

# Scholars, Spies, and Other Agents: US Hispanism and the State

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## I. An Awkward Conversation

On the evening of Wednesday, January 6, 1937, Professor Paul Rogers of Oberlin College, in Ohio, received a phone call from Ernest Hatch Wilkins, a nationally known peace activist and Dante scholar who, at the time, was also his college president. Wilkins called to invite Rogers to a lunch with Salvador de Madariaga, the former Spanish diplomat, who was visiting the Oberlin campus as part of a US lecture tour. Rogers was 36 years old and had taught Spanish at Oberlin since 1928. Madariaga, 50, had served for five years as Spain's permanent delegate at the League of Nations, in Geneva, until resigning in the summer of 1936 following a disagreement with the government of the Frente Popular, which had won the elections in February of that year.

By the time of Madariaga's tour, Spain had been at civil war for almost six months. The conflict had sparked intense debates in the US public sphere, including on the Oberlin campus, where Rogers—who in addition to a respected Hispanist was also an active anti-fascist—had been a leading pro-Republican voice. Madariaga had joined the fray in his own way, leveraging his considerable prestige to weigh in on the war in the international media. But unlike Rogers, he had done so “refusing to take sides,” in Paul Preston's words, “by taking a stance which he described as ‘abstaining’ from the Civil War”—a position associated with the term *la tercera España* (Preston, *Comrades* 153). Later that same January, the first American volunteers would arrive in Spain to form the Abraham Lincoln Battalion in the XV International Brigade of the Spanish Republican army; in the following months, they would be joined by several of Rogers's friends from Cleveland and New York as well as one of his Oberlin students. Rogers himself traveled to Spain, despite a State Department prohibition, in the summer of 1937 (Faber, *Anglo-American* 97–121).

Back in Oberlin that January evening, Rogers faced a complicated decision. Should he accept Wilkins's gracious invitation to eat with Madariaga? To Wilkins's surprise, the professor curtly declined without further explanation. But once Rogers had hung up, he felt awkward about the call. The next day, he sat down at his typewriter to give the president a more detailed explanation. “Our extremely brief telephone conversation last evening,” he wrote in a letter that is preserved

among Wilkins's papers in the Oberlin College archives, "did not permit me properly to express to you my appreciation of the courtesy of your invitation." And he continued:

I feel so strongly about what is happening in Spain, that I have lost all respect for a man who, given honors and responsibility by his country, has, nevertheless, not raised one finger to aid her democracy—the only democracy she has ever had—when it is being fiendishly attacked by international fascism; but who on the contrary has devoted his efforts to trying to show the world that he is one of the very few who can be objective and respect both sides.

Being myself a staunch supporter of democracy, and believing the world's battle for democracy against fascism is now being fought in Spain, I could not permit myself to sit at the table with a man of recognized capability, in a position to do much for democracy, but who has, nevertheless, by his betrayal of his country in her dark hour, given comfort to fascism. (Rogers, "Letter")

The letter leaves little doubt that Rogers meant his refusal to meet with Madariaga as a statement of principle: an act of solidarity with the embattled Spanish Republic. Equally clear is his belief that the Spanish diplomat had broken his oath of allegiance to his country, betraying it in a moment of need.

## 2. A Royal Debt

In one sense, Rogers's deeply felt loyalty to the Spanish Republic was logical. For one thing, he was a Hispanophile, an inclination he shared with most non-Spanish academics with a Hispanist vocation; for another, he had been a life-long progressive who, like many of his generation, had found himself radicalized by the Great Depression. Still, there was something ironic about Rogers's republicanism: as it turned out, he was personally indebted to the Spanish royal family. A mere ten years earlier, while he was finishing up his PhD at Cornell University, Rogers had been named Knight in the Order of Isabella by the then Spanish king, Alfonso XIII ("Paul [Patrick] Rogers"). The Spanish court had granted him the honor in appreciation of Rogers's precocious scholarship—he was only 27 at the time—demonstrating the decisive Spanish influence on the development of French literature. This line of research, Rogers confessed in a 1926 article on the topic in the US-based journal *Hispania*, was driven by "a resentment of the unfortunate fact that a lack of deserved emphasis is given to the role that Spanish letters have played in the literature of the world, and especially in that of France": "Continually the student in Spanish is being told of the tremendous influence of France on Spain, but seldom does he hear of the immense . . . influence of the latter country on her northern neighbor" ("Spanish Influence" 205).

Even as a graduate student, Rogers was clearly aware of the fact that the explosive growth of Spanish teaching in the United States, which began during the first World War (Fernández), did not mean that his field necessarily enjoyed the same

prestige as other European languages such as French or Italian. Among the hurdles Hispanism faced were stubborn prejudices from fellow humanists. In fact, the same Ernest Wilkins who had invited Rogers to lunch with Madariaga at Oberlin in the first days of 1937 had spoken on that very topic 19 years earlier, at a meeting of the National Education Association in the summer of 1918. At that occasion, Wilkins had boldly stated that “no sane critic who knows the several European literatures would rank Spanish literature with Italian or with French in universal value” (Wilkins 17; qtd. in Fernández 131; Faber, *Anglo-American* 15).

To be sure, Rogers was not the last American Hispanist to join the battle for prestige and defend the value of Spanish culture vis-à-vis its European competitors. Nor was he the last Hispanist to accept the Orden de Isabel la Católica, which is Spain’s highest civilian honor. David Gies received the distinction in 2007; Stanley G. Payne did two years later. None of this is surprising: if modern nation-states have long encouraged work by foreign scholars on their history, language, and culture through tax-funded research grants and other forms of support, they also take pleasure in formally expressing their gratitude to experts from abroad through decorations and similar honors.<sup>1</sup> This sometimes goes both ways: Paul Preston, the British historian, received the Spanish knighthood in the Order of Isabella in 2006; twelve years later, he was knighted by his own queen, Elizabeth, in acknowledgment of his “services to UK/Spain relations” (“Professor”).

### 3. Hispanists and the State

This anecdotal introduction serves to bring home my central point: the relationship between scholars and modern states is often more complex than we tend to assume, and this complexity especially affects academic experts who work in, or are citizens of, nation-states other than those that they study—including scholars who study Spain from elsewhere. If they are lucky, they receive double the state support and recognition, as in Preston’s case. More often, however, they are likely to be caught between competing loyalties or, worse, subject to suspicion, surveillance, and harassment from both sides. Modern nation-states, it seems, have tended to consider the academic fields that study their own history and culture—either practiced domestically or abroad, by national or foreigner scholars—as a potential generator of status and prestige and, therefore, as extensions of their foreign policy and even a kind of shadow diplomacy. These same nation-states also crave scholarly knowledge about *other* nations—knowledge is power, after all—and are often willing to fund it generously, especially if it is deemed of strategic importance. In this second context, scholars are mobilized less as shadow diplomats than as shadow spies. Still, while states value scholarly knowledge about other countries, they also seem to harbor a stubborn distrust for the individuals who generate that knowledge.

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<sup>1</sup>One such expression caused a national stir in November 1938, when one of Rogers’s colleagues at Oberlin, the Germanist Karl Geiser, received a decoration from the Nazi government, a distinction he said he was honored to accept (“Geiser”).

Thinking about the relationship between state structures and scholarship brings up difficult questions. Whom do scholars serve? To what entity or collective do we owe allegiance? Notions of service or loyalty no longer figure centrally in academics' reflections about their work. In the humanities these days, I would venture, it is probably less common to think about scholarship in terms of service than in terms of commitment, interest, or advocacy. Still, if anything is clear from sweeping institutional histories of Latin American studies in the United States—such as Mark Berger's classic *Under Northern Eyes* or, more recently, Fernando Degiovanni's *Vernacular Latin Americanisms*—it is that US-based scholars from the late nineteenth century through the Cold War very much thought in terms of service, loyalty, and allegiance. They did so in their daily practice but also as they justified their work to university administrations or funding agencies. And in many cases, the entity commanding their loyalty or service was assumed to be the nation-state. As Berger and Degiovanni show, moreover, until roughly the late 1960s the assumption of state service—often framed as a form of patriotism—coexisted with the idea of scholarship as a fundamentally *disinterested* vocation, a concept of the academic's role that associated political activism, or the adoption of partisan positions, as detrimental to scholarly rigor. Service to the state, in other words, was—curious as it may seem to us today—not seen in political terms.

Over the past quarter century, critical institutional histories of Hispanism have made clear that this view of the scholar's role has shaped a field like Hispanism in decisive ways (Moraña; Resina). So has the relationship between Hispanists and the state. As Joan Ramon Resina has shown, for example, the body of scholarly knowledge about Spanish history, culture, and literature as it became established since the mid-nineteenth century was overdetermined from the outset not only by the interests and agendas of the Spanish state but by those of the states that provided scholars of Spain with institutional support, including Germany, France, Britain, and the United States (*Del hispanismo* 54–67). Similarly, as James Fernández has shown, the emergence of Hispanism in the United States responded in large part to the perceived economic and political interests of the US government, primarily in relation to Latin America. More recently, Degiovanni has strengthened that argument with regard to the scholarly study of Latin American literature and culture in the United States, showing that the “production of knowledge about Latin American culture” at US academic institutions “was mediated since its beginnings by the specter of war” and that the field's primary objective was “the theorization of the continent as a hemispheric market” (1). Along similar lines, Berger has argued that, at least until the 1960s, the work of Latin Americanist academics in the United States “complemented and helped legitimize the US rise to predominance in the Caribbean region and beyond” (46). The ideology behind this tendency was Pan-Americanism, whose rise in the early twentieth century, Berger argued, coincided with the “professionalization” of Latin American scholarship: “Pan American ideas have been central to the institutionalization of Latin American studies in North America between the First and Second World Wars” (45).

Within Hispanism, insights from critical institutional historians about the deep links between the field and state interests have fueled proposals for institutional and disciplinary reform, such as Resina's federalist framework for Iberian studies,

or a decolonizing conception of transatlantic studies (Enjuto-Rangel et al.). These proposals, in turn, have been met with skepticism. Joseba Gabilondo, for example, has argued that even a federal concept like Iberian studies is bound, in the end, to reconfirm Spanish centralism (91), while critics like Resina and Trigo have suggested that transatlantic studies is too indebted to Hispanism as a Spain- and Castilian-centric ideology to be as transformative as its proponents claim (Resina “Transatlantic”; Trigo).

This awareness of the role of the state—and, especially, the negative impact of that role—has been relatively late to emerge among Hispanist academics. Looking at the history of Hispanism in the United States, in fact, we could say that Spanish and US state apparatuses have often shown a greater awareness of the link between their interests and the work of American Hispanists than those Hispanists themselves. At some moments, the US and Spanish states have clearly seen Hispanists as potential allies or even as government agents, inviting them to adopt roles ranging from ambassadors of sorts to figurative or literal spies. At other moments, both the United States and Spain have treated Hispanists with suspicion—prompting different levels of surveillance—or directly marked them as dangerous subversives.

#### 4. State Agents, Subversives, Spies

Paul Rogers is a case in point. Seven years and two days after his phone call with Wilkins, on January 8, 1944, J. Edgar Hoover, the director of the FBI, dictated a memo to his Cleveland Field Office ordering that Rogers’s mail be intercepted and scanned for 30 days (Paul Patrick Rogers File). It was only the first of many such measures. For the next 25 years, Hoover’s agency would keep a close watch on the Oberlin Spanish professor, who was believed to be serving as a courier between the communist parties of Spain, Mexico, and the United States. This suspicion was not entirely unfounded. Rogers, as said, was a radical; he had traveled to Spain for a month during the Civil War, and throughout the 1940s and 50s, he spent several months each year in Mexico, where he socialized with a group of Spanish Republican exiles that included well-known members of the Spanish Communist Party such as José Ignacio Mantecón and Juan Vicens, in addition to intellectuals like Max Aub, Constanca de la Mora, Luis Buñuel, and José Herrera Petere. Some of these exiles he had known since the 1920s and early 30s; others were friends he had met during his trip to wartime Spain in 1937. Naturally, little of this went unnoticed in Washington, and for the better part of the next quarter century Rogers was regularly shadowed on both sides of the US-Mexico border (Faber, *Anglo-American* 97–121).

But if the FBI had no trouble reaching into Mexico, Rogers’s network, too, spanned both sides of the Río Grande. His oldest friend in Mexico was the poet León Felipe, with whom he had coincided in the late 1920s at Cornell University, where Rogers had done his PhD and the poet had a teaching gig at the time. It was in these years that Rogers had first met Federico de Onís (1885–1966), who had mentored León Felipe when the poet first arrived in the United States.

Onís, who had been at Columbia University since 1916, precisely when Spanish initiated its meteoric rise at US high schools and universities (Fernández), is another interesting case for studying the relationship between Hispanism and the state. As a member of the Columbia faculty, he was not formally a functionary of the Spanish state. But he had been one for the six years prior, in a double role: as a founding member of the Centro de Estudios Históricos, headed by Ramón Menéndez Pidal, under the umbrella of the Junta para Ampliación de Estudios (JAE), and as *catedrático*, first at the University of Oviedo and then at Salamanca. Institutionally speaking, in fact, Onís had kept one foot on Spanish soil when he moved to the United States: he had held on to his university chair, and, as Degiovanni points out, the JAE considered him, for all practical purposes, its principal emissary abroad in North America (66).

In any case, regardless of his formal employment status, Onís clearly continued to view himself as an agent of the Spanish state—and Spanish national interests more generally—throughout his time in New York City. “[M]i actividad entera y toda la energía de que soy capaz” has been spent “en dar a conocer España a los estudiantes norteamericanos, y . . . extender ese conocimiento a toda clase de gentes y de públicos,” he wrote in a speech from October 1920 for students in Salamanca to inaugurate the academic year, which was read on his behalf in Spain but which he presented himself, that same month, to his colleagues at the New York Chapter of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish (Onís, “El español” 265). The “roca firme de mi espíritu,” Onís assured his Spanish audience, was “mi españolismo radical, . . . al sentirme azotado por todas partes y constantemente por las olas invasoras de una civilización extraña, viva y pujante.” In fact, thanks to “esta larga prueba a que mi alma se ha visto sometida en el extranjero,” he said, “mi españolismo ha salido más puro y acendrado que nunca” (265–66). Onís saw himself as a warrior; among the “enemies” he faced, he wrote, were those who

aceptando la necesidad de estudiar el español y aun tratando de fomentarla, se esfuerzan por anular los efectos favorables que para España pudiera tener. Son éstos los que, admitiendo el valor práctico del español como instrumento de comercio, le niegan todo valor cultural. En consecuencia, según ellos, el español debería ser estudiado por aquellas personas que han de dedicarse a los negocios, intensificando el carácter práctico de su enseñanza; pero de ningún modo ser aceptado como una de las materias a que puede concederse valor educativo general, y por lo tanto servir a los estudiantes para ser admitidos a la enseñanza superior de colegios y universidades. (279)

Spaniards, Onís told his listeners, had no reason to feel inferior: “Podrán otros pueblos tener una civilización más alta y más rica; pero ninguno, entre todos los modernos, ofrece una civilización más larga, continua y armónica, a pesar de las constantes conturbaciones interiores y de la enorme extensión territorial” (286). This also meant it was important to resist those who claimed that Spanish

America could be understood, or traded with, without the mediation of Spain.<sup>2</sup> As Degiovanni shows, Onís's private correspondence provides further proof that he saw himself, in the first place, as a promoter and protector of Spanish national interests. "[T]he influence we have achieved in guiding Spanish-US activities towards our own interests, will always be advantageous to us," he wrote to Américo Castro, using a first person plural that, as Degiovanni points out, was "unmistakably patriotic" (66).

The persistent concerns about prestige that have accompanied Hispanism since its founding days have shaped scholars' political stances as well. Onís and Castro both understood that, as agents of the Spanish state, it behooved them not to arouse the suspicion of US authorities. They agreed on the need to steer clear of political conflict. Taking partisan positions, they feared, would tarnish their academic reputation and, with it, their possibilities of advancing Spanish interests. Degiovanni quotes a letter from Castro to Amado Alonso, who was then stationed in Puerto Rico, in which Castro writes: "Our role is to teach, keep quiet and get paid" (79). "[N]o abro la boca," Castro wrote to Onís in 1937, "y sobre todo mantengo mi pluma a mil leguas de todo lo que huele a política" (Onís, *Cartas* 138; qtd. in Degiovanni 87). For his part, Degiovanni points out, Onís had bought into the same notion of "professionalism and political detachment":

Despite leaning Republican, Onís (like other members of the Centro de Estudios Históricos) saw communism and socialism as obstacles to Spain's project of global economic expansion, particularly in the United States. Onís's correspondence reveals how careful he was about inviting anyone to the Instituto de las Españas whose political affiliation might interfere with his ideals of an "eternal Spain"—especially dissidents whose "scientific" credentials could be overshadowed by openly partisan activities. (80)

The truth is that Onís and Castro were not wrong to be careful. Scholars who were less concerned about taking public political positions had a decidedly harder time in the United States. Rogers was not the only sympathizer of the Spanish Republic—or the only one in his circle of friends—to land on the FBI's watchlist. Starting in the early 1940s, Luis Buñuel had his own FBI file, and so did some of the Spanish exiles who ended up teaching at US universities, such as

<sup>2</sup> "Estos dicen: puesto que son los países hispanoamericanos los que nos importan, vayamos a ellos directamente y desentendámonos de España. Con la América española —o como ellos dicen, latina— vamos a comerciar, con ella vamos a estrechar nuestras relaciones políticas, ¿qué nos importa España? España pertenece al pasado; a nosotros nos importan sólo el presente y el porvenir, que están en la América española. Ni siquiera debemos ir a España a estudiar su lengua; porque si aprendemos allí el castellano, cuando en él hablemos a los hispanoamericanos, no nos entenderán, y les ofenderemos, además, con una pronunciación extranjera que nos hará odiosos a sus ojos.

"Todo esto, y otras cosas por el estilo, se ha dicho y se ha escrito repetidamente, y se ha defendido con tal vehemencia que sólo podríamos explicárnosla como nacida de un odio ciego a España" (Onís, "El español" 281).



Buñuel's friend José Rubia Barcia, whose activities take up a good part of the FBI field agents surveilling Buñuel (Martín 661–80; Luis Buñuel File).

## 5. Hispanists as Activists

Barcia's case, for that matter, is even more instructive about the complex relation between Hispanism and the state. Born in Galicia and trained as an Arabist in Granada, Rubia Barcia served the Republic during the war and ended up exiled in Cuba, from where Américo Castro called him to the United States for a teaching position. After some initial trouble with Immigration (upon arrival in Miami he was detained and interrogated for four days), he was hired in 1943 by the Office of War Information (OWI) to produce Spanish-language broadcasts as part of the war effort (Fox). After losing his job with the OWI over a political disagreement—he refused to read a speech in which Churchill called Franco a gentleman—Buñuel convinced him to join him for film work in Hollywood. Eventually, he got an academic position as a Spanish professor at UCLA. In 1945, an attempt from Immigration to deport him initiated a decade-long bureaucratic nightmare that—after a stint in jail and an investigation by the House Un-American Activities Committee—ended happily in his regularization, but only after a direct intervention from a US congressman. Barcia became a US citizen in 1956.

Quite different in temperament from Onís and Castro, Barcia kept a politically combative profile throughout the years of his exile. In his articles in *España Libre*, the journal published in New York by Victoria Kent, he regularly wrote acerbic political commentary targeting both Franco's Spain and the United States. In 1961, for example, he denounced the US government and authorities in no uncertain terms: “han favorecido y favorecen, con excesiva frecuencia, la rapiña de empresas privadas en el exterior, han reforzado y ayudado a regímenes totalitarios, y han diseminado el desconcierto y el escepticismo entre los que no aciertan a ver ninguna coincidencia entre palabra y conducta.” By contrast, he added, “[l]as autoridades norteamericanas, y sus organismos oficiales, . . . han abandonado a su suerte a miles de refugiados en Francia . . . y han mantenido, tozuda y tercamente, una actitud hostil y desconfiada frente a los defensores de la República. Es imposible justificar, lógicamente, tanta ceguera” (*Prosas* 99–101). In an autobiographical sketch included in *Memoria de España*, a collection of short texts published toward the end of his life, he wrote:

Yo he sido, creo, el benjamín de los intelectuales transterrados. Salí de España muy joven, profundamente herido, con la conciencia tranquila, sin embargo, por haber servido a una causa que sentí justa y no haber hecho conscientemente daño a nadie, ni dentro ni fuera de las fronteras patrias, y capaz de convivir, pacíficamente, con ideas no compartidas y de defender las mías sin pretender imponérselas a nadie.

El vejamen, la angustia, las desagradables peripecias del exilio, el espectáculo de una España rebajada y la esperanza de recobrarla



renacida, contribuyeron a mantener al rojo vivo mi ánimo de combatiente. (8)

If Rubia Barcia came close to being deported to Franco's Spain in the mid-1940s, where he would have ended up in jail or worse, the Franco regime—eager to curry favor with the US government (Rosendorf 80–118)—was decidedly less hostile to foreign Hispanists who came to Spain for research in the 1950s, even if they were known to harbor pro-Republican sympathies, such as the US historian Gabriel Jackson. (Ironically, by then Jackson's left-wing sympathies had already landed him on the radar of the House Un-American Activities Committee, stifling his academic career [Faber "Negrín"].) Foreign scholars, then as now, were considered a source of international prestige.

Activist figures like Jackson were an exception, however. Institutionally speaking, academic Hispanism abroad in the decades following the Spanish Civil War was quick to assume the Francoist state as the new normal. A prominent UK Hispanist like A. A. Parker—whose own ideological profile was decidedly conservative—developed an excellent relationship with Francoist institutions early on and was “as committed as the regime to vindicating the virtues and heroism of Spanish history—including the Conquest and the forcible imposition of religious unity—against its negative constructions in the Protestant North” (Faber, *Anglo-American* 204). Still, in 1965, the Francoist state, represented by the Minister of Information and Tourism, Manuel Fraga, appointed Ricardo de la Cierva to develop a counteroffensive to what it saw as negative publicity emanating from the work of foreign historians of twentieth-century Spain like Jackson, Hugh Thomas, and Herbert Southworth (Reig Tapia 74; Preston, Prologue ix). A US Hispanist like Burnett Bolloten, on the other hand, saw his work on the Civil War—which sympathized with the anarchists but was sharply critical of the communists—favored by the US state: the 1962 Spanish translation of *The Grand Camouflage* was paid for and promoted by the CIA-sponsored Congress for Cultural Freedom (Glondys 130).

## 6. Epilogue: 1936–2017

What can we say about the relationship between the state and Hispanism today? While the return of democracy in Spain and the end of the Cold War have changed the nature of that relationship, some basic patterns seem to have remained in place. For one thing, the Spanish state continues to sponsor and award Hispanist scholarship from around the world, through institutions such as the Instituto Cervantes. For another, government institutions and representatives continue to bolster their interests and positions by mobilizing the knowledge and prestige generated through academic institutions at home and abroad.

That said, the semi-federal structure established by the 1978 constitution—the Estado de las Autonomías—has introduced an interesting new dynamic. The disputes, dilemmas, and discourses generated around the Catalan *procés* and the 2017 referendum for independence in particular would make for an interesting case study. Much like what happened in 1936 following the failed military coup,

the Catalan conflict prompted both camps—in this case, the central government and the Generalitat—to highlight, if not actively seek, expressions of support from the global academic community.

Then as now, both camps were aware that the opinion of the academic expert carries special weight. Thus, in June 1937, the *Heraldo de Aragón*, a newspaper published in Nationalist-controlled Zaragoza, published an open letter by Miguel Artigas to the “Hispanists of the world.” Artigas had, until the outbreak of the war, been the director of the National Library, and ended up choosing the rebels’ side. His letter decried the destruction of Spain’s cultural heritage—museums, archives, and libraries—in the cities and villages occupied by the *rojos*. At the end of his text, Artigas explicitly called upon the international community of Hispanists, naming twelve prominent Hispanists by name, to support the “true” Spain—that is, the Nationalist cause:

¡Qué impresión de espanto vais a sufrir si visitáis esas ciudades que han sido o son rojas, vosotros, los que formáis la familia de los hispanistas —Huntington, Croce, Farinelli, Fitz-Gerald, Coster [sic], Espinosa, Schevill, Martinanche, Thomas, el de Londres y el de Bruselas; Vossler, Pfandl y tantos otros—, cuando vengáis a visitarnos, a continuar vuestros estudios en esta vuestra segunda patria! (Artigas 1)

As soon as the Republican authorities found out about Artigas’s letter, the Junta Central del Tesoro Artístico, the Republican government institution charged with the safekeeping of Spain’s cultural patrimony, published a pamphlet arguing that it was not the Republicans who had destroyed museums, libraries, and archives, but the bombings from the Nationalists and their German and Italian allies (Junta Central 10). Not only had the government and its supporters worked hard to safeguard Spain’s cultural heritage, but they had also rescued that heritage from the greedy hands of the church and the nobility. In that sense, the pamphlet argued, they had done international Hispanism a tremendous service. Tomás Navarro Tomás, Artigas’s successor as director of the National Library, confirmed this argument in an open letter of his own, also entitled *A los hispanistas del mundo*.

Hispanists in the 1930s were hesitant to grant public support to Republicans or the rebels. As I have explained elsewhere, the American leadership of the field, fearful of division in its ranks, responded to the recruitment attempts from both sides with a call to neutrality. Alfred Coester, editor of the then largest professional journal, *Hispania*, underscored in an editorial note that the Association of American Teachers of Spanish stood “for but one object, to wit, to advance the study of the Spanish language in the United States,” adding that it would “not promote that end to project the Spanish civil war into our midst” and that *Hispania* would not “print articles that can be considered as biased” (qtd. in Faber, *Anglo-American* 46).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Ironically, as Degiovanni shows, by 1936 Coester, who saw his scholarship as a form of patriotic service, had regularly lent his Hispanist and Latin Americanist expertise to US

Much like the Civil War, the dispute over Catalonia's *procés*, the 2017 referendum, and its legal fallout have also divided the academic community into at least three camps: those who identify with Spanish centralism, those who sympathize with the Catalan independence movement, and those who believe that scholars should steer clear of political conflicts of this type altogether. In the meantime, the intensification of Catalan and Spanish forms of nationalism has fueled a dynamics of (self-)recruitment among the academic community through listservs and petitions—as well as public demonizations of scholars with views, or fields of research, that are critical of those forms of nationalism. Much like in 1936, scholars are summarily divided into *amigos* and *enemigos*.

In September 2019, during the trial of the Catalan leaders involved in the referendum, the social-democratic government of Pedro Sánchez launched its campaign to reinforce Spain's democratic image. Irene Lozano, the secretary of state in charge of the operation, suggested that anyone who doubted the quality of the country's democracy plays into the hand of "*los enemigos de España*" (Faber "Tocamientos"). The phrase stood out not only because it harkened back to Francoist discourse, but also because, in recent years, it has been used regularly by Spanish nationalists such as Arturo Pérez Reverte or María Elvira Roca Barea to dismiss British Hispanists like Henry Kamen and Paul Preston, whose work they associate with the "Black Legend" spread by Spain's international rivals (Faber, "España").

Kamen and Preston, who speak Catalan, have expressed skepticism of Spanish nationalism and criticized the central government's handling of the crisis, although they have stopped short of supporting Catalan independence. But the cause of Spanish nationalism has also been able to boast some prestigious academic recruits. One of the most prominent among them is Stanley G. Payne, emeritus historian of Spain at the University of Wisconsin who, as said, was knighted in 2009 as Caballero Gran Cruz de la Orden de Isabel la Católica. During a visit to the program of right-wing talk radio host Federico Jiménez Losantos in January 2018, Payne blamed Catalan "extremism" on the Estado de las Autonomías and stated that "Cataluña siempre ha sido española" ("Federico" 22:18). Among Payne's many recent books is *En defensa de España*, which aims to debunk myths and black legends in Spanish history, and which won the 2017 Premio Espasa. A bit over two years later, in January 2020, during the heated debates in the Spanish Parliament that would result in the investiture of Pedro Sánchez as head of a progressive government with the votes or abstentions of regional pro-independence parties, the deputy Javier Ortega Smith of the radical-right party Vox ostentatiously refused to pay attention. While Sánchez gave his investiture speech, Ortega feigned to be engrossed in a book. It was Payne's *En defensa de España*.

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