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Epidemic Expressions: Reading the Cultural Narrative of "Spanish" Flu Discourse in Spain, 1918–19

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An abstract of
A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Emory University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
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Abstract

Epidemic Expressions: Reading the Cultural Narrative of "Spanish" Flu Discourse in Spain, 1918–19

By Ryan A. Davis

This dissertation analyzes "Spanish" flu discourse in Spain (primarily news coverage) in order to trace the cultural narrative produced in response to the influenza epidemic of 1918–19. The meaning ascribed to the epidemic changed as it evolved into a full-fledged crisis, which manifested both empirically and discursively. Empirically speaking, the epidemic threatened the body politic of the Spanish nation. Discursively speaking, it threatened the Spanish nation *qua* imagined community. As a whole, this study examines the discursive response to this two-fold crisis. In recreating the story of the epidemic, chapter one shows how the initial benignity of the flu, and its diagnosis as such, created expectations that the epidemic would progress in a mundane fashion. It then shows how the press implicitly distinguished between an "epidemic Spain" and a "sanitary Spain" as the epidemic evolved into a crisis. The rhetorical conventions used to represent politicians, physicians, the general population, and the press were aimed at situating each group in relation to these two Spains. In chapter two, I show how the cultural figure of Don Juan, especially in the guise of the *soldado de Nápoles*, was invoked to explain both the empirical and discursive crises presented by the epidemic. I argue that the Don Juan figure provided a narrative template whereby Spaniards could emplot their experience of the epidemic. Given the psychocultural function of Don Juan in Spanish history, this narrative serves to reinforce Spanish national identity. In chapter three, I use editorial cartoons to show how this identity ultimately proved to be a bourgeois construct delineated according to class, culture and gender, and one that accordingly privileged the elites over the masses, high culture over low culture, and masculine over feminine.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables and Figures

Introduction: Epidemic Genre(s) and the "Spanish" Flu Narrative

In 1918 a news wire from Spain to England reported the arrival of "a strange form of disease of epidemic character" (Collier 7). Within less than a year, some 50 to 100 million people would die worldwide from what has come to be called the "Spanish" flu. Critics usually suggest the epidemic began in the U.S. or in Asia and spread around the globe in three waves: the first in the spring of 1918, the second in the fall of the same year, and the third in the early months of 1919.[1] The World Health Organization has referred to the epidemic as "the single most devastating infectious disease outbreak ever recorded" (5). Similarly, C. W. Potter has called it "one of the most dramatic events of medical history" (575). In Spain, its demographic impact was so great that, in Beatriz Echeverri's words, "the children born around the years of the pandemic belong to a diminished generation" (190). Yet, notwithstanding the scope and impact of the epidemic, there exists what Susan Sontag calls a "near-total historical amnesia" about the "Spanish" flu (71). In 1992, van Hartesveldt suggested that "[h]istorical study of the 1918 pandemic has been spotty" (7). Similarly, Phillips and Killingray note "spasmodic bursts of interest" in the epidemic (12).

The last decade, however, has witnessed a surge of renewed interest in the "Spanish" flu, spawned in part by Jeffrey Taubenberger's publication of the first partial genetic sequencing of the 1918 flu virus in 1997. A year after Taubenberger's publication, the University of Cape Town hosted the first academic conference ever dedicated entirely to the epidemic (Phillips and Killingray 2). Selections of the

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[1] The timing of the waves varies by geography. Given the focus of this dissertation, I follow the European experience. General overviews of the epidemic are available in a number of sources, e.g., Echeverri (18-44), Phillips and Killingray (1-21), and van Hartesveldt (1-12).

[2] Iatrogenesis refers to an adverse condition induced by a physician.

proceedings were published in 2003 under the title *The Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1918–19: New Perspectives*. In 2005, the complete genetic sequencing of the 1918 virus led to intense debates about the prudence of "resurrecting" the virus. Some considered it "the most effective bioweapons agent now known" (Von Bubnof), while other criticized the "pandemic of iatrogenic panic" (Bonneux and Van Damme 788).[2] In addition to renewed interest in the flu from scientists, the artistic community has also focused its attention on the epidemic. Beginning with the publication of Edward Rutherfurd's *London* in the same year that Taubenberger published his partial genetic sequencing of the 1918 virus's RNA, there has been a steady stream of literary fiction, movies (including those made for television), and documentaries that shed new light on the epidemic. This literary or artistic turn represents a new and unique development in flu discourse, for, as José Antonio Cabezas Fernández del Campo has observed:

> Es curioso observar que, a diferencia del 'aprovechamiento literario' de temas vinculados a epidemias como las de peste ('Il Decamerone', de Bocaccio; 'La peste', de Camus), o las de fiebre amarilla ('The narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym', de Poe), tanto episodios de las epidemias de gripe del siglo XIX como de la pandemia de 1918–19 no han sido apenas objeto de descripciones noveladas o realistas por parte de los escritores; y ello, lo mismo en España que en el extranjero. (86–87)

The near-total absence of artistic treatments of the epidemic (from the period) distinguishes the flu from other epidemics like the Black Plague, tuberculosis, and AIDS. The only works of art or literature that I am aware of that treat the epidemic are Edvard Munch's two versions of his *Self Portrait after the Spanish Flu* (1918), Katherine Anne

[2] Iatrogenesis refers to an adverse condition induced by a physician.

Porter's novel *Pale Horse, Pale Rider* (1939), and William Maxwell's novel *They Came Like Swallows* (1937). As a result of the virtually nonexistent artistic engagement with the epidemic, it has largely remained the purview of historians, sociologists, and natural scientists. And yet, despite renewed interest from critics in these fields, the type of (broadly understood) cultural studies approach to the epidemic that informs our understanding of other epidemics has been lacking.[3] In addressing this critical opportunity, my study has two main goals. The first is to provide the first monograph-length study of Spain's experience of the epidemic to a larger critical audience. To my knowledge, there are, at present, only two essays in English that deal with the epidemic in Spain.[4] The second is to bring to bear on the epidemic the analytical tools of literary studies, especially narratology. In this vein, I will articulate in the chapters that follow what I am calling the cultural narrative of "Spanish" flu discourse. By cultural narrative I mean simply the representation of the epidemic in the general press. The expression "'Spanish' flu discourse" refers ostensibly to the body of statements made about the epidemic and is meant to preserve both the narratological concern for how the epidemic is represented and the Foucauldian concern for how those statements go about constructing the object called "the 'Spanish' flu." At the risk of being reductive, I see the narratalogical concern as bound up with the Foucauldian concern.

My primary source materials come from the major (i.e., nationally circulated) daily newspapers in Spain, circa 1918—*ABC*, *El Liberal*, *La Vanguardia*, and *El Sol*—

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[3] This type of analysis can be seen in works like Diego Armus's edited collection, *Disease in the History of Modern Latin America: From Malaria to AIDS*, Charles Briggs and Clara Mantini-Briggs's *Stories in the Time of Cholera: Racial Profiling During a Medical Nightmare,* Paula Treichler's *How to Have Theory in an Epidemic: Cultural Chronicles of AIDS*, and Steven Johnson's *Ghost Map: The Story of London's Most Terrifying Epidemic and How It Changed Science, Cities, and the Modern World.*

[4] They are Beatriz Echeverri's "Spanish Influenza Seen from Spain" and Antoni Trilla et al.'s "The 1918 'Spanish Flu' in Spain."

and *El Socialista*, though the latter to a lesser degree. The first three had the largest print runs in Spain at the time of the epidemic—roughly 100,000 in 1918. The print run for *El Sol* was only slightly lower, 78,000 in 1920.[5] *El Liberal* can reasonably be assumed to reflect a certain bias toward Madrid, the source of its production, in its news coverage. On the other hand, *La Vanguardia*—produced in Barcelona—and *El Sol*—which never distributed more than 20% of its papers in Madrid—offer peripheral, if not necessarily minority, perspectives. Likewise, in the 1920s, 75% of *ABC*'s papers were distributed to the provinces (Seoane and Sáiz 86). If a minority perspective can be said to exist, it is to be found in *El Socialista*. The official voice of the socialist party, the Partido Socialista Obrero Español, *El Socialista* reflects the perspective of the masses disenfranchised from the aristocratically-driven political system known as *turnismo*. In this sense, it offers a valuable counterpoint to *ABC*'s more regime-friendly perspective, even though its print run was inferior to that of *ABC*.[6] This combination of news sources will also offer insights into the center-periphery dynamic that plays out during the epidemic. In terms of political orientation, *ABC* and *El Sol* were, respectively, right- and left-leaning: the first, a pro-monarchy daily; the second, the expression of "una burguesía progresista no oligárquica" (Seoane and Sáiz 246). *La Vanguardia* is also a liberal newspaper, though its ties to Barcelona echo regionalist sensibilities absent in *El Sol*. Taken together, *ABC*, *El Liberal*, *La Vanguardia*, *El Sol*, and, *El Socialista* offer a cross-section of Spanish national sentiment regarding the epidemic. In terms of methodology, my study is

[5] In 1918, Nicolás María de Urgoiti, director general of La Papelera Española, and *empresario* of the Sociedad de Prensa Gráfica and of the newspapers *El Sol* and *La Voz*, estimated total print runs in Spain at 1,600,000, roughly 60% of which was distributed to either Madrid or Barcelona (Seoane and Sáiz 31). Official statistics on print runs exist for 1913, 1920, and 1927; however, because numbers were self-reported by news sources, it is widely held that the figures are suspect (29).

[6] Enrique Moral Sandoval estimates the 1920 print run at 16,000 (no pagination).

grounded in the textual analysis of news reports, opinion pieces, and editorial cartoons that come from these news dailies. For the most part, I have chosen texts that focus explicitly on the epidemic, leaving out those that mention it in passing or that address it as part of an article that deals foremost with other issues. So, for example, although *ABC* periodically mentions the epidemic in its regular section titled "Madrid al día," I have omitted these articles because their focus is other than the epidemic. In this sense, I have selected texts that frame the epidemic as a more or less coherent discursive object, however complex and fraught with problems it might be.[7]

Two reasons for basing my study of the "Spanish" flu on daily news coverage bear further comment. The first has to do with the origin of the flu's name. As a non-combatant country in WWI, Spain did not subject its press corps to the same censorship that existed in belligerent nations. It had no ostensible reason to hide the impact of the epidemic from others. Consequently, the Spanish press covered the epidemic in greater detail than elsewhere in Europe and the United States. As a result of this news coverage, foreigners dubbed the epidemic the "Spanish" flu. To be sure, Spaniards rejected the moniker. The only time it appears in news stories is when a newspaper reports on the epidemic in foreign lands. Spanish news coverage therefore constitutes a valuable source for understanding period reactions to the epidemic. The second reason has to do with the affinity between newspapers and novels and the role of both in culturally constructing (the idea of) the nation. Benedict Anderson has suggested that "[r]eading a newspaper is like reading a novel whose author has abandoned any thought of a coherent plot" (33 n54). The reason this is important is that, for Anderson, the quasi-ritualistic act of reading newspapers and novels constitutes the foundational act on which national identity is

[7] For more on the formation of discursive objects, see Michel Foucault (44-54).

founded. In other words, individuals imagine themselves as members of a national community by reading national newspapers and novels. And since, according to Charles Rosenberg, epidemics "mobiliz[e] communities to act out propitiatory rituals that incorporate and reaffirm fundamental social values and modes of understanding," analyzing the textual production of the Spanish press in response to the flu epidemic can shed light not just on Spanish "social values and modes of understanding," but on what the specific image of the Spanish nation was at the time (279).

Analyzing how Spanish national identity gets articulated in flu discourse responds to key developments the nation underwent in and around the years of the epidemic. Not only was the imperial crisis of 1898 processed as a national crisis—prompting philosophical reflection about what Spain was and what it meant to be a Spaniard—but the broader historical context was marked by social tensions that seemed to threaten the downfall of the bourgeois construct that was the nation. The Russian revolution of 1917 was the most proximate example of what the future portended. Internally, Spain was faced with increasing impatience among workers, anarchists, the military, and regionalists who spearheaded newly reinvigorated nationalist movements in places like Euskera and Cataluña.[8] Given this situation, it should come as no surprise that the epidemic added fuel to the fire of Spain's national crisis. Nor is it surprising that, in response to the epidemic, the rhetorical conventions of flu discourse sought to shore up the imagined community of the nation. Mine is a study, then, of the Spanish nation as a cultural construct at the time of the epidemic, not a political one.

[8] For a general history of the period, see Carr's *Spain: 1808-1975* (esp. 430-563). For a more focused study on labor and industrialization, see Martin's *The Agony of Modernization*. A cultural history is offered in Serrano and Salaün's edited collection, *Los felices años veinte: España, crisis y modernidad*.

Having explained why I use newspapers as the primary texts for my study of the flu epidemic, it will be helpful to elaborate on my general approach to these texts. As with other types of texts, analysis of news coverage implies addressing at least the following five variables: producers of news, readers of news, the critic analyzing the news, the news texts themselves, and the historical and cultural context of news production. In terms of who produces the news about the epidemic, I have already signaled the basic ideological inclination of the newspapers themselves. In large part, anonymously authored stories account for the overwhelming majority of daily news reports about the epidemic. I therefore take these texts to reflect the opinion of the newspaper, recalling Juan Pujol's comment in a 1919 article in *El Debate* that "'la libertad de opinión de los periodistas es completamente ilusoria […tienen que] decir lo que a las empresas conviene o presentar la dimisión'" (qtd. in Seoane and Sáiz 45).[9] Occasionally, however, authors do sign their articles, as when physicians publish their perspective on the epidemic events. In these cases, my analysis reflects how knowing who the author is influences the interpretation of the text, even if it is only a matter of knowing that he is a doctor or a well-known journalist.

In terms of identifying the readers of "Spanish" flu discourse, the best that can be hoped for is an approximation in number and kind. In 1920, the total population in Spain reached just over 21,000,000. Of that number, Antonio Viñao Frago estimates that 10,107,216 could at least read; 9,904,859 could read and write; and 202,357 could read only. This means that over 11,000,000 Spaniards were still illiterate. When broken down by gender, the respective illiteracy rates for men and women are 46% and 58%.[10] In other

[9] For more on the elaborate process of news production, see Allen Bell's *The Language of News Media*.
[10] Percentages are calculated from the raw numbers in Viñao Frago (587).

words, less than half of Spaniards could read about the epidemic directly, and of those who could, more were men than women. But literacy figures tell a limited story. In speaking of alternative forms of literacy, Viñao Frago includes in his study the following comment by Azorín, written in 1901 in *El Imparcial*:

> The bourgeois book . . . once read, is returned to the library where it usually sleeps tranquilly. . . . But the reader of an anarchist work, as a worker, does not have a library in the first place, nor does he buy books for himself alone. The author of this article has witnessed a reading of *The Conquest of Bread*…in a working-class house. In a room lit only by a candle, up to fourteen workers would gather every night during the winter. They read to one another, laboriously, listening; when the reader concluded, only the sputtering of the candle interrupted the silence. I have also been present at the reading of the Bible in a Puritan household; the sensation was identical in each case. The same can be said about newspapers. A much larger number of bourgeois papers are being read, but in these, current events occupy the space . . . the interest aroused is purely momentary. This does not happen with anarchist periodicals. Whatever they contain about contemporary news . . . only takes up about a third or a fourth of the issue, and since the remaining part is devoted to doctrinal questions, the copy is kept. . . . I know of many people who retain collections of every issue of these periodicals. Of how many other types of weeklies could the same be said? (591).[11]

[11] Viñao Frago cites Azorín's quote from Ramon Perez de la Dehesa's essay, "El acercamiento de la literatura finisecular a la literatura popular," published in *Creación y público en la literatura española.* Ed. Jean-François Botrel (Madrid, 1974), 156-57. In the absence of contrary indication, I take him to be the translator of Azorín's text.

To extrapolate from Azorín, then, the phenomenon of group readings suggests that more people could have kept abreast of epidemic news than the raw numbers of literate citizens would otherwise indicate, especially when one bears in mind the longstanding tradition of readers who read aloud to workers in factories.[12]

In addition to literacy figures and the phenomenon of group reading, the geographic distribution of literacy further nuances our understanding of the makeup of readers of flu discourse. Comparing a map of the impact of the second epidemic wave (see Echeverri, *Gripe española* 93) with one of provincial emigration rates (see Sánchez-Alonso 740) suggests that those hardest by the epidemic were also the least likely to be literate. Given that net migratory movement in Spain during the years of WWI was relatively insignificant when compared to that of the years leading up to the Great War, and that a high percentage of those emigrants were self-selected for their literacy, it does not seem unreasonable to state that the number of available readers from those areas hardest hit by the second wave of the epidemic was significantly reduced by these migratory patterns. Moreover, add to this the fact that in the newspapers with the largest national circulation, news from the provinces typically received less space than news from the capital cities, and one begins to see how certain factors combine to mitigate the perceived impact of the epidemic. Of course, none of this changes the basic reality that extrapolating information from issues of Spanish literacy in order to explain epidemic readership remains a difficult and problematic task. For this reason, my study of the flu epidemic rests predominantly on analysis of texts and how these engage the context of their production.

The next variable to consider is my own critical position vis-à-vis flu discourse.

[12] For a literary representation of this, see Pardo Bazán's *La Tribuna* (1882).

In his "concise history of media and cultural studies," Joke Hermes describes three scripts that critics in this area typically follow in their scholarship: advocacy, autobiography, and chronicle. In the first, the critic speaks on behalf of some politically underprivileged group, though the divide between the two often problematizes this script.[13] The second script, autobiography, implies a more self-reflexive approach in which the critic takes into consideration her subject positionality. One benefit of this type of analysis is thus its ability "to address issues of gender and ethnicity in relation to identity construction" (263). In the chronicle script, as in the advocacy script, the critic adopts a detached position from which to make an argument. However, rather than speak on behalf of a specific group, the script focuses less on people than on the "processes and practices of meaning production" (266). My own position aligns most squarely with the chronicle script since it does not depend on ethnographic methods such as interviews or correspondence nor on personal or family recollections. Rather, I engage in textual analysis of my primary documents in order to elucidate their "processes and practices of meaning production." However, in doing so, I also relate these documents to their context of production in order to show how Spanish culture of the time was explicitly marked by issues like gender and class. Thus, my ultimate purpose is both to preserve and elucidate Spain's historico-documentary memory of the intriguing socio-medical crisis that was the "Spanish" flu epidemic and expand our knowledge of how cultural narratives are constructed in response to such crises. In doing so, I have benefited from the work of various scholars who have written on epidemics as sociocultural phenomena.

In his *Explaining Epidemics*, Charles Rosenberg sets out to describe the "archetypical pattern of historical plague epidemics" (281). Although "[a]ttempts…to

[13] For instance, see Gayatri Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak."

impose a clear chronological evolution on such different [epidemic] etiologies and responses…have faced a multitude of exceptions and complications" (34), as Jo N. Hays has rightly noted, I nevertheless find Rosenberg's "archetypical pattern" useful in fleshing out the particular profile of the "Spanish" flu epidemic. According to Rosenberg, "[e]pidemics start at a moment in time, proceed on a stage limited in space and duration, following a plot line of increasing and revelatory tension, move to a crisis of individual and collective character, then drift toward closure" (279). This essentially Aristotelian structure has four acts, the first of which Rosenberg titles "progressive revelation."[14] Communities resist acknowledging the presence of an epidemic because "acknowledgement would threaten interests—specific economic and institutional interests and, more generally, the emotional assurance and complacency of ordinary men and women" (281). In "Spanish" flu discourse, there does not seem to be any resistance to admitting the presence of the epidemic. This no doubt responds to the general benignity of the flu during the first epidemic wave. The need to mollify the masses, however, figures prominently in flu discourse. Lumped together as part of the *público* (also the *pueblo*, *vecindario*), ordinary men and women are portrayed as being particularly susceptible to panic.

Despite initial resistance to admitting the reality of an epidemic, the empirical evidence soon becomes too much to ignore and the need to "manage randomness"—Rosenberg's second category—outweighs the desire to remain ignorant. Epidemics are chaotic and, as such, pose a threat not just to people's health but to the very pillars on

[14] The tension between Rosenberg's emphasis on the *dramatic* structure of epidemics and my concern for the cultural *narrative* of the "Spanish" flu is somewhat mitigated by Cheryl Mattingly's work on narrative drama, which I discuss below. In short, given my focus on the emplotment of the epidemic experience, I am less interested in fine-grained distinctions between drama and narrative and more interested in their convergence as structuring metaphors.

which a community is founded. If the community cannot rise to the challenge of the epidemic threat, it risks both disintegration and reorganization. In other words, it can fall apart or be replaced by a different social order. To meet the challenge, then, communities seek an explanatory framework with which to make sense of the epidemic, which in turn implies intervention (282–84). The specific framework adopted in Spain to explain the flu epidemic signals one of the most unique features of "Spanish" flu discourse. Based on clinical evidence, doctors diagnosed the epidemic disease as the flu early in the first wave. Although the diffuseness of the disease seemed at odds with what they had come to expect from the flu, its generally benign manifestation prevented most from second guessing the diagnosis. The definitive laboratory results, it was felt, would soon vindicate their assessment of things. When the second epidemic wave hit, however, the increased virulence of the disease increasingly called into question the validity of the flu diagnosis. The failure of conclusive lab results to ever materialize—despite a few sensational claims to the contrary—only exacerbated the discrepancy between the official explanation of the epidemic and Spaniards' experience of it. As the official explanatory framework came increasingly under fire, alternative explanations emerged. Ironically, the medical profession stuck to its guns, even speaking with unanimity. At the same time, they also recognized the need to take action. This brings us to the third act of archetypical epidemics.

Titled "negotiating public response," the third epidemic act involves taking actions of noted symbolic value for a community: "measures to interdict an epidemic constitute rituals, collective rites integrating cognitive and emotional elements. In this sense…[these events] all play a similar role—the visible acting out of community

solidarity" (Rosenberg 285). The second epidemic wave threatened to destabilize Spanish society. *El Liberal*'s call for a *dictadura sanitaria* was thus only partly a manner of speaking. This dictatorship was to be the political form that ushered in a new state, converting the "epidemic Spain" into a "sanitary Spain." Although the terms are mine, they reflect an implicit distinction made by the Spanish press. The dilapidated condition of Spain's public health infrastructure embodied the former. The latter, by contrast, was a discursive construct that, it was implied, would materialize if the *dictadura sanitaria* was successful. The medical profession, as well as politicians and the press, all jockeyed for position in this nascent "sanitary Spain." Their actions constitute the "measures [of] interdict[ion]" through which they "act[ed] out…community solidarity" (285).

Rosenberg titles the final epidemic act "subsidence and retrospection." He notes how "[e]pidemics ordinarily end with a whimper, not a bang" (286). In other words, the disease dies out gradually, not suddenly. The time it takes for this to happen allows communities to take stock of their response to the epidemic, reassessing the values on which they are founded: "Epidemics have always provided occasion for retrospective moral judgment" (287). The "Spanish" flu did "end with a whimper," though there was very little by way of retrospection.[15] WWI ended as the epidemic reached its zenith during the second wave. As a result, news of the anticipated peace negotiations overshadowed news of the epidemic just as the war had before it ended. In December of 1918, Sileno, pen name of the artist Pedro Antonio Villahermosa, published an editorial cartoon in *ABC* that depicted a nurse and a doctor observing two cases of "[l]a epidemia reinante." The nurse's comments signal the changing of the guard in terms of noteworthy

[15] As best I can tell, there are only a handful of studies produced in the aftermath of the epidemic, primarily university projects like theses.

news items: "—¡Señor doctor: ahí tiene usted dos casos típicos de autonomía que han degenerado en locura separatista…!" Together with the end of WWI and the prospect of peace talks in Paris, tensions between Spain's central government and its regions occupied the national spotlight, relegating the third epidemic wave—which was not long in coming—even further to the periphery than the two previous ones.

In addition to Rosenberg's work, Priscilla Wald's notion of the "outbreak narrative" also sheds valuable light on the "Spanish" flu. In its most summary form, Wald defines an "outbreak narrative" as one which, "in its scientific, journalistic, and fictional incarnations[,]…follows a formulaic plot that begins with the identification of an emerging infection, includes discussion of the global networks through which it travels, and chronicles the epidemiological work that ends with its containment" (2). The cultural narrative of the "Spanish" flu does begin with the identification of the disease, though, as I mentioned earlier, the diagnosis quickly runs into problems. Also, there is a significant amount of chronicling epidemiological work in the cultural narrative of the flu, though it would be difficult to speak of an ending. The flu was never contained; rather, it simply faded, both from the body politic and from memory. In terms of the networks of travel taken by the flu, these were much less an issue in the first and third epidemic waves than in the second. The severity of the latter, mixed with rumors about various infections entering Spain through France prompted severe measures along the border between the two countries. In this sense, the cultural narrative of the flu resembles the tendency of outbreak narratives to (re-) inscribe, and thus reinforce, national boundaries: "Outbreak narratives derive their subtle and complex power less by sustaining the language of crisis than by invoking the precariousness of the imagined community" (58). Here Wald

specifically engages Anderson's influential study *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*: "The nation is imagined, argues Anderson, because most of its members will remain strangers, 'yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion'" (52). The precariousness of the national community derives from its condition as "imagined" and thus its continuation and well-being depends on the perpetuity of these "consensual act[s] of imagining" among its citizens (58). As a perpetual act, this imagining stretches indefinitely into the future, thereby endowing these "consensual act[s] of imagining" with a mythic element.

To articulate the borders of the national community, outbreak narratives utilize the logic of contagion—as both "a fact of, as well as a metaphor for, life" (Wald 82)—whereby those who do and do not belong find their respective place either on the inside or outside of that community (11–20).[16] In this regard, "[t]he carrier is the archetypal stranger, both embodying the danger of microbial invasion…and transforming it into the possibility for [national] rejuvenation and growth" (10). Bound up in this "possibility…for rejuvenation and growth," of course, is the foreboding threat of failure—social dissolution will inevitably follow the inability to (re)integrate the archetypal stranger into the community. No wonder, then, that outbreak narratives so often adopt an apocalyptic tone. No wonder, either, that the "ontological tremor" manifest in outbreak narratives smacks of theology: "the uncertainty of the future promoted by the hovering threat of apocalypse inflects communal transformation with preternatural, often religious, significance" (53).

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[16] For more on contagion, see the various contributions to Bashford and Hooker's *Contagion: Historical and Cultural Studies*, Arnold Weinstein's "Afterword: Infection as Metaphor," and the various contributions to the special issue of *American Literary History* on "Contagion and Culture."

In flu discourse, the concept of the healthy carrier barely registers. There are only a small number of explicit references to it. The reason for this no doubt has to do with the fact that there were no laboratory tests that could confirm whether or not someone had the flu. Thus, although social responsibility was advocated during the flu epidemic, there is little sense in flu discourse of any implied intentionality (Wald 3). Nor, as a result, does it register an obsession over an epidemiological index case. Unlike the early days of HIV/AIDS, for instance, the flu did not strike at a seemingly clearly delineated group of people like the so-called 4-H club: "homos, heroin addicts, Haitians, and hookers" (Treichler 53).[17] It did, in fact, disproportionately affect the young and healthy, though the reason for this remains a mystery. More importantly, unlike the marginalized groups of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, there was no specific behavior attached to the flu that was considered objectionable.

However, the absence of a patient zero—the flu's version of a Typhoid Mary, call him *Guillermo Gripe*—does not mean the logic of contagion fails to register in flu discourse. During the second epidemic wave, Portuguese workers returning home passed through Spain. Although Spanish laborers trod the same path, it was the former who were viewed suspiciously by Spanish physicians. The othering of foreigners did not, however, reach apocalyptic proportions. To quote Arnold Weinstein, Spaniards were not "obsessed with the 'plague logic,' the suspicion that particular groups [were] secretly boring their way into [Spanish] society, jeopardizing [their] security, poised to strike [them] in [their] collective vital organs" (103). In short, one finds stigmatizing in flu discourse, though it would be difficult to speak of scapegoats.

[17] Treichler gets the expression from reporter David Black.

In this sense, although the "Spanish" flu epidemic was understood in many ways as a threat to the nation, there are important ways in which its scope was limited. For instance, it rarely made front page news and often was lumped together with other maladies in a broader context of health-related preoccupations. As I have intimated elsewhere in this introduction, WWI and Spain's internal sociopolitical problems overshadowed the epidemic. In this sense, it was perceived as symptomatic of deep structural problems then plaguing Spain (and Europe in general). The epidemic was merely one of myriad crises facing the country, and some of these were considered to be more profound. Nor was the nature or scope of the epidemic sufficient to call into question the epistemological tools used to study it.[18] Rather, it was forcibly fitted into the prevailing scientific framework. Thus, although it was "responsible for the first bitter blow inflicted on triumphant bacteriology," as Eugenia Tognotti has argued, it never challenged the paradigmatic validity of the science of bacteriology (97).[19] Nor did it usher in a new disease paradigm situated between those of tuberculosis in the nineteenth century and cancer in the later twentieth.[20]

The impact of the epidemic was also mitigated by the short duration of each of its waves, which reinforced perceptions of it as ephemeral. Any sense of foreboding was at best sporadic and short-lived, being limited primarily to the second wave, and even then, it shows up in relation to distinct geographical locations, not the entire nation. In this regard, I would note that both Madrid and Barcelona suffered relatively milder second

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[18] Contrast the "Spanish" flu, in this regard, with HIV/AIDS (Rosenberg 287-92).

[19] In invoking Kuhn's notion of paradigm shifts in science, I am not suggesting that an epidemic must produce such a shift to be considered a significant or serious event. It is interesting, however, that with so many momentous advancements in science in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the "Spanish" flu did not cause more questioning of the status quo approach to epidemics.

[20] See Susan Sontag's *Illness as Metaphor* for a discussion of the tuberculosis and cancer paradigms. Although she does not explicitly use the term, the notion permeates her text.

waves compared to other parts of Spain. Given their prominence in the news industry, it should come as no surprise that coverage of the second epidemic wave would reflect this fact. Taken together, the evanescence and superficiality of the epidemic (i.e., the idea that it was a symptom of a larger crisis rather than a crisis in and of itself) keep in check the mythic proportions that Wald attributes to outbreak narratives. Ultimately, the epidemic evidenced social crisis, though it portended no apocalypse.

In addition to the scholarly work on epidemics that I have cited above, the current academic context has witnessed the rise of the "medical humanities" and "narrative medicine."[21] A brief discussion of the aims of the literature in these fields will help to further delineate my own project. NYU's webpage on the medical humanities defines it as "an interdisciplinary field of humanities (literature, philosophy, ethics, history and religion), social science (anthropology, cultural studies, psychology, sociology), and the arts (literature, theater, film, and visual arts) *and their application to medical education and practice*" (my emphasis).[22] Similarly, Rita Charon has written that "narrative medicine offers…a disciplined and deep set of conceptual frameworks—mostly from literary studies, and especially from narratology—that give us theoretical means to understand *why* acts of doctoring are not unlike acts of reading, interpreting, and writing and *how* such things as reading fiction and writing ordinary narrative prose about our patients help to *make us better doctors*" (my emphasis on the final phrase). As these two

[21] Howard Brody's *Stories of Sickness* (the second edition) remains one of the most lucid studies of these new fields of inquiry. See also Arthur Kleinman's *The Illness Narratives*. Kleinman was the first (to my knowledge) to distinguish between illness, disease, and sickness. The first refers to "the innately human experience of symptoms and suffering" (4). *Disease*, on the other hand, corresponds to the clinical perspective and means "an alteration in biological structure or functioning" (5-6). Lastly, the term *sickness* suggests "the understanding of a disorder in its generic sense across a population in relation to macrosocial…forces" (6).

[22] The website houses a variety of valuable resources including annotations of artistic works that deal with illness in various ways, syllabi of courses taught in the field, and a blog.

comments suggest, one general thrust of the type of scholarship being done in these fields involves bringing humanistic modes of inquiry to bear on clinical encounters in order to re-humanize the practice of medicine—a glowing testament to the humanities at work in the world.[23]

A subset of critical literature in these fields deals with illness narratives. In *Reconstructing Illness: Studies in Pathography*, Anne Hunsaker Hawkins defines the pathography, her term for illness narratives, as "a form of autobiography or biography that describes personal experiences of illness, treatment, and sometimes death" (1). Dating from the second half of the twentieth century, they seem to be a response to contemporary medical practice and its tendency to treat patients less as wholes than as a collection of parts and processes. Over and against this fragmenting and, ultimately, dehumanizing thrust of contemporary medical practice, pathographies place the patient front and center: "Pathography, then, returns the voice of the patient to the world of medicine, a world where that voice is too rarely heard, and it does so in such a way as to assert the phenomenological, the subjective, and the experiential side of illness" (12). Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan has similarly noted that the attention illness narratives give to the body as opposed to the medium of language constitutes "their special contribution to the age-old problem (and challenge) of narrating the unnarratable" (no pagination). The focus on the body is key, for as Gay Becker (whose insights Rimmon-Kenan develops in her essay) has noted, "our understanding of ourselves and the world begins with our reliance on the orderly functioning of our bodies" (12). Rita Charon has similarly argued

[23] See Rita Charon's *Narrative Medicine* for an example of the type of literature aimed at improving health care. Kathryn Montgomery Hunter's *Doctors' Stories* is less pedagogically oriented, though valuable for elucidating the narrative structure of the practice of medicine. Marjorie Garber highlights examples of the humanities at work in the world in her essay "Good to Think With."

that health care professionals have a profound duty to "acknowledge the inviolability of the patient's body as a locus of the person's self" (*Narrative Medicine* 86).

To read this critical literature alongside news coverage of the "Spanish" flu is to recognize a dearth in the latter of either descriptions of diseased individuals or their stories. In this sense, what interests me about the epidemic is what this absence of (embodied) patients from the cultural narrative of it suggests for our understanding of flu discourse and, more broadly, Spanish culture at the time. It seems to me that flu discourse privileges *collective* experience of the epidemic (witness the plethora of news coverage) over *individual* experience of it (witness the lack of pathographies).[24] In the cultural narrative of the epidemic, then, the "I" that is so prominent in illness narratives gives way to the collective "we" of Spaniards, and, by extension, the material body of the former to the implied body of the latter. Thus, mine is less an ethnographic study of lives in process than an exploration of this collective identity, or, to be more precise, Spanish national identity.[25] The focus of the former is on embodied subjects, mine on the imagined subjectivity of the body politic. In this sense, "Spanish" flu discourse differs from an early period of AIDS discourse when, as Paula Treichler has noted, the latter devolved into a battle over the gay male body (11–41). My point, ultimately, is that unlike other diseases, the flu operated, *for individuals*, on the level of having, not being. There is no metaphorical pressure to conflate one's disease and one's identity, as Sontag maintains there is with tuberculosis and cancer.[26] (Incidentally, this is one reason the epidemic could not, or at least did not, lead to a distinct disease paradigm).

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[24] Although it lies outside the scope of this study, it would be interesting to read Josep Pla's *El Quadern Gris* in light of the scholarly literature on illness narratives.
[25] For more on lives in process, see Charlotte Linde's *Life Stories*.
[26] See also Brody (82-83).

At the same time, this does not mean that individual, material bodies remain unaffected by flu discourse. As I will show in the next chapter, strategies aimed at containing the epidemic basically amounted to techniques for controlling how people used their bodies. In other words, the intervention measures taken invariably impinged on human behavior. If this manner of speaking recalls Foucault's thinking on bio-politics and governmentality, this is not without reason. As I read the news coverage of the epidemic, I was struck with how regularly people were reduced to a numerical or statistical index of the larger population. To offer just one example, for me the most illustrative, I would point out the numerous times when reports about the epidemic are reduced to two figures, morbidity and mortality. So, for instance, one finds examples like the following from October 21, 1918, in *El Liberal*:

> En Elda se extiende la epidemia. Ayer hubo 200 casos con algunas defunciones.
>
> En Benisan, 15 y 2.
>
> En Benidorm, 8 y 1.
>
> En Bihar, 6 y 2.

In total, information is given for 23 towns. Bodies, and bodily control, thus function somewhat differently in flu discourse than, say, in the imaginary plague of hysteria in *fin de siglo* Argentina where, according to Gabriella Nouzeilles, "doctors systematically and meticulously rewrote the symptomatic inscriptions of hysteria as fables of control" in order to subjugate women to the patriarchal order ("Imaginary" 72). I say somewhat differently because I will show in chapter three that flu discourse does not always reduce bodies to numerical functions. Qualitative categories like gender impact imagined subjectivity as much as they do embodied subjects.

Having outlined the general parameters of my study, I now want to summarize the arguments I will make in the next three chapters. Because so little scholarship exists in English about Spain's experience of the 1918–19 epidemic, I have tried to capture in **chapter one** a sense of how the epidemic developed. In other words, I give a summary view of what narratologists would call the story of the epidemic. At the same time, I recognize Cheryl Mattingly's caution that "[l]iterary theorists, historians, sociolinguists, and others whose primary concerns are written and oral texts have not investigated the structure of lived experience and thus the distinctions between life and art rest on far too simple a view of how life-in-time is experienced" (44). Given my training in the analysis of (primarily) literary texts, the temptation is to *reduce* news coverage to literature and view the participants in the epidemic as *merely* characters. Provided I can keep in check the problems implied by the terms *reduce* and *merely*, however, the tools of narrative analysis can emphasize features of flu discourse heretofore unnoticed by scholars, and therefore shed new light on Spanish culture of the early 20th century.

Keeping in mind Mattingly's caution, I have found her concept of narrative drama useful for dealing with the idiosyncrasies of news texts (as opposed to literary texts). According to Mattingly, narrative dramas have two key features: "One is the collision between expectations and unfolding events….A second is the development of desire. Drama is heightened when what happens really matters" (154). The value of the concept of narrative drama is its ability to preserve what Mattingly calls the "emergent meaning" of events (44). What distinguishes literary fiction (with some exceptions) from newspapers, as Anderson has so presciently noted, is the lack of a coherent plot in the latter. So even though I may be able to read news coverage of the epidemic with some

sense of how it begins and ends—a sense that comes from my historiographical readings on the matter—it is important to remember that Spaniards experienced the epidemic in real time. And it is the experience of the epidemic in real time—Mattingly speaks of "life-in-time" (44)—that the news coverage captures, however imperfectly. The expression *narrative drama* thus communicates both desire for structure and its perceived lack.

To outline the story of the "Spanish" flu is thus to detail how meaning emerges in response to the epidemic. In this light, I make two related arguments in chapter one. The first is that the initial diagnosis of the epidemic pathogen as the flu induces a cognitive crisis. To adopt Mattingly's language, this crisis is produced by the collision between Spaniards' expectations of how the epidemic would play out—expectations that stemmed from the assumption that the flu was a benign, mundane illness—and their actual experience of it as it unfolded. In fact, one could speak of two complementary crises: the empirical experience of the epidemic and the failure of language to explain this experience. I am reminded of Dino Felluga's assertion that "one must…have faith, so to speak, in language's ability finally to determine some relatively stable meaning in the communicative process" (no pagination). It was precisely this faith that Spaniards lost in the official version of the epidemic and it was this loss of faith that produced different discursive reactions. One such reaction—and this constitutes the second argument I make in chapter one—was the implicit construction of and distinction between an "epidemic Spain" and a "sanitary Spain" by the Spanish press. In showing how these two opposing entities come into being, I will concentrate on how the press situates medical professionals, politicians (in the generic sense), the Spanish public, and its own

institution in relation to each other and to these two Spains. In the context of the epidemic crisis, the press attempted rhetorically to stabilize the social order, which the flu had destabilized, by organizing these groups in a top-down hierarchy, one that basically supported the status quo, but which also held to the fire the feet of the institutional powers who failed to work in support of Spain during its hour of need.

If chapter one focuses on elements of both the story and the narrative discourse of the "Spanish" flu, chapters two and three deal predominantly with the latter. In **chapter two**, I will show how the figure of Don Juan was invoked to fill the cognitive vacuum created by the flu diagnosis. Specifically, I will argue that Don Juan embodies the tension inherent in flu discourse and therefore can mediate the epidemic crisis. Unlike the figure of the *flu*, Don Juan can account for both the supposedly benign nature of the epidemic disease and the catastrophe it produced. I take this tension between benignity and catastrophe to be a manifestation of the dialectical tension between similarity and difference that James Mandrell says Don Juan embodies. To offer a more familiar example, consider the two most canonical pieces (in Spain) about the famed *burlador*—Tirso's *El burlador de Sevilla* (1630) and Zorrilla's *Don Juan Tenorio* (1844). In both works, Don Juan is simultaneously a member of the noble class which maintains the social order and the source of the threat to that order. In this way, he embodies the tension between similarity (being *of* the social order) and difference (being a threat *to* the social order). *Mutatis mutandi*, as a metaphor for the flu, Don Juan can mediate the crisis induced by the flu diagnosis because of this dual nature. The mechanism involved in making this successful is what Mark Turner calls blending.

Turner discusses the cognitive value of blending in the context of double-scope stories, which he defines as stories that result from the blending, or combining, of elements from two disparate stories into a third. The value of double-scope stories is that they possess "emergent structure and meaning" (24) that have "inferential consequences for the real story," in other words, real life (17). To depict the "Spanish" flu as a Don Juan figure is thus to combine elements of the story of the epidemic with the story of Don Juan in order to produce a third story, in the case of the epidemic, the *soldado de Nápoles* story. *Soldado de Nápoles* was a nickname given to the flu in the early stages of the epidemic. It comes from a popular song from José Serrano's *zarzuela*, *La canción del olvido*, which debuted in Madrid in March of 1918. As it turns out, *La canción del olvido* is a period version of the Don Juan story. In fact, it adopts many of the conventions found in Zorrilla's *Don Juan Tenorio*: the protagonist who is a *burlador* (Captain Leonello, the eponymous *soldado de Nápoles*), bribed maids, duels between rivals, the all-important letter, and a lighthearted version of the famous sofa scene. The *soldado de Nápoles* nickname serves two important cognitive functions. The first is that, unlike the term *flu*, it gives the epidemic pathogen a cognitively satisfactory name, a point attested to by the numerous news reports that use it as a title. Steven G. Kellman has called titles "an attempt to impose some order on the vast field [an author] is surveying" (155). Imposing discursive order on the "Spanish" flu is precisely what the *soldado de Nápoles* accomplishes.

The second cognitive function that the *soldado de Nápoles* serves has to do with *La canción del olvido* as a double-scope story, and the cultural implications of the Don Juan figure. If news coverage of the epidemic lacks plot structure, as I mentioned, this is

precisely what *La canción del olvido* provides. Put otherwise, in *La canción del olvido* Spaniards find a narrative template with which to structure their experience of the flu epidemic. And of the structuring elements it provides, none is more important than the sense of an ending. Peter Brooks has affirmed that "we are able to read present moments—in literature, and by extension, in life—as endowed with narrative meaning only because we read them in anticipation of the structuring power of those endings that will retrospectively give them the order and significance of plot" (94).[27] The one thing about which no one during the epidemic had any sense was precisely how it would end. This open-ended future must have added immensely to people's anxiety. In addition to serving a cognitive function, then, it may well be that the *soldado de Nápoles* story served a psychological and sociopsychological purpose as well. Just as *La canción del olvido* ends with the felicitous union of Captain Leonello and Rosina, his love interest, so, too, the implication would be: would the epidemic end felicitously? What makes the double-scope story of the *soldado de Nápoles* so important is that it actualizes certain psychocultural mechanisms associated with the Don Juan figure. Historically speaking, the way Spaniards resolve the dialectical tension that Don Juan embodies reveals the cultural values that underscore their communal identity. (One can access this working-through process in the literature about Don Juan produced in a given period). Therefore, the discursive connection between Don Juan and the flu epidemic is suffused with a concern for Spanish values and (national) identity. In other words, the ending suggested

[27] The problem of narrative beginnings and endings in Spanish literature is taken up by Hazel Gold in *The Reframing of Realism* (esp. chapters 1 and 2).

by the *soldado de Nápoles* double-scope story seems preset to reaffirm national values and identity.[28]

In **chapter three**, I take up the task of articulating just what this national identity looks like. Specifically, I turn to the editorial cartoons produced in response to the epidemic to show how the implied reader of flu discourse—who I take to be the expression of the ideal Spanish subject—is marked by class, gender, and culture (i.e., the high/low divide). To do this, I first discuss the aesthetic place of editorial cartoons in early 20th-century Spain. For José Francés, the most voluble apologist of Spanish *caricatura*, editorial cartoons had both an aesthetic value and a didactic function. In fact the two were intertwined. Since artists had privileged access to knowledge about the world, the masses could acquire cultural sensibility by viewing their works in expositions. This sensibility would then allow them to appreciate the works of art displayed in museums, those bastions of bourgeois cultural authority. In short, this cyclical process reveals a dynamic whereby editorial cartoons merely recreated bourgeois subjects. Not surprisingly, in the editorial cartoons about the epidemic, the implied reader/viewer is upper-class and male. The Spanish nation as imagined at the time of the "Spanish" flu is thus a bourgeois construct, masculinist and class-based.

[28] Turner suggests an intimate connection between double-scope stories and nationalism: "Nationalism, like religion, depends on such compressed, double-scope stories for its existence, which is why robust nationalism, like religion, did not come into existence until after human beings evolved the capacity for double-scope blending" (16).

Chapter 1: A Tale of Two Spains: The "Spanish" Flu as Emerging Crisis and the Struggle to Explain and Contain It

On May 21, 1918, *El Liberal* published a scant article titled "¿Se puede vivir? La enfermedad de moda." It was likely the first in Spain to report on the "Spanish" flu.[29] The first words read: "Desde hace unos días, Madrid se halla bajo los efectos de una epidemia, leve por fortuna; pero que, por las trazas, se propone matar a los médicos a fuerza de trabajo." As a sign of how mild the epidemic was, patients were confined to bed for all of three or four days. Interestingly enough, it seemed to be doing most of its damage in theaters. The Reina Victoria, Novedades, and Cómico theaters were all besieged by "[la] fiebre gripal—así la denominan…[la cual] causa más desazones a los empresarios que el 'tifus, la más terrible enfermedad de las taquillas. Como esto siga en aumento, no habrá quien pueda cantar aquello de 'Soldado de Nápoles.'"[30] The following day *El Sol* and *ABC* published their respective first stories about the epidemic: the former, "¿Cuál es la causa? Una epidemia en Madrid;" the latter, "Epidemia benigna. La enfermería en Madrid." As per their titles, both sources limit the location of the epidemic (at this stage) to the capital city. Beatriz Echeverri has noted how the epidemic tended to spread outwards from urban centers, with Madrid, a central node in Spain's travel grid (to say nothing of its geographic and political centrality), playing a major role in the initial spread of the epidemic ("Seen from Spain" 176–77). *El Sol* initially distinguished between the barracks and (implicitly) the civilian population only to conclude that, in fact, "no existe diferencia entre la dolencia observada en los cuarteles por nuestros

[29] There is some indication that articles in March were reporting on the epidemic, though it was not until May that there was a 'press consciousness' of the epidemic as such. Porras Gallo cites a May 20 article in *El Sol*, though my own investigation suggests the article dates from May 22.
[30] I discuss the *soldado* in greater detail in chapter two.

informadores y la que aqueja desde hace días a todo Madrid." Both newspapers specify the symptoms associated with the disease (as did *El Liberal*) and both affirm its mildness, a point *El Sol* repeats twice. In fact, the disease was so mild that "los facultativos de los Cuerpos de [la] guarnición…no han considerado preciso ordenar el ingreso en el hospital de ninguno de los atacados" ("Epidemia benigna," *ABC*, 22 May 1918). Moreover, both sources mention one of the early etiological theories of the epidemic: "la remoción del suelo y subsuelo para ejecutar las obras del Metropolitano y del alcantarillado" ("Epidemia benigna," *ABC*, 22 May 1918). Madrid was installing its first underground metro line between the Cuatro Caminos and Sol stops and it seems there were more than a few who felt this new mark of Spanish modernity was not without its pestiferous repercussions.

One interesting distinction between the respective stories of *El Sol* and *ABC* relates to how each frames knowledge about the epidemic. For instance, the *El Sol* article begins with terminology that reflects uncertainty: "*Parece que* entre los soldados de la guarnición de Madrid se están dando muchos casos de [una] enfermedad *no diagnosticada todavía* por los médicos" ("¿Cuál es la causa?" 22 May 1918, emphasis added). By the middle of the story, however, the language of the article reflects greater certitude: "*Indudablemente*, no existe diferencia entre la dolencia observada en los cuarteles…y la que aqueja…a todo Madrid" (emphasis added). Added to the conviction of the adverb "indudablemente" is the matter-of-fact force communicated through the present indicative form of *existir* and, in the next sentence, *tratarse*—"No se trata de una enfermedad grave." Ignorance of the etiology of the epidemic, it would seem, did not preclude making a value judgment about its virulence. Thereafter in the article follows a

list of symptoms, which further points to knowledge about the epidemic rather than ignorance. The article ends with the authoritative prescription of medical doctors: "Los médicos prescriben la abstinencia de frutas, verduras y legumbres. En general, el primer cuidado debe ser el buen funcionamiento del estómago." The concluding reference to doctors contrasts significantly with that at the beginning of the article. Not only is incertitude replaced by certitude, but doctors are there to shepherd the change, a gesture that throws into greater relief the *todavía* of the first sentence. Bound up in the term is the hope that doctors would ultimately solve the riddle of the at that point inchoate flu epidemic.[31]

If the article in *El Sol* reveals a move from ignorance to knowledge about the epidemic, *ABC* takes the opposite tack. Unlike *El Sol*, *ABC* actually includes a diagnosis, flu, even if it attributes the diagnosis to the doctors (?) in the barracks. Then, after noting how the number of *atacados* "aumenta por días," *ABC* refers to the "extraña epidemia en el Cuerpo de Correos" ("Epidemia benigna," 22 May 1918). The paper then cites the etiological theory of an anonymous authority: "Hay *quien* opina que es causa de…" (emphasis added). Lastly, the final paragraph begins with the expression *parece que*, which, together with the unidentified *quien*, augments the tone of the term *extraña*, all three highlighting the uncertainty associated with the epidemic. Consequently, this uncertainty belies an anxious concern that the epidemic might get worse, even leading to death. The last sentence of the article reads: "*Parece que* la inmunidad se consigue a *poca costa*, mediante las *sencillas* precauciones que consisten en no ingerir frutas, legumbres crudas ni ensalada, y *hasta ahora* no existe serio motivo de alarma, porque la

[31] If one considers the historical context, such hopes and faith were spot on. It is precisely the failure of medical science to solve the "Spanish" flu riddle that Eugenia Tognotti takes up in her article on "scientific triumphalism."

enfermedad, aunque molesta, *no ha determinado* ninguna defunción" (emphasis added). The conjunction of the specific temporal references (*hasta ahora* and the present perfect of *no ha determinado*), qualitative assessments (*poca costa* and *sencillas*), and the uncertainty of the generic, subject-less *parece que* serves to undermine knowledge about the epidemic as related in the article. As a result of this undermined knowledge, each of these expressions threatens to become its opposite, resulting in a sentence something more like the following: "La inmunidad se consigue a *gran costa*, mediante las *complicadas* precauciones que consisten en no ingerir frutas, legumbres crudas ni ensalada, y *desde ahora en adelante* existe serio motivo de alarma porque la enfermedad, *sí va a determinar* defunciones." In a sense, this hypothetical sentence reflects the message of the article when one traces therein the evolution from knowledge about the epidemic to ignorance of it. Any anxiety produced by the epidemic is, in this regard, inversely proportional to knowledge, specifically of the medical/scientific type, about it.

The last of Spain's mass-circulated newspapers to write about the epidemic was the Barcelona-based *La Vanguardia*. The brief piece, titled "La epidemia reinante" and published on May 25, 1918, was little more than a verbatim citation of the "ilustre doctor Marañón." (The journalist did provide the opening sentence.) Reiterating similar points made in the sources coming out of the nation's capital, he, too, located the epidemic epicenter in Madrid. Taking the middle ground between *El Sol*, which offered no diagnosis for the epidemic pathogen, and *ABC*, which mentioned it was being called the flu in the military barracks, Marañón declared the disease to be "clínicamente parecida á la *grippe*." Confident he would soon be vindicated in his diagnostic choice, he noted how the discovery of the pathogen remained unaccomplished only "por el momento." He

concluded by reiterating what was fast becoming a truism: “Se trata, pues, como ya han adelantado los periódicos, de una epidemia leve.”

Sociologist Beatriz Echeverri has noted how the epidemic tended to spread outwards from urban centers (“Seen from Spain,” 176–77). Nowhere was this more apparent than in the first epidemic wave. As all of the initial stories about the epidemic indicate, Madrid occupied a central position in flu discourse. Given Madrid’s prominence during the first wave, it is not surprising that, in contrast to the sparse story printed in *La Vanguardia*, *Heraldo de Madrid* published a front page, two-column piece on May 23—“La enfermedad de Madrid.” In the article, written by one Dr. Eleizegui, some of the major participants in flu discourse begin to take shape. After repeating the same song about how the epidemic “reviste caracteres de benignidad extrema, a pesar de su gran poder de diffusion,” he states: “Hacemos tales afirmaciones al comenzar esta información para tranquilizar al vecindario, que por la forma brusca de presentarse el mal y la gran cantidad de individuos a que ataca, produce cierto temor que de ningún modo está justificado.” Despite occasional exceptions to the contrary—as when one reads of doctors who abandon their posts, or neighbors who lend each other a helping hand—the implicit rule of “Spanish” flu discourse is that physicians and other scientific/medical professionals are represented as bastions of reason who apply their knowledge for the greater public good, often in collaboration with other like-minded rational subjects. Regular people (*el vecindario*), on the other hand, are portrayed as a panic-prone mass subject to their own irrational impulses and a danger to be contained. I will flesh out this dichotomy in greater detail below when I turn to the second epidemic wave. For now I want to discuss the beginning of the epidemic in more general terms.

Of Beginnings and Meanings

In his contribution to *Narrative Dynamics* ("Beginnings"), Edward Said has written that "[w]ithout at least a sense of a beginning, nothing can really be done, much less ended…[a]nd the more crowded and confused a field appears, the more a beginning, fictional or not, seems imperative. A beginning gives us the chance to do work that compensates us for the tumbling disorder of brute reality that will not settle down" (265). The compensation, I assume, is whatever it is that gets done thanks to a beginning. In the case of narrative, one who reads is compensated with (the potential for) meaning. We might say that, in providing closure, endings actualize meaning, whereas beginnings project a desire for this closure/meaning. It is in this sense that Cheryl Mattingly defines incipient plots as those which "[project] onto the future…a kind of active wish for what should come to pass" (157). Modifying Mattingly's language somewhat, what I want to propose is that the first news stories to report on the epidemic function as a beginning and therefore provide us with its inchoate plot structure. To be sure, the meaning of the epidemic will emerge as the narrative drama of it unfolds, but this does not change the fact that some sort of meaning is already implied by the inchoate plot provided in the beginning by the initial news coverage. For the most part, the entire first wave of the epidemic can be considered its beginning because there are few qualitative changes in how the flu manifests that modify the emergent meaning of the epidemic. (News coverage drops off sharply after June 7, which means the epidemic as a newsworthy event lasted barely more than two weeks).

Given that first-wave news coverage constitutes the beginning of the epidemic, and given that beginnings constitute inchoate plots, I maintain that the way the epidemic

is characterized during the first epidemic wave establishes an interpretive precedent that will impact how it gets processed both during the first wave and in subsequent waves. The flu's perceived "benignidad extrema," which Eleizegui and others noted, will thus condition representations of the epidemic in the press and, by extension, perceptions of it by the Spanish reading public. During the first wave, this *benignidad* served to diffuse the anxiety caused by the fact that its etiology remained a mystery. However, when Ruiz Falcó reportedly isolated Pfeiffer's bacillus (the pathogen believed to cause the flu) the mystery was seemingly solved. Not only did Ruiz Falcó's discovery provide symbolic closure to the first epidemic wave—news reports drop off sharply after June 7, when his discovery was announced in the pages of *El Sol*—, it seemed to etch in stone the benign nature of the epidemic. When the second wave began, however, the lively public exchanges between physicians positing different etiological explanations—a characteristic of the first wave until Ruiz Falcó's discovery—were replaced by practically universal unanimity among the medical community. The epidemic disease was the flu, end of discussion. Porras Gallo has commented on the curious fact that the medical debate "tenía mayor amplitud" during the first wave than during subsequent waves, noting that the Real Academia de Medicina's debates took place behind closed doors during the second wave of the epidemic after being open to the public during the first (*Ciudad en crisis* 294, 305). The Real Academia's *volte face* highlights the major distinction between the thrust of the first epidemic wave and that of the second. In the former, emphasis was placed on explaining the epidemic; in the latter, on containing it. The remainder of this chapter will be dedicated to elucidating these two endeavors. After sketching the first-wave debates about the identity of the pathogen, which culminate in

Ruiz Falcó's discovery, I will then discuss the major features of second-wave flu discourse.

As I mentioned in the introduction, the press implicitly distinguishes between an "epidemic Spain" and a "sanitary Spain." What I will show is how discursive evolution from the former to the latter passes through three distinct phases. The first phase is the epidemic's perceived threat to the nation via its borders. Wage-earning Portuguese laborers returning home from France through Spain were suspected of bringing with them various diseases, including the "Spanish" flu. As a result of the increased virulence of the flu during the second epidemic wave, Spaniards closed ranks, stigmatizing in the process those they perceived as dirty others. In response to the growing threat posed by the epidemic, the press demanded a *dictadura sanitaria* (phase two). In 1918, public health in Spain needed a major organizational overhaul, a fact the epidemic rendered all too glaringly obvious. Although epidemiological data show no major difference in the severity of the epidemic in Spain versus other, more advanced countries, the press's rhetorically-charged call for a public health dictatorship compensated for self-perceptions as a backward nation—as the hackneyed phrase quipped, Europe stopped at the Pyrenees.

Whether in response to the press or not, local and national officials took numerous measures to mitigate the epidemic. These steps constitute the material foundation on which the "sanitary Spain" was built, and represent the third phase. In tracing the evolutionary development of "sanitary Spain," my goal is to recuperate a sense of the *story* of the epidemic during the most challenging wave. In the final section of the chapter, titled "Towards a Sanitized Discourse?," I will discuss more explicitly the roles and reactions of the major *participants* in the epidemic. Not surprisingly, as Charles

Briggs and Clara Mantini-Briggs have noted in response to a cholera epidemic in 1990s Venezuela, the social destabilization caused by the epidemic led to "competing narratives [that sought to] characterize the same events in quite different ways" (8). Physicians, politicians, and the press all jockeyed for position in an attempt to preserve their place in the "sanitary Spain." Physicians became social saviors, even martyrs, selflessly placing themselves between the Spanish public and the invading epidemic. Moreover, they deflected any criticism of their profession toward the organization of public health in Spain, blaming politicians for figuratively tying their hands when they were most needed. Not surprisingly, the government was interested in coming across as a dutiful social servant, genuinely interested in helping its constituents, and diligently engaged to this end. Similarly, the press engaged in its own self-defense, insisting that it was, and had always, operated in the public's best interest when reporting on the epidemic. Ironically enough, the implied interlocutor of each of these groups was the Spanish public, the one party without a voice in flu discourse. Despite being silenced, however, the importance of the Spanish public in this sense reveals just how powerful the concept of the imagined community is.

Toward a Definitive Diagnosis

As I noted earlier, news coverage of the first epidemic wave tended to emphasize the benign nature of the flu. *ABC* summed up the perspective nicely when it reported that "[l]a enfermedad no tendrá importancia, los laboratorios y la Junta de Sanidad no cesan de hablar de microbios benignos y casi inofensivos" ("La epidemia reinante," 29 May 1918). To be sure, the high incidence of infection, what epidemiologists refer to as disease morbidity, did cause some inconveniences, as when *El Sol* reported a shortage of

simones and *manuelas* (i.e., purveyors of taxis and the taxi carts themselves, respectively) and the scandal of price gouging of lemons ("La fiebre de los tres días," 28 May 1918, 1).[32] Or when a political debate about the general strike of the previous August was postponed because Srs. Villanueva, Alba, and Dato were all sick.[33] But generally speaking, no one seemed too preoccupied with the epidemic. This state of affairs no doubt contributed to doctors' willingness to debate openly the diagnosis of the disease in the pages of the lay press. For if there was one thing that received as much attention as the fact that the epidemic was benign, it was that its identity remained a debated question.

Early forays by physicians into the popular press included Francisco Huertas, who, in his brief "nota clínica" (*El Liberal*, 23 May 1918), communicated some of the basic features of "Spanish" flu discourse. He begins by reiterating the "carácter benigno con que comenzó [la epidemia]," though he seems to change gears suggesting that "por su carácter difusivo [la epidemia]…justifica la alarma de Madrid." By the end of his clinical note, however, he has reordered the syntactical relationship between alarm and benignity: "En resumen: aunque muy difusible y difundida, la enfermedad, es benigna." This new syntactical relationship between the benign flu and its alarming diffusion suggests that the former outweighs the latter in importance. The conjunction *aunque*, which mitigates the source of the epidemic alarm, further emphasizes this hierarchy. The middle paragraphs offer a clue as to why Huertas might have ended his clinical note mitigating what he saw as justification for alarm. He states that the "aspecto clínico" of the disease justified the diagnosis as "genuinamente gripal" and adds that "[e]n breve los

[32] Because lemons were such a basic food product, price gouging in this case reflects the degree to which the epidemic was disrupting daily life.
[33] These men were major players in Spanish politics. At the time, Dato was Ministro del Estado and Alba, the Ministro de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes. Villanueva had, at various times, occupied such positions as the Ministro de Hacienda, Ministro de Agricultura, and Presidente del Congreso.

trabajos de laboratorio pondrán de manifiesto la especificidad etiológica." Huertas's faith in the dominant medical paradigm of the time apparently informed his optimism vis-à-vis the epidemic. Francisco Aguilar, medical director of the Instituto Cervantes, shared Huertas's opinion: "la *grippe* es una enfermedad en cuyo cuadro clínico caben perfectamente todos los caracteres y síntomas que se observan en esta epidemia" ("La enfermedad del día," *El Sol*, 25 May 1918). Ironically, however, the concept had such elasticity for him that one wonders whether some readers, even the medically uninitiated, might not have questioned its functionality: "[l]a *grippe* es el prototipo de las pandemias. Su cosmopolitismo no es igualado, ni superado, por ninguna otra infección…en cada epidemia [adopta] una característica especial."

The first extended exposition of the epidemic was published by Gustavo Pittaluga. Pittaluga, an Italian, came to Spain in 1902 to present his work on malaria (*paludismo*) at the 14th International Medical Conference. He would continue to work on malaria throughout his professional life. Enamored with Spain, he was naturalized as a citizen in 1904 and was appointed head of the disinfection service of the Instituto de Higiene Alfonso XIII in 1905. He later earned the *cátedra* of Parasitology and Tropical Pathology at the University of Madrid in 1911. Together with Gregorio Marañón and Ruiz Falcó, he was sent to France in late 1918 to study the similarities between the flu epidemic there and in Spain. Their report, which I discuss in detail below, was published in early November in various sources. Pittaluga's "Algunas observaciones sobre la enfermedad actual" represents the first attempt to synthesize what was known about the epidemic as of June 1. Recalling the elasticity the flu concept had for Aguilar, he notes the "persistencia de cierta confusión popular entre todas estas formas leves de infecciones

generales, llamadas indiferentemente dengue o *grippe*." For Pittaluga, however, it seemed clear that the epidemic disease was not the flu: "la epidemia que padecemos difiere de la *grippe*, por las siguientes razones fundamentales: a) porque el síndrome (o conjunto de síntomas) es mucho más uniforme…b) por la evolución mucho más rápida; c) por la ausencia casi constante de formas bactéricas identificables con el bacilo de Pfeiffer, agente patógeno de la influenza."[34] It is something of an historical irony that by refusing to accept the flu diagnosis in the absence of definitive bacteriological evidence, Pittaluga would ultimately be on the wrong side of the debate.[35]

In an effort to endow public debate about the epidemic with "la mayor garantía de autoridad," one Dr. Eleizegui solicited and then published the medical opinion of at least nine different doctors in the *Heraldo de Madrid* (4 June 1918, 1). One of these doctors, Huertas, highlighted the importance of the laboratory, much as Pittaluga had done: "El Laboratorio todavía no ha dicho la última palabra, y cuando lo haga seguramente será para robustecer más y más el concepto 'genérico' de influenza" (qtd. in Eleizegui, 4 June 1918, 1). As the linchpin of bacteriology, the laboratory remained the ultimate authority ("la última palabra") in epidemic matters. It alone had the capacity to solidify or modify the extant concept of influenza. As Bruno Latour has said in his *The Pasteurization of France*, the laboratory was the "indisputable fulcrum" in the advancements made by Pasteur (72). If microbes in nature could kill men or animals much larger than themselves, the argument went, it was in the laboratory where "the power ratio is reversed" and microbes are dominated by the laboratory technician (74). The isolation of

[34] Pfeiffer's bacillus, a rod-shaped bacterium, was named after Richard Pfeiffer, the German scientist who first discovered it in 1892 in the context of another flu epidemic.
[35] Referring to Pittaluga, Porras Gallo has written that "la posición de este médico era menos arrogante y más coherente con el nivel de conocimiento que existía en esos momentos en relación con la etiología de la gripe" (*Ciudad en crisis* 300).

a pathogen in the laboratory thus necessarily precedes controlling it. Only then can its impact in nature be attenuated. Thus, for Madrid's Inspector Provincial de Sanidad, José Call, to subordinate the laboratory to the clinic was to boldly privilege the observation of physicians over the insight of the microscope: "los médicos no necesitan seguramente de la intervención del laboratorio para salir de dudas. Esta es sólo de gran importancia para robustecer el criterio clínico" (qtd. in Eleizegui, 4 June 1918, 1). Call's comment recalls Arthur Kleinman's distinction between disease and illness. The former refers to the biomedical understanding of, say, the flu, whereas the latter refers to an individual's experience of it. To be sure, drawing the distinction may have freed physicians (at least in principle) to address the needs of their patients more readily, but it did little to change the symbolic role of the laboratory in flu discourse.

Indeed, in Marañón's correspondence to Eleizegui, he, too, cited the laboratory, though with greater force than anyone else: "Es gripe, porque clínicamente el cuadro es el de la gripe, y porque los análisis bacteriológicos lo confirman, poniendo de relieve la existencia, en los esputos, en los fotitos expulsados durante la tos, etc., de diversos gérmenes (neumococos, estreptococos, meningococos, etc.) y en algunos casos el bacilo de Pfeiffer" (6 June 1918, 1). Marañón was so confident that the matter had been settled that he even resorted to insulting those of a different opinion, particularly lay people: "creo que debemos afirmar rotundamente al público, que mira con cierto desdén nuestras dudas diagnósticas, que la epidemia actual de Madrid es de gripe. Es absurdo pensar en otra cosa." Marañón's impatience ("Es absurdo…") includes not just the Spanish public, but other doctors as well. He accused those who discussed alternative diagnoses of cultivating confusion: "Hablar de otras enfermedades distintas de la gripe, como han

hecho varios médicos en distintos periódicos, supone un deseo evidente de divagar y de contribuir a la confusión pública." Ultimately, Marañón blamed the authors of this confusion, whose signatures gave "una impresión de autoridad," for masking (*enmascarar*) the truth and he dismissed their ideas as "alardes pseudo-científicos."

Published alongside the opinion of Marañón was that of Tomás Maestre y Pérez, of the Laboratorio de Medicina Legal, who simultaneously corroborated the flu diagnosis while discounting the importance of Pfeiffer's bacillus: "Está fuera de duda que la actual gripe no es producida por el bacilo ya clásico de Pfeiffer, pues a malas penas se encuentra este germen en un 10 por 100 de los esputos de los atacados" (qtd. in Eleizegui, 6 June 1918, 2). When alarm about the epidemic first began to spread among Madrid residents (*el vecindario madrileño*), Maestre believed it his duty to dedicate a section of the Laboratorio del Instituto de Medicina Legal to researching the epidemic pathogen, believing that "casi seguramente tendría un microorganismo que la motivara." Although his findings failed to resolve the debate about the nature of the epidemic disease, his remains the most explicit description in the general press of what scientists were seeing under the microscope: "pude apreciar como fenómeno constante la existencia de un bacilo corto y recio, en gran abundancia, que adoptaba, además de presentarse aislado, las formas de diplobacilo y de estreptobacilo de cadena corta, cuatro o cinco eslabones como máximum. Observé también la presencia constante de dos estreptococos de larga serie, uno grueso y otro menudo." Maestre's dismissal of the role of Pfeiffer's bacillus contrasts with the findings of A. Ruiz Falcó, whose supposed discovery of the pathogenic agent responsible for the epidemic brought the first wave, at least symbolically, to an end.

Ruiz Falcó worked at the Instituto de Afonso XIII under the direction of Santiago Ramón y Cajal and was one of the three doctors commissioned to study the flu in France during the second epidemic wave. His findings on the flu were introduced by *El Sol* with these words: "El doctor Ruiz Falcó, uno de los mejores bacteriólogos españoles, ha descubierto el germen de la epidemia actual, que desde hoy queda perfectamente definida, y ha tenido la atención de honrar a *El Sol* con el siguiente artículo." Falcó confessed that he had decided to publish his finding in *El Sol*, as opposed to a professional venue, in part because of recent claims that had contradicted his own:

> Nos hubiéramos limitado a dar cuenta del resultado de nuestro trabajo a la superioridad y a publicarlo en la Prensa profesional, si no se hubiese afirmado recientemente en los periódicos diarios, por informaciones y artículos de personas competentes, y basándose en investigaciones bacteriológicas, que no se encuentra el bacilo de Pfeiffer; que la enfermedad reinante es, por su bacteriología y epidemiología, distinta de la *grippe* o *influenza*…. ("La fiebre de los tres días," 7 June 1918)

That Falcó viewed the professional press and the "superioridad" as too limited an audience for his findings reveals a certain anxiety among doctors to control the terms of the public debate about the epidemic. This anxiety can also be perceived in the language Ruiz Falcó adopts to normalize the pathogen. Thus he notes how "habíamos encontrado la flor bacteriana, que se halla en todas las epidemias de *grippe* o *influenza*…" (italics in original). In a footnote to this phrase, he equated *grippe* and *influenza* with their authentic Castilian counterpart: "*Mejor trancazo, pues éste es el nombre castizo castellano de la enfermedad*" (italics in original). Moreover, in concluding his article he wrote: "En

resumen, tanto la epidemiología como la bacteriología de la enfermedad actual son las de la *grippe*, *influenza* o *trancazo*, como quiera llamarse; pero no enfermedad nueva o no conocida." Ruiz Falcó's use of the term *trancazo*, and his insistence that the flu was not "[una] enfermedad nueva o no conocida," allowed him to discursively translate the pathogen from an unknown, threatening disease into the well-known and therefore less threatening flu. This point is especially important when one considers that *trancazo*—a slang term for the flu specific to Spain—appears only one other time in flu discourse. The language of flu discourse would thus seem to suggest that the "Spanish" flu was indeed "[una] enfermedad nueva."

This, in fact, was the opinion of Ángel Sánchez de Val, whose book, *La Septicemia gripal* (1919), expresses the terms that are ultimately at stake in diagnosing the epidemic as the flu more clearly than any other source. For Sánchez, the epidemic constituted "un *hecho nuevo*" (21). Because of this, he also thought it extremely problematic that the epidemic disease was so casually being called the flu: "La palabra Gripe, lanzada por alguien y aceptada por todos, es quizás la principal culpable [por la entonces reinante confusión sobre la epidemia]; esta palabra despierta en el médico la idea que anteriormente teníamos de la gripe como una infección esencialmente benigna y pasajera" (22–23). As has been shown, the flu was assumed to be both benign and ephemeral, an assumption that had even been codified. In article 152 of the Instrucción General de Sanidad, the disease appeared in the second, not the first group of diseases in terms of severity ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 10 Oct. 1918, 14). For Sánchez de Val, this assumption had two related problems. The first was that it obscured the reality of the epidemic: "todos estos conceptos basados en hechos inactuales, se mezclan con la

realidad del momento, a la que desfiguran" (23). The second was that this disfigured reality caused confusion, which in turn impacted the quality of care people received: "estos conceptos…confunden, impidiendo la apreciación serena de la verdad y ejerciendo sobre el espíritu una efectiva coacción en el momento de adoptar las resoluciones terapéuticas" (23). In many ways, Sánchez de Val frames his study of the epidemic by his meditations on how language had mediated the then recent experience of it.[36] As his use of the verb *lanzar* implies—"La palabra Gripe, lanzada por alguien"—he viewed the flu diagnosis as somewhat haphazard. However, the impact of this haphazardness, as Sánchez so adamantly argued, was anything but insignificant.

In light of the tension between different authorities about the identity of the epidemic pathogen, my argument is that *gripe* served two related purposes in the context of the "Spanish" flu. On one hand, it served as a point of departure from which medical professionals could move forward. In other words, the specific diagnosis implied specific protocol for physicians. The practical need for such a diagnosis was perceived by Call, who, as I noted earlier, detached clinical practice from its dependence on laboratory results. On the other hand, *gripe* also functioned as a diagnostic destination, somewhere physicians and lay persons alike wanted to arrive because the flu was a familiar, benign disease that did not presage an ominous outcome. In both cases, *gripe* served as both a socially and scientifically safe space that allowed lay persons and doctors to marshal a body of knowledge, practices, and assumptions associated with the disease. Having shown how flu discourse arrived at a flu diagnosis by the end of the first epidemic wave,

[36] If the date of A. Salvat y Navarro's prologue offers any clue (January 1919), Sánchez published his book before the epidemic had even passed.

I will now spend the remainder of the chapter dealing with flu discourse from the second epidemic wave.

The Second Epidemic Wave

In the second wave of the epidemic, the lack of conclusive laboratory results continued to vex the medical and scientific community, though there was now greater consensus among doctors. In some ways, their newfound consensus served as a rhetorical ploy that responded to the increased virulence of the flu. Faced with what was now perceived to be a much more serious threat, physicians closed ranks. However, given this change in the flu's severity, identifying the pathogen took a back seat to responding to it. Whatever the technical character of the pathogen proved to be, *flu* became operational shorthand for the epidemic in second-wave flu discourse.

In contrast to the first wave, the epicenter of which was Madrid, the second wave began in the provinces. On September 8, 1918, *El Liberal* reported that the epidemic had appeared in Murcia and Valencia ("Otra vez la gripe"). A week later an unofficial note (*nota oficiosa*) from the Ministerio de Gobernación described "distintos focos en varias provincias…." Although all of the headlines referred explicitly to the return of the *flu*, a September 14 article included references to "una enfermedad que persisten en diagnosticar de disentería" and "[una] enfermedad sospechosa," believed to be exantematic typhus, which had killed someone returning from France. Dysentery was believed to be one of the epidemic diseases then occurring on the border with France. Moreover, the entrance into Spain of "casos sospechosos" was attributed to the opening of the French border to a large group of approximately 400 people, mostly Portuguese. Nevertheless, García Prieto, who would later become President of the Consejo de

Ministros on November 9, denied rumors that cases of cholera had appeared on the border with France. The simultaneous appearance of so many epidemic diseases prompted Martín Salazar, the Inspector General de Sanidad and self-described taciturn man, to break his silence and speak to the press. In his remarks, he emphasized three points: that "la enfermedad sospechosa es la gripe," that the disease along the French border, according to a French government report, was "disentería bacilar," and that for the time being "no hay fundamento serio para sentirse alarmado" ("La epidemia reinante," *El Liberal*, 15 Sept. 1918). Indeed, as far as Salazar was concerned, "se han adoptado todas las precauciones necesarias."

Despite Salazár's perfunctory observations, the press was singing a different tune. In an article titled "La salud en España: Pocas burlas con el 'mal de moda'," *El Sol* noted that "[l]as autoridades sanitarias empiezan a preocuparse del desarrollo de la epidemia."[37] This preoccupation quickly translated into action. None other than Salazar, the highest ranking health official in Spain during the epidemic (his tenure as Inspector General de Sanidad del Reino would last until 1922), was involved in sending a three-man commission to the border with France. The commission was ostensibly charged with assessing the importance of reported cases of dysentery ("La salud pública," *El Liberal* 14 Sept. 1918).[38] On the same day that news about the commission came out, *El Sol* reported that "para evitar la importación de las enfermedades existentes en Francia, se han puesto en función activa todas las estaciones sanitarias de la frontera francesa…."

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[37] A marked change in the tone of flu discourse can be noted by comparing the title of the *El Sol* article to that of the first news article about the epidemic in Spain, *El Liberal*'s "¿Se puede vivir? La enfermedad de moda." The shift from the "*enfermedad* de moda" to the "*mal* de moda" highlights the increased virulence of the flu during the second epidemic wave. Moreover, all of the editorial cartoons that deal with the *enfermedad de moda* date from the first epidemic wave, suggesting that, by the second wave, the assumed superficiality of fashion no longer adequately expressed Spaniards' profound concerns about the epidemic. I discuss these images in greater detail in chapter three.

[38] This was not the same commission sent to study the epidemic in France (*El Sol*, 11 Oct.)

("La salud en España," 14 Sept. 1918).[39] Ten days later (September 24), *El Liberal* reported that Francisco Tello, Salazár's second in command (Subinspector General de Sanidad), had traveled to Portbou "con el objeto de estudiar sobre el terreno las medidas profilácticas que se deben adoptar para evitar la propagación de la epidemia" ("La salud pública" 2).

The simultaneous appearance of various epidemic diseases hailing from France along with the recrudescence of the flu epidemic in Spain also caused concern at the highest levels of government.[40] On September 14, *El Sol* reported that "al enterarse el ministro de la Gobernación del *estado anormal de la salud en España*, telegrafió a los gobernadores de las provincias fronterizas, dándoles instrucciones a fin de evitar que la enfermedad gripal adquiera caracteres graves complicándose con las enfermedades reinantes en Francia" ("La salud en España," emphasis added). Government fears were based not merely on the presence of the flu epidemic, but on the possibility of foreign diseases mixing with it to create a more toxic concoction. The abnormal state of health resulted from the intermingling of germs confirmed for officials that something was indeed fishy with this particular flu.

A day before the Ministerio de Gobernación sent instructions to shore up the borders, the governor of Guipúzcoa had sent a communiqué stating that 46 "portugueses febriles" had arrived and that measures had been taken to assure they arrived in their

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[39] These included the first-class stations of Irún and Portbou and second-class stations in Behovia (Guipúzcoa); La Junquera and Puigcerdá (Gerona); Bosots, Les, and Seo de Urgel (Lérida); Canfranc and Sallent (Huesca); and Dancharinea, Vera, and Valcarlos (Navarra). In terms of resources, all of these stations possessed "estufa de desinfección por vapor, pulverizadores, personal de maquinistas y desinfectores y de cuantos elementos son necesarios para su funcionamiento" (*El Sol*, 14 Sept.). Moreover, the stations at Irún and Portbou had "por su importancia, un personal numeroso de médicos reconocedores, estufas y otros medios de desinfección y un hospital de aislamiento para los enfermos sospechosos."

[40] The second wave of the epidemic first appeared in the provinces of Tarragona, Castellón, and Murcia (Echeverri *Gripe española* 89).

home country "en las mejores condiciones posibles" ("El 'mal de moda,'" *El Sol*, 13 Sept.). This neighborly sentiment would quickly fade from flu discourse as the need to preserve the (health of the) nation took precedence over everything else.

National Borders and Foreign Bodies

The significance of national borders to the question of Spanish national health in second-wave flu discourse is reflected in the attention paid to three cities that otherwise might have been considered of minor significance: Irún, Portbou, and Medina del Campo. Irún and Portbou are the northernmost towns on the Spanish-French border—the former on the Atlantic side, some ten miles east of San Sebastián (the popular summer vacation spot for some of Spain's elite, including the royal family), the latter on the Mediterranean side. Medina del Campo, located some twenty miles southwest of Valladolid, was the last train stop for Portuguese workers heading home. When a government meeting was interrupted by news of a train returning from France *via* Portbou with Spanish workers who had been "attacked" by the epidemic, the decision was made to close the border ("La salud pública," *El Sol*, 22 Sept. 1918). Similarly, bad news from the Portbou area ("las noticias poco gratas") prompted Barcelona politicians to agree to the daily disinfection of public carriages, streetcars, factories, workshops, public spectacle halls, and "todo local donde se congreguen numerosas personas." By September 25, the government had already articulated a six-point protocol for transporting sick Portuguese laborers, which *ABC*, *El Sol* and *El Liberal* all published verbatim. Only those workers with a certified visa issued by a Spanish consulate and which stipulated that they were not proceeding from an infected town ("población epidemiada") were received at the border. Once at the border, they were "reconocidos por los médicos" and detained unless absolutely healthy.

In a gesture that reflects both precaution and fear, those allowed to pass were directed to special train cars where they traveled "incomunicados y sin relación posible con los demás viajeros." Once on their way, the governors of each of the provinces through which they would pass were sent a telegram to ensure that the appropriate medical authorities were present to verify the "incomunicación completa de los coches." When the travelers arrived in Medina del Campo, their train car was separated from the rest and placed on an isolated track until coupled with the train that would take them to Portugal. While waiting, the workers were not allowed to get out of the car, nor could they change cars. When they finally arrived at the Portuguese border, the train cars were disinfected again.

Despite the specificity of the public health protocol vis-à-vis the Portuguese workers, the diligence with which it was followed was vigorously called into question. In fact, during the last few days of September, *ABC* engaged in a passionate campaign against the "nota oficiosa de Gobernación, que pretendía negar certeza a nuestros informes respecto a las expediciones de portugueses que regresan de Francia…," marshalling forth evidence in the form of details, testimonies, and letters received from readers ("La gripe. La salud pública," 29 Sept. 1918, 11). One such letter from Burgos told of a group of Portuguese returning to their country. While in transit, someone died, and the Portuguese tried to leave the body in Burgos but were prohibited by the Civil Guard. The letter further stated that the same group had earlier gotten off the train in Miranda de Ebro and reboarded only after the Civil Guard intervened. Lastly, the letter communicated the denunciation made by a city councilman, one Sr. Cecilia, who stated that "un matrimonio burgalés que viajó en un vagón de los utilizados para los portugueses

falleció al llegar a Barcelona." On the strength of this evidence, *ABC* reiterated its protest against the passage of Portuguese workers from France to Portugal, arguing that the *appearance* of health was no guarantee of it: "El hecho externo de que no presenten síntomas al entrar en España no debe bastar para el libre tránsito" ("La gripe. La salud pública," 29 Sept. 1918, 11). At least in terms of medical knowledge, *ABC*'s distinction between the external appearance of health and health proper was justifiable since the concept of the healthy carrier was, by that point, known.[41] Nor was it uncommon for travelers in possession of documentation verifying their healthy status to later develop symptoms ("La gripe. La salud pública," *ABC*, 4 Oct. 1918). Furthermore, Portuguese workers were not the only laborers returning home either through or to Spain. On October 6, *La Vanguardia* reported that Barcelona authorities alone anticipated the arrival of 2,000 Spanish workers to their city ("El estado sanitario"). Yet Spanish workers, though isolated, were never labeled "infestados" as the Portuguese were ("El estado sanitario de España," *El Sol*, 4 Oct. 1918). Although Pittaluga had already discounted direct physical contact as the epidemic's mode of contagion in the first epidemic wave—he argued for an air-based vector—this did not prevent the Portuguese from being stigmatized.[42]

In their study of responses to pandemic emergencies, Ronald Barrett and Peter Brown identify four essential elements to the biosocial phenomenon of stigma. A consideration of the Spanish press' treatment of Portuguese workers in light of their study

[41] For instance, see *La Vanguardia* ("El estado sanitario," 18 Oct. 1918) and Pittaluga's "Algunas consideraciones," discussed above.

[42] In fairness, the Spanish were not the only ones to implement health measures that were considered passé. In fact, France responded to the measures taken by Spain along the border with some tit-for-tat politicking, "exigiendo que se someta a inspección médica todo español que trate de penetrar en territorio francés" (*El Sol*, 22 Sept.).

helps identify both the extent and limits of, to borrow Sontag's expression, "metaphoric thinking" in "Spanish" flu discourse. The four elements of stigma are:

> First, stigma can present major barriers against health seeking, thereby reducing early detection and treatment, and furthering the spread of disease. Second, the general poverty and neglect of socially discredited groups can increase the susceptibility of populations to the entry and amplification of infectious diseases. Third, potentially stigmatized populations may distrust and not cooperate with the health authorities during a public health emergency. Finally, social stigma may distort public perceptions of risk, resulting in mass panic among citizens and the disproportionate allocation of healthcare resources by politicians and health professionals. (35)

Because the Portuguese workers were not Spanish citizens, Spanish officials (medical and political) did not feel obligated to assist them, other than facilitating their return to Portugal. Their role was to prevent them from importing the epidemic into Spain and to minimize the impact of any cases that did enter.[43] In the case of the Portuguese workers, then, the first three elements of stigma discussed by Barrett and Brown are rendered irrelevant by virtue of their citizenship. Spanish treatment of the Portuguese had less to do with disease-associated stigma than with national provenance—except, that is, when it came to the perceptions of risk—despite the fact that Spanish workers would have been just as likely to carry the flu. Not surprisingly, then, when reporting on the matter, *La*

[43] Nevertheless, as early as October 1, Portuguese were seen in the heart of the nation, Madrid: "En las calles de la Corte se han visto hoy, llamando mucho la atención del vecindario, grupos de portugueses andrajosos, cargados de maletas y petates" ("España," *La Vanguardia*). The "desfile" of Portuguese, as it was called, "ha causado, como es consiguiente, una malísima impresión." The use of the term "Corte" instead of "Madrid" specifically evokes the political function of the capital city. Moreover, that *La Vanguardia* would explicitly mention the filthiness of the foreigners only reiterated, if implicitly, their status as contagious threat.

Vanguardia foregrounded the nationalistic overtone of the whole affair by referring to Spanish workers as the "obreros españoles *repatriados*" ("El estado sanitario," 14 Oct. 1918, emphasis added). In short, in "Spanish" flu discourse, the metaphorical slide from having a disease to being diseased served to reinforce national borders.

A clear example of the stigmatization of Portuguese laborers comes from a letter from the physician of Pozal de Gallinas to his son, published in part by *ABC* on September 29. He claimed not only that Medina was the principal source of the epidemic, but that the Portuguese were responsible: "Medina es, indudablemente, el foco primitivo de donde ha partido la epidemia que tiene consternados a todos estos pueblos; es falso, de toda falsedad, que los vagones en que viajan los portugueses sean apartados de las vías principales y desinfectados debidamente; falso también que se impida descender a los portugueses" ("La gripe. La salud pública"). His punctuation, in the form of a semicolon, links the focal point of the epidemic with the Portuguese both syntactically and semantically: not only does the semicolon point to a continuation between the first and second clauses of the sentence, it also insinuates a causal link in their meaning whereby the Portuguese are implicitly blamed for the epidemic in Medina and its environs. A similar rhetorical strategy can be seen by the physician's use of italics: "*Descienden y pernoctan* en las salas de descanso, convertidas en verdaderas enfermerías, donde, hacinados, y muchos enfermos, permanecen *varias horas*; y lo más triste es que nadie se preocupa de desinfectar dichos locales, pues en dicha estación están *abandonadas en absoluto* las más sencillas prácticas de desinfección." As they descend onto the waiting room, the Portuguese convert it into an infirmary, as though their movement could somehow cause illness. At the same time, there is a suggestive tension between

movement and stasis since the Portuguese end up converting a space normally marked by peoples' momentary presence into one of permanence—"permanecen *varias horas*." It would seem that for those Portuguese who were sick, the "Spanish" flu proved to be, as Susan Sontag has said of illness in general, "a more onerous citizenship" (3). For their compatriots who were not sick, however, it was their citizenship that proved to be the more onerous illness.

As I noted earlier, Dr. Tello traveled to Portbou on September 24 in response to border anxieties fueled by the flu. A week later (September 30), García Prieto, then the Ministro de Gobernación, and Salazar departed for Medina del Campo sometime around 4:30 to investigate reports of the failure to adopt opportune prophylactic measures ("La salud pública en España," *El Sol*, 1 Oct. 1918). The visit of such high-ranking officials to an otherwise irrelevant region says a lot about the strategic position of the town for Spain's travel grid. While there, Dr. Salazar refuted the notion that Medina del Campo was a source of the epidemic affecting the surrounding areas. Furthermore, he explained that Portuguese workers were isolated "por exceso de precaución," even when they arrived from the French border "en perfecto estado de salud." The discrepancy between Salazar's official version of the epidemic and the reports coming out of Medina (like the letters published by *ABC*) already evidences a crack in flu discourse that would ultimately lead to the rhetorical rupture between an "epidemic Spain" and a "sanitary Spain."

Notwithstanding the apparent good news from Medina, it was reported that "[h]a quedado en suspenso la comunicación interferroviaria de España con Portugal, con objeto de poder intensificar la vigilancia" ("La gripe. La salud pública," *ABC*, 2 Oct. 1918).

Similarly, another communiqué ("una enérgica circular") was sent to civil governors and authority figures in border towns "para que se estreche el cordón sanitario y se extreme toda clase de precauciones." All travelers, "al penetrar en nuestro territorio debe[n] estar provisto del correspondiente certificado facultativo que acredite haber sido convenientemente visado." The reference to "nuestro" territory reveals the us/them dynamic that undergirds the measures taken. The following day *El Sol* published a Real Orden that specifically blamed the state of Spanish health on "otros países de Europa, con los cuales nuestras relaciones son frecuentes…" ("No es posible seguir callando," 3 Oct. 1918). (Incidentally, the Real Orden amounted to a threat against railroad companies that failed to implement necessary measures against the spread of the epidemic). Not surprisingly, the Portuguese rejected the label of "infected/infectious other." *El Liberal* published the following note from the *Legación de Portugal* in Spain: "'Los rumores que hace tiempo corren en España acerca de la existencia en Portugal de enfermedades epidémicas como el cólera, el tifus exantemático, etc., son en absoluto destituidos de fundamento'" ("La salud pública," 24 Oct. 1918, 2. Original in Spanish). It was reported that, after rigorous tests, Ricardo Jorge, Director General of Public Health, declared "'perentoria y absolutamente que la única epidemia reinante en Portugal es la gripe o influenza…[y que] nunca alcanzó proporciones demasiado alarmantes de intensidad y gravedad.'"[44]

The stigmatization of Portuguese workers is an important element of the discursive construction of Spain as an "epidemic state" because of the way it clearly

[44] Similar rejoinders appeared in *El Socialista* ("De la epidemia gripal") and *ABC*. Differing slightly from that of *El Liberal*'s, *ABC*'s read as follows: "'Los rumores que hace tiempo corren en España acerca de la existencia en Portugal de enfermedades epidémicas *de carácter gravísimo*…'" (La salud pública," 24 Oct. 1918, 19, emphasis added).

articulates an inside/outside dynamic. The national borders delineated an "us" (Spain) and a "them" (Portugal and France).[45] As dirty others, "they" must be excluded in order to preserve "our" health. In the case of the Portuguese, the Spanish state had one function: remove them from the country. Only Spaniards were to receive state-afforded medical attention, as the following episode in Bilbao demonstrates: "Hoy se presentaron al alcalde varios súbditos portugueses, procedentes de Francia, en demanda de socorros, que les niegan en el Consulado. El alcalde ya les había socorrido anteriormente y se excusó, pues el capítulo presupuesto para tales gastos hay que aplicarlo a las necesidades de los hijos pobres de Bilbao" ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 6 Oct. 1918, 11). The news article further remarks that the municipal authority had learned that the Portuguese had crossed the border secretly and that, in light of this fact, and because "el vecindario cree que son los viajeros vehículos de la epidemia," it sent them off for disinfection. To one degree or another, regular citizens, medical professionals, and politicians all viewed the peripatetic Portuguese with caution and considered a secure border necessary for the sanitary wellbeing of Spain. Despite the fact that "we live in a society that is poorly defined by national boundaries," at least in terms of how things like disease articulate real, material bonds between people, the psychological appeal of imagined communities often proves too much to overcome, as the hundreds of Portuguese wage earners returning home through Spain learned in 1918 (Farmer, *Infections and Inequalities* 11).[46]

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[45] Although France was included among the "otros países" responsible for Spain's epidemic state, French citizens did not receive the same media attention as the Portuguese (*El Sol*, 3 Oct.).

[46] Oddly enough, the verbal stigmatization of the Portuguese has no visual counterpart. In the sources I consulted, I was unable to find any editorial cartoons or photographs depicting the Portuguese at all, much less as dirty others. By contrast, I did find two images that reflect the mechanism of stigmatization in the context of partisan politics. In figures 1 and 2, respectively, *aliadófilos* and *germanófilos* are labeled as the pestiferous other.

Another external threat that reinforced the us/them dynamic in epidemic discourse—and by extension, worked to preserve the territorial and identity boundaries of Spain—was the arrival of ships in Spanish ports. One ship, the transatlantic Infanta Isabel, received more attention than perhaps any other. The ship, which belonged to the Casa Pinillos y Compañía, left La Coruña on September 24 and was headed to destinations in Cuba and Central America ("El estado sanitario," *Heraldo de Madrid*; "La gripe a bordo," *El Sol*, 6 Oct. 1918). By the time it reached Las Palmas—*ABC* reports it arriving on October 5 ("La salud pública," 6 Oct. 1918: 11), while *El Sol* places it in Las Palmas at least as early as the 4th—500 passengers (of some 1,200 to 1,300) had fallen ill with the flu and the ship was therefore ordered to return to Vigo ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 6 Oct. 1918, 11; "La salud pública," *ABC*, 7 Oct. 1918, 15; "La gripe a bordo," *El Sol*, 7 Oct. 1918).[47] Although the ship's captain ordered the disembarcation of the sick, local authorities, including the Junta de Sanidad, opposed it: "No se autorizó el desembarque de pasajeros ni la entrada al buque de persona alguna" ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 7 Oct. 1918, 15). Ultimately, the ship dropped anchor in a bay some twenty kilometers to the south of Las Palmas and the majority of the sick were taken ashore and sent to a makeshift lazaretto in Gando. There they were attended to by, among others, the mayor of Las Palmas. Military forces cordoned off the lazaretto to avoid all communication with the public. According to both *ABC* and *El Sol*, the healthy who were to return to Vigo on the ship wanted to stay, and as a result of the ensuing ruckus, the ship's captain called for backup from the Marines. By the following day, some twelve

[47] Both *ABC* and *El Sol* give the figure of 500 sick for 5 October. However, *El Sol* reported that there were only 175 sick when the ship arrived in Las Palmas on the fourth (6 Oct.). The spectacular increase in the number of sick from 4 to 5 October may explain the growing anxiety among the local residents of Las Palmas that accompanies the ship's presence.

people had died (not from the *motín*), including a mother who passed away in the act of breastfeeding her son ("La gripe a bordo," *El Sol*, 7 Oct. 1918). The entire island, according to *ABC*, was alarmed by the presence of the Infanta in their port ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 7 Oct. 1918, 15). Family members of the passengers sent hundreds of telegrams from the Peninsula seeking information about their loved ones ("La gripe," *Heraldo de Madrid*, 9 Oct. 1918).

The sick were mostly emigrants from third class, with only a few from second class and none from first ("El estado sanitario," *El Sol*, 9 Oct. 1918, 3). While the ship was in La Coruña, a large group of third-class passengers boarded, prompting "una gran protesta en los que ya estaban a bordo." When the epidemic was (officially?) declared, third-class passengers were confined to their cabins. Because the vast majority of passengers were emigrants, various newspapers requested the government halt emigration: "La Prensa manifiesta que el Gobierno no deba permitir ninguna clase de emigración dentro de las actuales circunstancias, pues son tremendas las consecuencias, tanto durante la travesía como por el grave conflicto que se crea para los puertos de escala" ("La gripe a bordo," *El Sol* 7 Oct. 1918). Similarly, *Heraldo de Madrid* writes: "La Prensa sigue pidiendo al Gobierno que, en estas circunstancias, suspenda la emigración, para evitar peligros a la salud y espectáculos tan dolorosos como estos del 'Infanta Isabel'" ("La gripe," 9 Oct. 1918). Lastly, *ABC*: "La Prensa pide al Gobierno que no consienta la emigración en ningún puerto español mientras no se haya normalizado el estado sanitario" ("La salud pública," 8 Oct. 1918, 13). The government agreed with the press and issued a Real Orden in which "'se suspend[e] temporalmente la emigración por los puertos de la Península autorizados para la misma'" (*Gaceta* qtd. in *ABC*, 10 Oct.).

The justification offered by the Ministerio de Obras Públicas specifically mentioned the Infanta Isabel:

> [La emigración se suspende e]n vista de las circunstancias sanitarias por que atraviesa nuestro país con motivo de la extensa epidemia de gripe que se padece en toda España y de lo acontecido en el vapor español *Infanta Isabel*…, y [porque] la Inspección general de Sanidad [cree] que el mayor peligro para que se desarrollen y repitan estos hechos, por la natural acumulación del pasaje, dependen del embarque de emigrantes, que por su falta de hábitos de higiene constituyen la materia más susceptible de propagación de contagio…

For the Spanish government, the proportion of disease among third-class passengers, as compared to those from first and second class, was sufficient proof to declare that the former lacked basic hygiene habits. Santa Cruz de Tenerife's Republican newspaper, *El Progreso*, echoed this opinion that third-class emigrants were dirty others:

> Ustedes mismos pueden juzgar de la influencia que la higiene posee sobre esta epidemia con sólo saber que en el pasaje de primera y de segunda preferente que tiene a bordo el 'Infanta' no se ha dado ni un solo caso. Todos los casos de invasión han ocurrido en el pasaje de tercera, salvo algunos que se han presentado en el de segunda ordinaria. ("Lo del 'Infanta Isabel'")

Toward a Public Health Dictatorship

As the epidemic threat grew in magnitude, fears over the wellbeing of the Spanish epidemic state led *El Liberal* to call for a public health dictatorship. This *dictadura sanitaria* was to have two branches: one that dealt with the nature and flow of information and one that dealt with the application of and compliance with measures

aimed at curbing the epidemic. In fact, the press's accurate and candid depiction of the epidemic was supposed to win support for the recommended measures: "Sin que pequemos de alarmistas, entendemos que tiene la situación sanitaria suficiente gravedad para que se dé al público una fiel sensación de ella, a fin de que nadie pueda ser víctima por credulidad o ignorancia y para que todos se convenzan de la conveniencia de emplear las medidas profilácticas recomendadas por los técnicos" ("La salud pública," 2 Oct. 1). Later, in the same article, *El Liberal* argued more forcefully that:

> El fiel reflejo de la situación debe ser secundado por una gran severidad en las medidas sanitarias que se dicten. Un exquisito cuidado para providenciar cuanto sirva para detener los progresos del mal y evitar su difusión. Y una gran energía—una verdadera dictadura sanitaria—para exigir que se cumplan las medidas dispuestas, sin tolerar infracciones o debilidades que pueden tener incalculable transcendencia para la salud pública.

The polyvalence of the term *mal* conflated biology and sociology in rhetorically reinforcing the notion that the epidemic was both an ill and an evil. All Spaniards were expected to join the fight against this common enemy. *El Liberal* grounded its argument on the principle that "la salud pública…está por encima de toda conveniencia particular" ("La salud pública en España," 3 Oct. 1918, 3). Indeed, this principle of privileging the collective interest over individual interests was what made the dictatorship "perfectamente disculpable." Ironically, even as it called for a "fiel reflejo" of epidemic conditions, *El Liberal* admitted to having censored information about those very conditions: "Hasta hoy, para evitar esa alarma, hemos creído prudente reservar datos que conocíamos y estragos que causaba el mal en algunas provincias. Creemos que esta

reserva puede ser, en adelante, perjudicial."[48] The main objective of *El Liberal*'s call for a *dictadura sanitaria*, including a cessation of self-censorship, was ultimately the restoration of the Spanish nation from its epidemic state.

Unlike its political counterparts, the *dictadura sanitaria* did not seem to ruffle too many feathers. In other words, there was no guilt by metaphorical association with such an unsavory political form.[49] On the contrary, not only did *El Liberal* take pride in the fact that García Prieto, and the government in general, supported its viewpoint, but the Subsecretario de Gobernación could hardly contain his enthusiasm for such an idea:

> De dictadura sanitaria en realidad, puede y debe ser calificada la conducta observada por el ministro de la Gobernación, no ya desde que se divulgó la existencia de focos gripales en diferentes puntos de España, sino con grande anterioridad a estos hechos. Labor de perseverancia de muchos años ha sido la creación de un potente organismo sanitario que nos pusiese a salvo de toda contingencia, y así, al advertirse los primeros síntomas epidémicos, no ya en España, sino en los países vecinos, el Gobierno ha podido utilizar las meritísimas funciones encomendadas al Cuerpo de Sanidad civil y disponer del material técnico necesario.
>
> Se ha llegado evidentemente en estos días a extremos de rigor sanitario que, superficialmente juzgados, pudieran ser tildados de exageración; pero ante la inminencia del peligro, el Gobierno no ha titubeado un instante en apelar a toda clase de medios, entendiendo que altas consideraciones de humanidad debían

[48] Another layer of irony becomes visible when one recalls that it was the supposed lack of censorship in Spain that allowed the press to cover the epidemic and which ultimately led to the historical nickname of the flu as "Spanish."

[49] On the rather more nuanced problem of the roles of and relationship between elites and masses in Spanish politics and society, see Ortega y Gasset's *La rebelión de las masas*.

> sobreponerse a cualquier otro estímulo…Ninguna atención, ni aún el respeto a los intereses privados, decidirá al Gobierno a apartarse de la norma de conducta que se ha trazado. ("La gripe. La salud pública," *ABC*, 3 Oct. 1918, 11)

The question that arises is why the undersecretary would have voiced enthusiasm for such a polemical political form. The accelerated disintegration of the official *turnismo* system and the widespread concern over the "social question" had produced a moment rife with revolutionary fervor. Romero Salvadó has drawn attention to the "[a]narchy and indiscipline [that] appeared to be the order of the day" (100). The liberalizing trend of the Spanish press as an alternative sphere for political debate only augmented frustration over Spain's social and political circumstances. Not surprisingly, then, on the same day as *ABC* reported the undersecretary's enthusiasm for a *dictadura sanitaria*, *El Liberal* cautioned that such a dictatorship was "la única dictadura que puede admitirse en nuestros tiempos" ("La salud pública en España," 3 Oct. 1918, 3). Such a caveat was, tellingly, absent from the undersecretary's remarks. The reason probably has to do with how the undersecretary framed the issue. The government had acted as a dictatorship only with the understanding that "altas consideraciones de humanidad debían sobreponerse a cualquier otro estímulo" ("La gripe. La salud pública," *ABC*, 3 Oct. 1918, 11). In other words, the government put a human(itarian) face on the epidemic and then sought to portray itself as successfully discharging its responsibilities vis-à-vis the Spanish people. In doing this, the undersecretary's actions followed an established precedent. In reference to the relationship between Spanish workers and the Regency press, David Ortiz, Jr. has argued that "[t]he incorporation of the working class was at the heart of the social question, and the Regency press gave the dispute a human face.

Understood as a human crisis, it required peaceful resolution" (79). *Mutatis mutandi*, the undersecretary's enthusiasm for a *dictadura sanitaria* can be read as an attempt simultaneously to win over public opinion and preserve order—all by publicizing the government's efforts to mitigate the epidemic.

Despite the well nigh impossible task of hermetically sealing off Spain from an external epidemic attack, the flu found its way into the nation and, what is more, the inside/outside dynamic that grounded the approach of the *dictadura sanitaria* remained in force, turning its focus as much toward internal as external affairs. The movement of anyone became suspect if he or she came from places known or suspected to be infected with the flu. As the case of the Infanta Isabel showed, Tenerife saw the epidemic as an external threat. In an editorial for the *Gaceta de Tenerife*, V. Sierra Ruiz spoke of the "mortíferos efectos de la epidemia que *se nos adentra*" ("En vísperas de una epidemia," emphasis added). Centrally located towns also considered the epidemic as a threat coming from outside. On September 23, the Junta Provincial de Sanidad of Ciudad Real took measures to "evitar el contagio con los viajeros procedentes de sitios donde se haya declarado la epidemia, pues en esta capital no se ha registrado todavía ningún caso de gripe" ("Capítulo de calamidades," *El Sol*). Similarly, in Toledo, the Junta Provincial de Sanidad "ha adoptado importantes acuerdos para evitar la invasión del mal en la provincia, que actualmente disfruta de buen estado sanitario" ("La salud pública," *El Sol*, 25 Sept. 1918). As late as October 15, Luis Silvela y Casado, then mayor of Madrid, felt justified in claiming that the epidemic had not yet reached the Spanish capital, though anxieties over it doing so prompted him to affix a public edict (*bando*) "en los lugares de costumbre," outlining the measures the local government was taking just in case. The

first of these measures was the disinfection of travelers "cuando éstos procedan de puntos epidemiados" ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 15 Oct. 1918, 13). In fact, the measures advocated by Silvela may well have responded to the influx of Spaniards returning to Madrid from their summer vacation in San Sebastián, where the epidemic had already taken hold ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 8 Oct. 1918, 12).

Although flu discourse evinces a generalized fear of epidemic outsiders, few groups, such as Portuguese laborers, are specifically singled out as disease vectors. Within Spain, one such group was soldiers returning home on leave. The military sector of society was reported to have experienced the epidemic earlier than the civilian population in the early days of both the first and second waves. However, not until Gonzalo Lafora penned three articles on the subject—published in *El Sol* on October 21 and November 3 and 12—did the 'soldier-vector' hypothesis receive a systematic articulation in the general press. In essence, Lafora argued: "En cada pueblo donde llegaban estos soldados moribundos [procedentes de Logroño], se iniciaba enseguida un foco epidémico…" ("La epidemia en la provincial de Soria," 21 Oct. 1918). Because of their treatment of the sick soldiers and their role in spreading the epidemic to geographic areas that, because they were off the beaten path, might have been spared the effects of the epidemic, he blamed the military for "estos horrores cometidos"—a sentiment announced in the large, all-capital font of his title. Lafora paints the military in a harsh light, telling of some soldiers who were so sick that, when sent home on leave so as not "molest[ar] en los hospitales militares," they died at the train stations. When another soldier told a military official about his companion's sickness, the official responded: "'Que suba al tren aunque se muera.'" Lafora finished his article by declaring the

military's mishap "uno de los mayores atentados a la humanidad y a la ciencia sanitaria…."

Needless to say, the military responded less than favorably to Lafora's accusations. The day after his article appeared in the press, *La Correspondencia Militar* (*LCM*) published its rejoinder: "La epidemia antimilitarista. Horrores contra la verdad." As evidenced by the title, *LCM* sought to cast Lafora's questionable reporting in terms of an anti-military campaign. Since 1898, the military had been criticized in the press on a number of fronts: an inflated officer corps, military ineffectiveness, and repressive tactics (like those used in the *¡Cu-Cut!* affair).[50] In this sense, the military saw Lafora's criticism as simply one more example of an anti-military bent and reacted with what some might have considered its typical hypersensitivity. *LCM*'s defense amounted to proving Lafora guilty by association with *El Sol*, which with "persistente malignidad…viene tratando de asuntos militares…" ("La epidemia antimilitarista"). The next day, *ABC* published the Ministro de Guerra's "rectificación oficiosa" ("La salud pública;" "La epidemia antimilitarista"). In his rectification, the minister referred to Lafora's claims as "insidiosas manifestaciones" and outlined a specific calendar of events that explained the conditions under which the young recruits were allowed to return home. On September 18, a military junta met in Burgos and dictated that the recruits be sent home to avoid overcrowding in the barracks. (*Hacinamiento* was believed to facilitate the spread of the epidemic). Given the risks inherent in sending the soldiers home—risks the minister

[50] In November 1905, *¡Cu-Cut!*, a Catalan satirical newspaper, published a joke insulting the military, provoking a group of soldiers to trash the offices of *¡Cu-Cut!* and *La Veu de Catalunya*. The government, faced with the decision of siding with the military or castigating it, capitulated and passed the *Ley de Jurisdicciones*, which adjudicated crimes against the *patria* in military tribunals. For more information, see María del Socorro Arroyo's "Política y periodismo: La caricatura de *¡Cu-Cut!* desencadenante de la ley de jurisdicciones."

implied the military officials were well aware of—they first underwent a medical examination. Only those not suspected of the illness were allowed to leave. According to a telegraph sent to the minister by the military governor of Logroño, as of October 22 "no existía caso alguno de la epidemia gripal en aquella guarnición" ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 23 Oct. 1918, 13).

In another note to journalists the following day (24 Oct.), the Ministro de Guerra further refuted the criticisms leveled against his ministry. He noted that his ministry was not directly involved in overseeing the implementation of public health measures, but that this responsibility fell on local leadership. He also denied that certain military doctors had prevaricated in their reporting of casualties and insisted on their upstanding character: "El Cuerpo de Sanidad Militar ha demostrado en esta ocasión, como en todas las que se ha puesto a prueba su celo y laboriosidad, una abnegación sin límites, un loable espíritu y un noble entusiasmo por el firme cumplimiento de sus deberes profesionales, mereciendo su laudable actuación el beneplácito del ministro de la Guerra…" ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 24 Oct. 1918, 18). In his response of November 3, Lafora pieces together various texts—newspaper clippings and personal correspondence—to show his argument was based on "realidades y no insidias" ("Para el Ministro de la Guerra," *El Sol*). A clip from *El Eco Numantino* decries the "'delitos de lesa humanidad,'" offering the example of a recruit and his sister who died, leaving a three-month old child who "'se supone…habrá dejado de existir por inanición'" (qtd. in Lafora, "Para el Ministro de la Guerra," *El Sol*). Similarly, in his last article on the subject, Lafora marshals forth more documents from various sources that corroborate his belief that soldiers on leave were spreading the

epidemic. He rejects *LCM*'s suggestion that he is anti-military and affirms his is "un aviso humanitario" ("Para el Ministro de la Guerra," *El Sol*, 12 Nov. 1918).

Comparing the case of Portuguese workers with that of Spanish soldiers, one essential difference stands out; namely, that whereas the former were rhetorically reduced to the status of dirty others, the latter were simply seen as victims of neglect by the powers that be. Outsiders were threats to the configuration of the Spanish national body; insiders only evidenced functional problems with(in) that body without ever jeopardizing its constitutional integrity. As Laura Otis's articulation of the "membrane model" suggests, the adoption of this corporal metaphor for the nation was "supported" by medical advancements in cellular pathology (and other fields) that occurred in the geo-political context of intense imperialism. Medical notions of health and disease thus inform the organic conceptualization of the nation.[51] The health of the nation became an increasingly important issue in the latter half of the 19th century and the early part of the 20th. It is in this context that the call for a *dictadura sanitaria* plays out, the purpose of which was to convert Spain from an epidemic state into a sanitary state.

Spain: From Epidemic to Sanitary State

In referring to Spain as either an epidemic or sanitary state, I purposefully invoke the polyvalence of the term *state*. On one hand, Spain finds itself *in epidemic conditions.* On the other, *the central political authority* was in charge of responding to these conditions. The epidemic conditions are evidenced at every level of individual and social life, disrupting even the most sacrosanct of local and national rituals. We have already seen how the establishment of *cordons sanitaires* along Spain's borders disrupted travel

[51] For instance, *El Liberal* suggested: "Si fuéramos a creer a un humorista, amigo nuestro, diríamos con él que el estado sanitario de España es una consecuencia de la política que preside nuestros morbosos días" ("Entre los daños").

and how border concerns in general cut vacations short. Similarly, the transatlantic trip to Cuba of the *Alfonso XIII* was cancelled because "se ha prohibido el embarque de pasajeros en atención a las circunstancias actuales" ("La gripe," *El Sol*, 15 Oct. 1918). In Huesca, elections were suspended ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 23 Oct. 1918, 15). In Barcelona, so many post office employees became sick that residents were asked not to mail anything that was not urgent ("La salud en España," *ABC*, 25 Oct. 1918, 23). *El Sol* reported that in Ciudad Real, the request was made to suspend trials by jury ("El estado sanitario," 15 Oct. 1918). Schools at every level were closed down, the Ministerio de Instrucción Pública ultimately issuing a Real Orden granting university rectors the right to postpone the academic year "'sin previa consulta con este ministerio…'" ("La cuestión sanitaria en España," *El Sol*, 5 Oct. 1918). In Madrid, virtually every type of venue dedicated to public leisure was subjected to closure if it failed to prove it met sanitary conditions:

> Que tantos los propietarios, directores, administradores, etcetera, etc., de centros de enseñanza particulares, como los de cafés, bares, cervecerías, 'tupis', tiendas de comidas y bebidas, teatros, circos, frontones, salas de conciertos, salones de baile, cinematógrafos, cafés conciertos, etc., etc., presenten en las oficinas de la Inspección provincial de Sanidad, dentro del improrrogable plazo de quince días, los documentos que acrediten que los respectivos locales reúnen las condiciones higiénicas exigidas por las disposiciones vigentes. ("Noticias de la epidemia," *El Sol*, 23 Oct. 1918)

In Valladolid, the public health junta even went so far as to prohibit playing games in cafes, a measure that provoked protests ("La salud pública en España," *El Liberal*, 21 Oct. 1918).

The epidemic also forced various organizations to cancel meetings. In Almería, the Comisión de la Liga de Consumidores, which had organized a banquet aimed at resolving a strike, was asked to cancel the event and donate the collected funds to victims of the epidemic ("La epidemia de gripe," *El Sol*, 3 Oct. 1918). The commission acquiesced. In Madrid, the Junta de Gobierno y Patronato del Cuerpo de Médicos Titulares cancelled its assembly ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 7 Oct. 1918, 15), as did the Asamblea Nacional de Pesca in La Coruña ("La salud pública en España," *El Liberal*, 11 Oct. 1918, 2). Perhaps most notably, however, was the rescheduling of the third Congreso Nacional de Sanidad Civil and the first Congreso Nacional de Medicina.[52] In reference to the former, *Heraldo de Madrid* reported that: "este Congreso tiene por fin primordial solicitar del Gobierno una eficaz reorganización de los servicios sanitarios y el pago de los titulares por el estado…" ("Otro congreso aplazado"). Ironically, these two issues were among the most widely agreed upon by the medical profession as being most in need of attention.

The *fiestas* of various towns were also cancelled because of the epidemic, though not always without some controversy. In places like Castellón, Las Palmas, and Toledo, Columbus Day celebrations were put on hold ("La salud pública," *El Liberal*, 29 Sept. 1918; "La salud pública," *ABC*, 9 Oct. 1918, 14). In Zaragoza, the Junta Provincial de Sanidad voted not to declare the epidemic officially, though they did recommend "la suspension de fiestas, en las del Pilar, donde haya de aglomerarse el público" ("La salud

[52] Some 3,500 people (presumably all doctors) registered for the latter.

pública," *ABC*, 7 Oct. 1918, 16). Consequently, "qued[aban] excluídos del programa aquellos extremos que se refieren a fiestas religiosas, corridas de toros y regocijos públicos." The Junta's report—which was "[un] objeto de vivos y contradictorios comentarios"—left various businessmen and *feriantes* on pins and needles as they waited to see what concrete steps would be taken. At the national level, the Ministerio de Obras Públicas published a Real Orden limiting the liability of insurance companies because of the epidemic:

> Accediendo a una instancia presentada en la Comisaría general de Seguros por los directores de varias Compañías de seguros sobre la vida, y en atención a las circunstancias por que atraviesa la salud pública en España…se ha autorizado el insertar en las pólizas una cláusula provisional, consignando que "si el asegurado falleciere antes de transcurrir los noventa días a la formalización del contrato, la responsabilidad del asegurador se limitará a la devolución de las primas cobradas." ("La salud pública," *El Liberal*, 2 Nov. 1918)

In Guipúzcoa, the mayor ordered the temporary cessation of butter production so the milk could be given to those recovering from the flu ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 22 Oct. 1918, 16–17).

Religious life, too, was disrupted by the flu epidemic. One Sr. Laffite, a town councilman in San Sebastián, requested that "se suprimiera el agua bendita en las iglesias" ("La epidemia de gripe," *El Sol*, 3 Oct. 1918). In Zaragoza, the municipal subcommittee on public health made plans to ask the archbishop to disinfect the basins that held the holy water ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 18 Oct. 1918, 18). In Villar de Cañas (Cuenca), residents died without receiving final rites because the local priest was one of

the first victims of the epidemic. The mayor of Ujijar (Granada) was reprimanded because he locked up the parish priest for having rendered assistance to those sick with the flu ("La salud en España," *ABC*, 26 Oct. 1918, 19).

Rituals associated with the cemetery were perhaps the religious ceremonies most affected by the epidemic. There were reports of wood shortages that led to a lack of sufficient coffins ("El estado sanitario," *El Sol*, 8 Nov. 1918). *ABC* reported examples of doubling up on coffins and areas that lacked enough burial plots ("La salud pública," 21 Oct. 1918, 12). Some bodies went days without burial ("La salud pública," 21 Oct. 1918, 12). Processions from churches to the cemetery were prohibited ("El estado sanitario," *El Sol*, 10 Oct. 1918). The number of deaths was such that the horses that pulled the carts "estaban agotados por exceso de trabajo" ("El estado sanitario," *El Sol*, 24 Oct. 1918). In Vigo, the mayor's office ordered the "absoluta prohibición de cortejos fúnebres" ("El estado sanitario," *El Sol*, 24 Oct. 1918). In the province of Barcelona, one bishop objected to nighttime burials because they were frightening the population ("El estado sanitario," *El Sol*, 10 Oct. 1918). In Cartagena, *El Liberal* reported, without any further explanation, that carrying cadavers over the shoulder was prohibited ("La salud pública," 25 Oct. 1918). Many places—e.g., Almería, Madrid, Córdoba, Toledo, Bilbao—also forbade cemetery visitations on the first two days of November—All Saint's Day and All Soul's Day. In Castellón, not only was entrance to the cemetery barred, but its "renombrada feria de Todos los Santos" was cancelled ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 17 Oct., 14). Those in Barcelona wishing to leave flowers on the graves of loved ones were stopped at the entrance: "éstas [flores] serán entregadas en la puerta de los cementerios a unos empleados destinados al efecto que las colocarán en los panteones o nichos que se

les indique" ("La salud en España," *ABC*, 30 Oct. 1918, 19). *ABC* referred to these employees as "vigilantes," thereby associating their function with that of the police (1 Nov.).

In Barcelona, the *Pompas fúnebres* company failed to meet burial demands, which caused no small stir in the city. At six o'clock in the evening on October 13, a group of 50 people marched to the *Casas Consistoriales* to present their complaints against the company to Barcelona mayor Morales Pareja ("El estado sanitario," *La Vanguardia*, 14 Oct. 1918). In a private conversation, Morales informed three representatives of the *ad hoc* commission of neighbors that he had already called the company a number of times on its shortcomings. He also told the representatives that not all of the complaints received were accurate. Three days later, the issue was taken up by the City Council where, after some debate, a resolution to strip the company of its contract with the city was defeated. Fears of uncertain legal repercussions were cited as the reason for the measure's failure. In its place, however, it was decided that an "expediente en depuración de las responsabilidades [de la compañía]" would be formed. If the company was found to be delinquent in its contractual obligations, the contract would be voided ("Crónica general"). For their part, company leaders were in a difficult position. In a letter to *La Vanguardia* published on October 17, they lamented the fact that despite maintaining in circulation "5 automóviles camiones y 6 coches de reparto," the number of bodies to bury—up to 370 on some days—was simply overwhelming ("El estado sanitario," 17 Oct. 1918). Notwithstanding the logistical challenges faced by the *Pompas fúnebres* company, Barcelona residents remained displeased. When the widow of one José María Perís received a phone call from the company informing her that there

was no coffin available for her husband's burial, "[e]sto soliviantó al vecindario" ("El estado sanitario," *La Vanguardia*, 18 Oct. 1918, 8). A group of some 400 neighbors marched all the way to Civil Governor González Rothwos's office to voice their complaints.[53] Some time later, two more "neighborhood commissions" arrived at Town Hall for similar reasons.

As evidenced by this episode involving Barcelona's *Pompas fúnebres*, no area of Spanish life was unaffected by the flu epidemic, including the sacrosanct ritual of burying the dead. Similarly, artistic rituals associated with the dead were also affected by the epidemic. In Alicante, the governor banned representations of the play *Don Juan Tenorio*, the viewing of which was part of the yearly ritual that included cemetery visits. ("La salud en España," *ABC*, 30 Oct. 1918, 20). In the next chapter, I analyze the relationship between Don Juan Tenorio and the flu epidemic to show how the latter impacted notions of the Spanish nation. My present discussion of the *dictadura sanitaria* has more to do with an evolving notion of the Spanish state, especially as it relates to the organization of public health, though changes to the latter invariably impact notions of the Spanish nation.[54]

In response to the epidemic, numerous steps were taken, including the issuance of authoritative pronouncements, the prescription and proscription of specific behavioral practices, and the application of penalties by regulatory bodies. These measures formed part of the infrastructure of Spain *qua* sanitary state. Through them, the *dictadura*

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[53] This time the political weight of the Civil Governor was enough to felicitously resolve the situation. After phoning *Pompas fúnebres*, a coffin was provided.

[54] Following Anderson, I take the nation to be the product of a psychocultural process of imagination. It is a cultural phenomenon insofar as it engages issues of identity, beliefs, desires, etc. By contrast, I take the state to be a collection of institutions, organizations, and systems (e.g., the legal code). Insofar as it regulates the flow of material bodies, I take it to be a social phenomenon.

sanitaria called for by *El Liberal* became in many ways a reality. One of the most visually striking features of the *dictadura sanitaria* may well have been the agents who maintained (public health) order. The use of the Guardia Civil in border-sensitive regions has already been noted. In the province of Galicia, police officers accompanied doctors on house visits: "Va a procederse por los médicos de distrito, acompañados de guardias municipales, a girar visitas domiciliarias, vigilando el cumplimiento de las disposiciones de la Alcaldía, a fin de tomar en el acto las medidas necesarias para hacer que desaparezca toda suciedad que pueda constituir foco de infección" ("La salud pública en la provincia"). In an interview with the *Gaceta de Tenerife*, the provincial Director de Sanidad Exterior referred to these agents as "policía sanitaria" ("Ante el peligro"). Similarly, Sr. Llopis chided Barcelona's Health Commission for its weak efforts in combating the epidemic, suggesting that "lo grave del caso require disposiciones enérgicas, procediendo *manu militari*, en vez de limitarse á formular propuestas al Ayuntamiento….[L]o que reclama el vecindario y exigen las angustiosas circunstancias actuales, es que se ejerza una verdadera dictadura sanitaria" ("Crónica general," *La Vanguardia*, 17 Oct. 1918, 8). The call for military might, dictator style, was evidently justified both by the epidemic circumstances and the will of the people.

In addition to police forces and calls for military might, *brigadas* were also formed and charged with the disinfection of public and private spaces. Madrid actually had a regular brigade that did house calls and a "brigada especial" for those areas where "la aglomeración de personas u otros motivos exija la adopción de dicha medida [desinfección]" ("El estado sanitario," *El Sol*, 9 Oct. 1918). In Murcia, the governor organized youth into surveillance juntas "encargadas de denunciar las deficiencias que

observen en la población" ("La salud pública en España," *El Liberal*, 20 Oct. 1918, 2). Similarly, the governor of Barcelona encouraged neighbors to join in the effort to combat the epidemic "denunciando en la forma más rápida posible todas las faltas é infracciones que sepan" ("El estado sanitario," *La Vanguardia*, 15 Oct. 1918, 10). This style of surveillance was hardly an academic affair, as the residents of number four, Ribera de Curtidores in Madrid found out—their unsanitary home was denounced in the pages of *El Liberal* ("La salud pública en España," 22 Oct. 1918). Along the highways (*carreteras*) leading into Málaga, the governor mandated the installation of "puestos sanitarios para reconocer en ellos a los peatones" ("Los estragos de la epidemia," *El Sol*, 25 Oct. 1918).

Although less visible than whitewashing brigades and sanitary police, other official institutions and individuals were also busy behind the scenes responding to conditions brought on by the flu epidemic. In myriad places the juntas de sanidad constituted themselves as permanently in session.[55] Their resolutions touched on matters both tangible and intangible. Examples of the former include the opening or closing of schools ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 28 Sept. 1918, 14); the prohibition of consecutive shows in theaters so as to permit "la renovación del aire y…la fumigación del local" ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 25 Sept. 1918, 10); and the cancellation (*suprimir*) of "misas de cuerpo presente en los domicilios de los fallecidos" ("La gripe," *Heraldo de Madrid*, 17 Oct. 1918, 3). Examples of the latter include Madrid's Junta Provincial de Sanidad, which voted to "sostener el prestigio de las autoridades sanitarias por su conducta en las actuales circunstancias y por la lucha titánica que tienen que sostener…" ("Noticias de la epidemia," *El Sol*, 25 Oct. 1918). Foremost among these was Martín Salazar, the Public

[55] For instance, Murcia ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 21 Oct. 1918, 13); Gerona ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 20 Oct. 1918, 12); and Palencia (*El Sol*, 14 Oct., 4).

Health Inspector General, whose efforts during the epidemic the Junta agreed to "ver con agrado…." Madrid's Junta also felt it necessary to issue a statement about its opinion of the seriousness of the epidemic, declaring that "la situación sanitaria de Madrid justifica la atención, 'pero no el pesimismo'" ("La gripe," *Heraldo de Madrid*, 17 Oct. 1918, 3).

The consequences for ignoring the dictated health measures served to reinforce the power of the *dictadura sanitaria*. For instance, the civil governor of Palma de Mallorca fined the mayor and physicians from Inca "por haber infringido las disposiciones sanitarias" ("La salud en España," *El Sol*, 22 Oct. 1918). The legalistic ring of the term *infringido* rhetorically reinforced the implication that the *dictadura* rested on sound legal footing. The health inspector in Badajoz was fined for not declaring the existence of the epidemic ("El estado sanitario en España," *El Sol*, 4 Oct. 1918). In Vigo, the mayor received a telegram from the provincial governor of Pontevedra threatening him with a 500 peseta fine, "sin perjuicio de imponérsele los correctivos que señala la ley de Sanidad" ("El estado sanitario," *El Sol*, 24 Oct. 1918). Barcelona's mayor required all those who owned *fincas* within the city limits to cover their wells and remove their chickens from "los terrados, galerías, patios y azoteas," reminding the owners that the Junta Provincial de Sanidad had the power to issue fines much more substantial than the 50 peseta-limit on his own office ("El estado sanitario," *La Vanguardia*, 6 Oct. 1918).

Fines hardly constituted the only penalty for disobeying dictatorial injunctions. Residents of Madrid could not receive certification of good conduct or of residency without first documenting that they had received their vaccinations ("La salud en España," *El Sol*, 22 Oct. 1918). Although the vaccine in question was not a flu vaccine, the penalty associated with not receiving it highlights the extent to which Spain had

become a sanitary state.[56] As I will argue shortly, the epidemic was swallowed up in the larger context of (as the title of the vaccine story suggests) "La salud en España." If the epidemic prompted talk of a *dictadura sanitaria*, this was nevertheless only the political arm of Spain *qua* sanitary state.

As might have been expected, the *ad hoc* evolution of the *dictadura sanitaria* invariably impinged upon the concept of the Spanish state as constituted at the time of the epidemic. As a result, it both called into question the various policies and practices of the latter and, ultimately, posited a new concept of it. I will cite just two examples. The first comes from the Colegio de Médicos in Madrid. In a meeting presided over by Ortega Morejón, the 400 participants agreed on three conclusions, each of which can be read as specifying how physicians would establish their (to keep with Pittaluga's language) social hegemony. The first conclusion stipulated that the widows and orphans of those doctors who had died during the epidemic be included as beneficiaries of the "ley de Epidemias" ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 23 Oct. 1918, 13). The second conclusion called for the creation of a Ministerio de Sanidad, which would operate independently of all other ministerial departments. The final conclusion amounted to "[una] enérgica protesta…por la escasa retribución con que se había pretendido recompensar a los médicos que se habían presentado en el ministerio de la Gobernación para acudir a los sitios epidemiados." During the meeting, it was also agreed that doctors should become functionaries of the state, a move that would counteract their having been "relegados al olvido y sujetos a la nefasta política de caciques analfabetos." Moreover, the group threatened that if their demands were not met in timely fashion, "las medidas que

[56] On the related themes of vaccination and citizenship in the context of nationalism, see Alison Bashford's *Imperial Hygiene*.

adoptarían los médicos serían radicalísimas, pues romperían en absoluto sus relaciones con el Gobierno." The revolutionary force of the Colegio's rhetoric (as reported by *ABC*) could not be clearer, and in demonstration of their resolve, all 400 doctors carried their demands to García Prieto himself.

The second example of the changing relationship between Spanish doctors and the Spanish state comes from Pittaluga, who, in his opinion piece "Con motivo de la epidemia de gripe," wrote:

> Cuando este segundo punto de vista [i.e., el reconocimiento de la importancia de la salud pública] haya sido alcanzado por todos, el pago de los titulares por el Estado se impondrá, y la resistencia pasiva de los políticos, que no quieren renunciar al tinglado de los alcaldes, y no quieren establecer, por tanto, la hegemonía inevitable de los médicos sobre los alcaldes, caerá como una de tantas ficciones que mantienen la ficción suprema de nuestra vida política actual.

Pittaluga clearly sees politicians and physicians as antagonists. Moreover, he believes the replacement of politicians by physicians is inevitable. The latter will ultimately overshadow the former in terms of social position and prestige, and the concomitant assumption of their pay by the state will naturally follow. As Pittaluga's editorial and the *Colegio*'s rhetoric demonstrate, the discourse on the transformation of Spain from an epidemic to a sanitary state carried with it revolutionary overtones. A new (sanitary) Spain threatened to replace the old (epidemic) Spain in which the *caciquismo*-plagued *turno pacífico* was unable to adequately respond to the needs of the nation during the epidemic.

Another critique of the Spanish state as understood at the time of the epidemic was its rhetorical relegation to the Middle Ages. The subtitle "Como en la Edad Media" framed *El Sol*'s report of events in Santander, where "[un] pánico terrible…se apodera de los pueblos ante la presencia de un [mendigo enfermo]" ("El estado sanitario," 23 Oct. 1918). Similarly, the Portuguese response to the closing of their border with Spain was described in these terms: "Ningún diario [lisboeta] puede explicarse las medidas, que llaman medievalos, adoptadas por las autoridades sanitarias de España…" ("La gripe," *El Sol*, 28 Oct. 1918. Original in Spanish).[57] One Dr. Mirandela, writing in Lisbon's *Diario de Noticias*, contrasted Spain's medieval measures with the modern agreements reached at the International Sanitary Convention of 1912, held in Paris:

> En España, como en Portugal, se sabe que estamos exentos de peste y cólera; pero, aun en este caso, la Convención de 1912, que España firmó, en unión de todos los países europeos, prohibe el cierre total de las fronteras y el establecimiento de cordones sanitarios, que son anacronismos y fórmulas medievales que, gracias a los progresos de la higiene y al concepto de las relaciones sociales que instituyó el derecho sanitario moderno, están terminantemente derogados. (qtd. in "La gripe," *El Sol*, 28 Oct. 1918)

Given what was at stake in the tension between an old and a new Spain, it should come as no surprise that the control of information became a key feature of second-wave flu discourse. Politicians, medical professionals, and the press all had a vested interest in

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[57] It should be noted that Spain was not the only country to restrict human ingress. The governor of San Sebastián asked the Ministro de Gobernación to request that governors from interior provinces cease issuing passports to poor laborers. A large group of them were unable to enter France because the French consulate refused to review their passports ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 19 Oct. 1918, 15). For more on tensions that arose between Spain and France in the context of international public health measures, specifically cholera epidemics, see Peter Baldwin's *Contagion and the State* (especially 91-92, 174, 180-81, 220, and 224).

how they were represented to, and thus perceived by, the Spanish public. In fact, the Spanish public—alternately described as *la opinión*, *la opinión pública*, or simply *el público*—was the single most important, if often implicit, interlocutor for each of these groups. All three were, to one degree or another, intent on appearing to the public as effectively carrying out their respective responsibilities (to say nothing of their sincere desires to do so). For politicians, this meant counteracting the prevailing opinion that the extant political system was defunct and therefore incapable of mitigating the effects of the epidemic. For the press, it meant faithfully discharging its duty as "purveyor of the truth for the Spanish people" (Ortiz Jr. 108). Lastly, for medical professionals, it meant defending the efficacy of medicine (*qua* science) amidst a public health crisis that, for all intents and purposes, thwarted such efficacy.

Sanitized Discourse?

Perhaps not surprisingly, the press and the political establishment adopted antagonistic roles vis-à-vis each other in their respective efforts to control how the Spanish reading public viewed them. Each predictably accused the other of distorting the reality of the epidemic. The press accused the government of grossly underreporting events and thus deceiving the public, while the government accused the press of inflating their story and thus inflaming public sentiment. *ABC* went so far as to suggest that the government's editorial liberties, far from appeasing people, made matters worse: "los [informes] de procedencia official, limitando [la amplitud aterradora del mal] y paliando sus efectos, sólo tienen una eficacia negativa: la de producir el desaliento en la opinión pública del país" ("La salud pública," 17 Oct. 1918, 13). *El Sol* articulated its criticism of the government in these terms:

> Del mismo modo que nuestros gobernantes suelen ocultar a la opinión los conflictos de orden social o político que surgen en España, sin que por medio de la negativa intenten otra cosa que encubrir el desgobierno de que somos víctimas todos los españoles, también ahora pretende el ministerio de la Gobernación convencernos de que la epidemia de gripe es muy limitada y de que son alarmistas aprovechados todos los que denuncian el abandono en que España se encuentra para defenderse contra la invasión general de enfermedades. ("Política sanitaria")

El Sol augments the rhetorical effect of its criticism by shifting its point of view. Initially it refers to the Spanish public ("la opinión") in the third person only to subsequently include itself as part of that public by adopting the first person plural: "pretende el ministerio…convencer*nos*" (emphasis added). Doing so simultaneously allies *El Sol* with its readers and drives a wedge between them (the readers) and the government. Similarly, *El Liberal* catered to public opinion when it distanced itself from the government after losing faith in the government's handling of the epidemic:

> Ocultar la verdad y seguir confiando en el celo del ministro de la Gobernación y de las autoridades a sus órdenes, sería faltar a nuestros deberes, abandonar la defensa del interés público, engañar al vecindario y dar motivo a que dejaran de adoptarse preocupaciones por parte de las familias, que podrán contribuir en gran modo a atenuar los efectos del mal. ("La salud pública en España," 15 Oct. 1918, 1)

Emphasizing its duty towards the Spanish public allied *El Liberal* with them while dismissing the government as irresponsibly indifferent.

However, like the press, the government was also sensitive to the reading public. On the same day that *El Liberal* advocated greater transparency in epidemic reporting, calling for an end to the "régimen de silencio" (" La salud pública en España," 3 Oct. 1918, 3), undersecretary Rosado was quoted as saying: "[los del gobierno] hemos considerado desde los primeros momentos que la publicidad era un poderoso complemento del régimen de profilaxis, y así no se ha ocultado ninguno de los informes que debían llegar a conocimiento de la opinión pública, porque creemos que ésta debe tener una sensación exacta de la situación sanitaria" ("La gripe," *ABC*, 3 Oct. 1918, 11). The government, too, sought to portray itself as the people's ally. Typically this involved leveling accusations of sensationalism against the press. Responding to reports that Portuguese and French were crossing the border into Spain, Rosado "se lamentó de la campaña de alarma que se hace por algunos periódicos" ("La epidemia en España," *El Sol*, 11 Oct. 1918). He asserted that only Spaniards were allowed to cross, and this because the government took seriously its patriotic duty ("deber patriótico"). In fact, Rosado noted how the Guardia Civil-enforced *cordon sanitaire* was maintained out of a sense of this duty despite the "varias reclamaciones de ambos países beligerantes."

Newspapers were not the only venue where control over information about the epidemic became an issue. In Oviedo, for instance, journalists were denied access to civil archives, presumably to prohibit them from probing the civil registers for morbidity and mortality statistics ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 9 Oct. 1918, 14). In Madrid, the aforementioned *bando* outlining the public health measures being taken was ostensibly publicized "para tranquilidad del vecindario," despite the fact that the epidemic had not at that point entered the capital city ("La salud publica," *ABC*, 15 Oct. 1918, 13). Nor was

language the only means of communication that entered the fray. In numerous areas, the ringing of church bells in eulogy of the dead was prohibited for fear that too much bell ringing would unnecessarily disturb people. Thus, in Alicante, "Las autoridades, para evitar la depresión de ánimos, ha dispuesto que ya no doblen las campanas de la iglesia a muerto, ni siquiera para los funerales" ("La epidemia reinante," *El Liberal*, 15 Sept. 1918, 2).[58] Like silent church bells, certain odors were also an index of effective epidemic intervention.[59] In a letter sent to *El Sol* from Bilbao, the anonymous author reported that "la epidemia ha decrecido mucho aquí, gracias a las enérgicas medidas que ha tomado el Ayuntamiento, ayudado por el gobernador" ("Para el Ministro de la Gobernación," 13 Oct. 1918). These measures included disinfection, about which the author approvingly wrote: "En las iglesias, escuelas, tiendas, oficinas, en fin, en todas partes, se siente ese olor fuerte de ácido fénico, zotal u otros desinfectantes." The article ends with a series of accusatory rhetorical questions: "¿Y en Madrid? ¿Cuándo nos demostrará el alcalde que se ocupa seriamente de evitar la propagación de la gripe? ¿Cuándo podrá decir el ministro de la Gobernación, sin temor a que le rectifiquen, que ha tomado medidas realmente enérgicas?" Once again, the adoption of the first person plural *nosotros* includes *El Sol* as part of the Spanish public while excluding the government. For their part, the mayor of Madrid and the Ministro de Gobernación are simultaneously cast as outsiders and as keepers of the public's health. In fact, their failure to keep the public healthy, implied by the rhetorical questions, highlights their distinction as outsiders, suggesting they should be ostracized from the community as such.

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[58] See also *El Sol*: 30 Sept., 10 and 14 Oct., and 3 Nov.; *ABC* ("La salud pública," 11 Oct. 1918 and "La salud pública," 20 Oct. 1918); *La Vanguardia* ("El estado sanitario," 10 Oct. 1918).

[59] The notion that bad odors cause epidemics appears in the first wave of the epidemic: "Es preciso acabar con los malos olores, estos olores típicos de Madrid, que son raíces y venero de epidemias" ("Raíces de epidemias").

Doctors, too, sought to portray themselves as allies of the Spanish people. To do so, however, they had to simultaneously popularize the legitimacy of their science over and against alternatives and establish themselves as the exclusive experts of it. Doctors were to have exclusive access to a privileged means of understanding and responding to the epidemic. The people were expected not only to respect their authority, but to abandon their homemade remedies. When doctors' knowledge of the epidemic pathogen and their ability, practically speaking, to stop it failed, they deflected criticisms of medicine proper to the shortcomings of the organization of public health generally in Spain and reiterated the mundane nature of the flu. In doing so, they placed themselves in the rather quixotic position of defending the Spanish people against the epidemic threat in a battle that offered little hope of success—either because the organizational shortcomings were too significant to overcome or because the mundane flu was more analogous to a windmill than a giant, the defeat of which commanded little attention or respect. However, this quixotic element hardly figures in any explicit way in flu discourse. Though I believe one can rightly interpret doctors as quixotic, this should not overshadow the fact that the dominant tone of flu discourse tended to heroize doctors without ironizing them.

The fact that doctors sought to establish their social valence during the epidemic by affirming their exclusive access to medical knowledge can be seen in their tendency to adopt a critical tone vis-à-vis the Spanish public, politicians, and the press. Sometime in October, the Inspección de Sanidad and the Ministro de Gobernación sent a three-man commission—comprised of Drs. Marañón, Pittaluga, and Ruiz Falcó—to France to study the epidemic there. On November 4, their report was published in the general press. In

their opening statement, the commission noted how because of the virulence of the second epidemic wave, "comenzaron a infiltrarse en el ánimo del público serias dudas acerca de la naturaleza de la enfermedad" (Marañón et al. 8). (Some in the medical profession were partly at fault, having offered their own "juicios seudocientíficos publicados en la Prensa política"). In fact, public doubt about the nature of the epidemic and a desire to compare Spain's prophylactic measures with those being taken in France were the two reasons cited for sending the commission. In order to pacify public fears, the commission unequivocally declared that the epidemic disease was in fact the flu: "Apresurémonos a declarar que esta identidad es absoluta." The commission's criticism of the other parties involved in the epidemic—the Spanish public, politicians, and the press—was strongest with regard to disinfection measures:

> En cambio, han sido muy limitadas las medidas de desinfección propiamente dichas. Está en el ánimo de todos su absoluta inutilidad. Cuando se han llevado a cabo ha sido más bien por satisfacer a la galería. Suponemos que en España la imposición de tales medidas habrá obedecido a iguales criterios, puramente políticos, y desde luego muy criticables desde el punto de vista de la seriedad científica. Aquí, en Francia, se le ha dado, desde luego, escasísima importancia; incluso por parte del público, que, por cierto, se ha conducido con una serenidad admirable, que hace resaltar aún más el aturdimiento a que se ha entregado el público en nuesto país. Bien es verdad que tampoco han contribuido a sosegarle algunos periódicos españoles, que han comentado excesivamente los estragos de la epidemia; mientras aquí, y en los demás países, la Prensa se limita a reflejar

> muy someramente la opinión de los hombres de ciencia y los consejos y disposiciones oficiales.

The commission used phrases like "desde luego" to suggest that the ineffectiveness of disinfection measures was self evident, which implied the Spanish press, politicians, and public were all ignorant while their French counterparts were knowledgeable. The commission accomplishes the same effect through extremist rhetoric in phrases like "absoluta inutilidad," "puramente políticos," and "excesivamente." This rhetoric also appears when contrasting the reactions of the two countries to fears of contagion along the border: "Es posible que, por parte también de las autoridades sanitarias francesas, se haya cedido algo a las exigencias del público que tenía motivos para temer, por parte de España, el mismo peligro de importación del contagio que tanto preocupó a los españoles durante los meses pasados." As these examples demonstrate, the commission tends to represent Spain as backwards and France as modern. Unlike Spanish public health authorities, those from France were only slightly influenced ("algo") by the public's demand for harsh measures along the border. Moreover, by suggesting that the French people were justified in their fear of contagion ("tenía motivos para temer"), the Spanish commission implicitly marks Spaniards as diseased others.

At the same time, the commission's report was not lacking in self-serving rhetoric. They concluded their comments by noting how "las medidas sanitarias dictadas por nuestra Inspección General de Sanidad coinciden con las tomadas aquí y en los demás países de Europa." The problem posed by the epidemic had less to do with the scientific capability of Spanish medicine specifically than with the state of the medical

sciences generally.[60] In this regard, the commission closed its report by deflecting criticisms of the former back onto those who voiced them: "Deben acogerse, por lo tanto, con serenidad y con respeto las aparentes faltas de eficacia de la acción sanitaria del Estado, siendo de todo punto injusto y revelador de un penoso grado de incultura el hacer responsible de cosas biológicamente irremediables a los organismos y personalidades encargados de la defensa sanitaria de la nación." In short, the commission's report functioned as a microcosm of flu discourse: medical professionals sought to establish themselves as the exclusive authorities on the epidemic by belittling those uninitiated in their discipline.

To bolster their social image, physicians sought to reinforce their epistemological and practical hegemony not just in reference to the epidemic but in general. For example, in early October, Gonzalo Lafora took up the differences between "Charlatanismo y medicina" in a two-part article as part of the regular section dedicated to "Biología y Medicina" in *El Sol*. Although Lafora considered the exaggeration of legitimate scientific discoveries as a form of charlatanism, his purpose in this article was to distinguish between medicine proper and "[ese] charlatanismo bajo e inferior practicado por gentes extrañas a la ciencia" (8 Oct. 1918). One characteristic of this charlatanism was the "repulsión a la investigación científica seria." In its place, the charlatan favored "el empleo de medios o facultades ocultas o desconocidas, a saber: la videncia o doble vista, el magnetismo, las plantas tropicales o nacionales más raras" (15 Oct. 1918). Another

[60] In the defensive rhetoric adopted by both medical and political authorities in flu discourse, their inability to mitigate the epidemic was attenuated by pointing out that medically advanced nations were also hit hard. Thus in an official response to Madrid-based reports criticizing Barcelona authorities' response to the flu, the *ayuntamiento* claimed that, despite taking significant measures, the fight was "poco menos que estéril…como lo prueba el que países tan higienizados como Suiza y Suecia hayan sufrido su azote con tanta ó mayor intensidad que lo sufrimos nosotros" ("El estado sanitario," *La Vanguardia*, 15 Oct. 1918, 10).

trait was the mystery in which the charlatanism was shrouded, often accompanied by the fanaticism of those who believed in the efficacy of a given concoction. Lastly, Lafora mentions the tendency to advertise in the non-professional press while avoiding the professional press. Ultimately, he criticizes charlatanism as anti-progressive and irrational—"El charlatanismo nos vuelve al período precientífico…"—thereby implicitly labeling medicine proper as rational.[61]

In addition to writing articles for the press, doctors popularized their knowledge through direct contact with people in the form of *campañas sanitarias*. In addition to enlightening the public in matters of health, these campaigns also reinforced a particular public image of doctors. On the morning of November 3, Drs. Francos Rodríguez, Juarros, Recasens, Gimeno, and Cortezo spoke at a meeting in the Teatro Español with the express purpose of "da[ndo] a conocer al público lo que debe ser la política sanitaria" ("Estudio de la gripe," *El Liberal*, 4 Nov. 1918, 2). Francos Rodríguez and Recasens both criticized the Spanish state: the former for failing to care for the families of "héroes médicos" who had died, the latter for not improving the land or purifying drinking water. Recasens even incited the public to "rebelarse contra esta incuria de los Gobiernos." Similar to Pittaluga's opinion that doctors would eventually replace politicians in a new Spanish state, Cortezo also envisioned an expanded social role for doctors: "El médico es, y debe ser, algo más que el físico que visita al enfermo, y más que desde el laboratorio lanza al mundo los productos de su laboriosidad y de sus investigaciones: el médico es el higienista, y el higienista es un apóstol" ("El mitin de ayer," *El Sol*, 4 Nov. 1918). As

[61] The term "prescientific" comes from Clarence Farrar who, in an article on "Psychotherapy and the Church," distinguished three periods in the treatment of disease—the prescientific, the empiric, and the rational.

apostles of hygiene, doctors were at the forefront of what Cortezo saw as the "regenera[ción de España] en todos los aspectos de la vida."

Miguel Ángel Gónzalez sees this religious rhetoric surrounding Spanish doctors as part and parcel of the general tendency to emphasize the moral character of medicine in Spain. In contrasting medical responses to the epidemic there and in the U.S., he writes: "Donde de una forma más sobresaliente se aprecia una distinta concepción de la medicina [española] es en la retórica utilizada explícitamente para ensalzar el contenido moral de la labor del médico" (341). American doctors responded to the epidemic out of a sense of professionalism—it was their job—whereas their Spanish counterparts operated out of a combined sense of altruism and duty.[62] This altruism, moreover, was part of the "papel 'sacerdotal'" (343) played by doctors who were often heroized, in some cases even being likened to Christ: "'El hombre que salva muere por salvar, como Cristo'" (340).[63]

This heroization was not always reducible to rhetoric. In his harangue against the transmission of the flu via soldiers returning home on leave, Gonzalo Lafora praised the physician of Santa María (Soria) for helping nearby *pueblos*, all of them 10–20 kilometers away and each with at least 100 sick. Although recently married (six days earlier, only three of which he was able to spend with his new bride), the physician "trabaj[ó] día y noche sin descansar," for which Lafora recommended he receive the *Cruz de Beneficencia* ("La epidemia en la provincial de Soria"). In San Sebastián, one Dr. Castillo visited 200 patients per day ("La salud pública en España," *El Liberal*, 2 Oct. 1918, 1). The doctor of Vega de Liébana (Santander) reportedly visited 300 patients per

[62] Ángel Gónzalez uses the contradictory phrase "obligado altruismo profesional" (338).
[63] The citation comes from an anonymous letter to *La Medicina Ibera*.

day, despite lacking medications ("El estado sanitario," *El Sol*, 8 Nov. 1918). These doctors' efforts show the difficulty of dismissing outright their representations in the press. No doubt the medical profession was well served by positive news coverage, but this should not discount how well Spaniards were served by those medical professionals who, often for a pittance, placed their own lives at risk to practice their healing profession.

Individual physicians writing in the press—whether general or professional—were not the only ones to positively portray the medical profession. Various medical organizations also took measures to legitimate, specifically, the role of doctors in the epidemic, and that of medicine generally in Spanish society. On October 9, the Real Consejo de Sanidad voted to recommend "confianza en las medidas que se adopten [frente a la epidemia] y obediencia a las prescripciones que se señalen" ("El estado sanitario," *El Sol*, 10 Oct. 1918). Madrid's Junta Provincial de Sanidad "acordó sostener el prestigio de las autoridades sanitarias por su conducta en las actuales circunstancias y por la lucha titánica que tienen que sostener…" ("Noticias de la epidemia," *El Sol*, 25 Oct. 1918). One way the medical profession sought to secure its social standing was by arguing for reforms in public health organization. In its October 22 session, Madrid's Junta Provincial de Sanidad also voted on various matters of public health organization, the results of which they then presented to undersecretary Rosado. These measures included a call for the state to provide a pension for the families of doctors who had died during the epidemic, a complaint against the "honorarios mezquinos" offered to physicians who had traveled to "sitios contagiados" to render service, a vote to "[d]eclinar en las autoridades gubernativas el fracaso de la actual organización sanitaria,

que inutiliza a la clase médica," and the call to replace the outdated "instrucción de Sanidad…[con] una ley de Sanidad que responda cumplidamente a sus altos fines y que retribuya como es de justicia los esfuerzos de la clase médica, satisfaciendo sus legítimas aspiraciones" ("Noticias de la epidemia," *El Sol*, 23 Oct. 1918). These last two points, with their emphasis on the outdated organization of Spanish public health, and especially the inefficient use of physicians, highlights, in Ángel Gónzalez's words, the "antiguo modelo beneficentista y paternalista todavía vigente [en España durante la epidemia gripal]" (343). In Spain, the medical response to the flu epidemic was marked by the transition from this archaic model of public health to what we now call the modern social welfare state. Only in light of this transition does the otherwise perplexing combination in flu discourse of the rhetorical heroization of doctors, the legitimation of medicine *qua* science, and the critique of Spain's public health infrastructure make sense.

The public image of medical professionals was actually enhanced by contrasting their critiques of Spain's public health organization with reports of their own efforts to address the epidemic. Press reports about the various agreements (*acuerdo*) made by organizations like the juntas de sanidad abound. These reports complemented portrayals of doctors as humane heroes by suggesting they were also rational, collaborative characters. Numerous types of *acuerdos* were made, including decisions to officially declare or not declare the existence of the epidemic ("La salud en España," *ABC*, 26 Sept. 1918, 11; "La salud pública," *ABC*, 7 Oct. 1918, 16), petitions for personnel and supplies ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 18 Oct. 1918, 17), official diagnosis of the epidemic pathogen as the flu ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 10 Oct. 1918, 14), the closing and reopening of schools ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 28 Sept. 1918, 14–15), petitions to temporarily

suspend trials by jury (*ABC*, 26 sept., 12), the suspension of shows and fairs ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 28 Sept. 1918, 15), the authorization of credit to "atender a las necesidades originadas por la epidemia" ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 9 Oct. 1918, 15), and the disinfection of the mail ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 10 Oct. 1918, 16). Again, the point is that the press, in reporting these measures, reiterated the notion that they were the result of the rational, collaborative efforts of medical professionals. This no doubt fostered the image of their being in control of the epidemic situation.

Doctors and medical organizations implicitly buttressed this image of their being in control of the epidemic by minimizing the magnitude of the epidemic problem. They did this by reducing the disease to the flu. I have already shown above that the epidemic was perceived as benign during the first wave, a perception that obtained despite a measure of incertitude about the identity of the disease. In contrast, almost as soon as the second epidemic wave began, medical authorities sought to "acabar con la confusion que, sobre la identidad del proceso, se había creado de nuevo…" (Porras Gallo, *Ciudad en crisis*, 302). On the floor of the Senate, Espina adamantly declared: "La epidemia actual es una epidemia completamente conocida. No es nueva, ni en España ni en la historia médica; es una de tantas epidemias de gripe que, por desgracia, han asolado no sólo a España, sino a todo el mundo conocido…" (qtd. in Porras Gallo, *Ciudad en crisis*, 304). His perspective starkly contrasts with that of the aforementioned Sánchez de Val, for whom the epidemic represented "[un] hecho nuevo."

The various medical institutions also threw their weight behind a flu diagnosis. In their October 9 session, the Real Consejo de Sanidad agreed to "[c]onfirmar, en vista de los informes técnicos recibidos, que la enfermedad que se padece con carácter epidémico

en España es la gripe…" ("El estado sanitario," *El Sol*, 10 Oct. 1918). Notwithstanding the various efforts to reduce the pathogen to the flu, Porras Gallo has noted how "en vez de disipar dudas, [los resultados del laboratorio] fueron responsables de gran parte de las vacilaciones que surgieron sobre la identidad de la enfermedad epidémica" (*Ciudad en crisis*, 303). Moreover, she notes that the conflicting information could easily have promoted "un intenso debate en el seno de la Real Academia [de Medicina] (RAM) sobre dicha cuestión" (306). Such was not the case, however (306). Rather, it seems the RAM was more interested in moving beyond the question of the disease's classification to the issue of its etiology (306). Citing the October 26 session of the RAM, Huertas reiterated in the general press the belief that "la epidemia actual es sólo de gripe" ("La salud pública," *El Liberal*, 31 Oct. 1918).

Despite the numerous reassurances that, in fact, Spain was *only* suffering a flu epidemic, *El Liberal* implicitly took to task both medical and government authorities for playing word games: "Es la gripe sólo, cierto. Pero el nombre no hace la cosa. Lo mismo da que se llame gripe que peste infernal, si el resultado es que se muere la gente víctima de la epidemia que mina al país" ("La salud pública en España," 12 Oct. 1918, 2). *El Liberal* criticized these officials for either failing to see past the mundane veneer of the flu or for hiding behind it: "Y aquí vamos a anotar la escasa alarma oficial frente a los estragos de esta epidemia de sencillo nombre…por el hecho de tener nombre sencillo." In doing so, *El Liberal* also called attention to the impact of language. The lack of official alarm stemmed solely from what the word (*nombre*) *flu* connoted. Furthermore, *El Liberal* went so far as to accuse the government of censoring information, citing a six-month delay in the publication of the public health bulletin, which included demographic

statistics presumably about the epidemic: "¡Ah, si este mal pudiera paliarse con la censura previa!...Pero es más fácil poner mordaza en el comentario de los periódicos que prevenir medidas que inmunicen a un país o que atajen una epidemia al iniciarse su curso." That these criticisms of the government were part of the press' rhetorical ploy for the loyalty of the Spanish public becomes more clear by the claim that "[t]odo el país cree que debe ponerse in[m]ediatamente remedio a los estragos de este enemigo que se nos ha entrado por las puertas." *El Liberal*'s implied message was that the government remained at odds with the entire country by playing word games instead of taking concrete measures to mitigate the epidemic.

Certain prominent socialists added their voices to *El Liberal*'s. Julián Besteiro, in a parliamentary debate about the epidemic, ridiculed the lopsided representations of politicians and doctors on the one hand and the people on the other: "'Parecía…que los ministros eran perfectos, y que los inspectores de Sanidad perfectísimos y perfectísimo el servicio sanitario, y que sólo son imperfectos los ciudadanos que tienen la mala costumbre de morirse'" ("La salud pública," *El Liberal*, 24 Oct. 1918). Besteiro ironized the official story of the response to the epidemic—including the sanitized representations of health inspectors and ministers as perfect—by facetiously blaming citizens for their bad habit of dying. Pablo Iglesias also criticized the government for its lack of attention to public health. Writing from the pages of *El Socialista*, in an article entitled "Todo desorganizado. Una prueba más," he declared: "Nada se ha visto que indique verdadera organización, ni preparación seria, ni la prevision más insignificante. Sólo se ha podido observar abandono, descuido y barullo, cuando no indiferencia y crueldad…" (1).

In contrast to the way physicians were (self-)represented in the press, there was a generalized trend to portray the Spanish public as particularly susceptible to panic or alarm.[64] *ABC* articulated the matter in this way: "Poco a poco van señalándose casos de la epidemia en Madrid. La alarma no se hará esperar, y sólo puede contenerla o aliviarla la certeza de que las autoridades han adoptado todas las prevenciones posibles" ("La gripe," 1 Oct. 1918, 12). The fact that *only* the actions of authorities could mollify the masses implicitly reinforced the assumption that they (i.e., the authorities) were rational and the public, irrational. In one of his few public statements, Martín Salzar purportedly stated: "La opinión…debe estar tranquila y confiar en que el Gobierno y las autoridades ponen en ejecución cuantos medios hábiles tiene a su alcance y previenen la higiene y la ciencia médica para reducir el mal y restablecer cuanto autes…la normalidad sanitaria en España" ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 5 Oct. 1918, 11). *El Liberal* echoed this opinion: "es necesario que haya en todos serenidad, que se eviten los motivos de alarmas infundadas y que, desechándose los consejos del empirismo, se observen sin restricción las prácticas recomendadas por los higienistas" ("La salud pública en España," 19 Oct. 1918). Empiricism referred to the extra-official practice of medicine (i.e., *curanderismo*). *El Liberal*'s preference for the counsel of hygienists over that of empiricists not only

[64] See *El Liberal* ("Otra vez la gripe;" "La epidemia de gripe;" "La epidemia reinante;" "La gripe en toda España;" "La salud pública," 19 Sept. 1918; "La salud pública," 24 Sept. 1918; "La salud pública," 30 Sept. 1918; "La salud pública en España," 1 Oct. 1918, 1-2; "La salud pública en España," 2 Oct. 1918, 1-2; "La salud pública en España," 3 Oct. 1918, 1-2; "La salud pública en España," 5 Oct. 1918; "La salud pública en España," 6 Oct. 1918; "La salud pública en España," 8 Oct. 1918; "La salud pública," 9 Oct. 1918; "La salud pública en España," 11 Oct. 1918; "La salud pública en España," 13 Oct. 1918; "La salud pública en España," 15 Oct. 1918; "La salud pública en España," 16 Oct. 1918; "La salud pública en España," 17 Oct. 1918; "La salud pública en España," 18 Oct. 1918; "La salud pública en España," 19 Oct. 1918; "La salud pública en España," 21 Oct. 1918; "La salud pública en España," 22 Oct. 1918; "La salud pública," 29 Oct. 1918; and "La salud pública," 31 Oct. 1918; "Estudio de la gripe;" "La gripe en Málaga;" *El Sol* (: 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, 20, 23, 26, 27, and 28 Sept.; 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 23, 24, 25, 26, 30, and 31 Oct.; 1, 2, and 3 Nov.; 5 and 28 Dec. 1918); and *El Socialista* ("La epidemia gripal," 1 Oct. 1918; "La epidemia se extiende," 9 Oct. 1918; "Los estragos de la gripe," 16 Oct. 1918; and "Los estragos de la gripe," 28 Oct. 1918).

reinforced the positive image of medical science, but also implied that following empiricists constituted a motive for alarm. The message was that alarm could be avoided if only everyone would heed the counsel of those officially appointed to address the epidemic. Without these officials, however, the irrational *público* was destined to panic.

As I mentioned above, the image of medical professionals as humane, understanding persons was often accomplished by contrasting them with the emotionally volatile *público*. For example, in Barcelona, the university rector, trained in medicine, decided to call for the closure of classes in deference to public opinión:

> Terminó el rector manifestando que aunque como médico y como padre creía que no había peligro alguno en que las aulas permaneciesen abiertas, como lo probaba el hecho de que consintiera que su hijo asista á aquéllas, como rector, percatado del estado de opinión de Barcelona, reflejado en los artículos publicados por la prensa local, no queriendo ir en contra de tal estado de opinión, había rogado al gobernador civil que convocara para hoy á la Junta de Sanidad en cuya reunión propondrá el cierre de las clases á partir del día de mañana. ("El estado sanitario," *La Vanguardia*, 10 Oct. 1918)

The rector's actions simultaneously reinforce his image as dutiful public servant and intelligent, rational, and humane individual. On one hand, he evinces a willingness to suspend classes. On the other, his own belief that classes *could* remain open is based on his identity as both a doctor and a father.

Given the assumed propensity for the *pueblo español* to panic, one might expect to find numerous stories about social unrest during the epidemic. However, such stories are, in fact, very few and far between. I have not found a single case of looting

pharmacies or fighting over medical or other supplies. Some reports of non-compliance issues do exist, such as when people refused to adopt stipulated hygiene measures, or to clean their homes upon doctors' orders.[65] Other times one reads of protests, such as the one made by citizens of Vallada (Valencia). When the physicians from a neighboring town, who had been called in by some of Vallada's wealthy citizens, tried to leave "el pueblo no quería dejarles marchar, pues ya que habían visitado a los ricos, que visitaran a los pobres" ("La salud pública," *El Liberal*, 25 Sept. 1918). The citizens of Marmolejo (Jaén) protested reports by Madrid's *La Acción* that cases of bubonic plague had shown up in their town ("La salud pública en España," *El Liberal*, 3 Oct. 1918, 4).[66] In Sevilla, the common patients of a hospital, upon learning that an "enfermo sospechoso" had been admitted, "se alborotaron, intentando marcharse del Hospital" ("La salud pública," *El Liberal*, 24 Sept. 1918, 2). Still other times, neighbors (*el vecindario*) refused to help the sick for fear of contagion ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 5 Oct. 1918, 11). Cases of violence *per se*, however, are extremely rare. In Elche (Alicante), the quantity of sick outpaced doctors' ability to visit them to the degree that "se han dado casos de violencia para llevarlos a visitar, sin que guardasen turno de llamada" ("La salud pública en España," *El Liberal*, 11 Oct. 1918, 2). In Cádiz, "las fuerzas vivas de la población" visited the mayor to protest the installation of a lazaretto in the middle of town ("La salud pública," *ABC*,

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[65] See, for example, *ABC* ("La salud pública," 16 Oct. 1918 and "La salud pública," 17 Oct. 1918); *El Liberal* ("La salud pública," 30 Sept. 1918 and "La salud pública en España," 21 Oct. 1918.

[66] The plague was also erroneously rumored to have appeared in Cádiz (*El Sol*, 8 Nov., 4). Nor was the general populace alone in finding the plague. In Salamanca, Dr. Iñigo Maldonado reportedly determined that "el bacilo productor de la enfermedad, que tantos estragos está causando en casi todas las regiones de España…[era] muy semejante a los productores de la peste bubónica" (*El Sol*, 30 Oct., 4). D. Jesús Centeno, editor in chief of *Andalucía Médica*, claimed the same "bacilo seudo-pestoso" discovered by Maldonado was found a month earlier in the same region by Sevillian Drs. Seras and Franco ("La salud en España," *ABC*, 3 Nov. 1918, 14). On November 1, the *Gaceta Médica Balear* reported Ramón y Cajal's findings that disproved the link between the epidemic and the plague. Cajal's findings were not reported in the major newspapers (Sobre un descubrimiento" 12).

23 Oct. 1918, 15). In response, the mayor decided instead to use the top floor of the provincial library as a provisional hospital. Neighbors from this part of town, however, also protested and the situation was reported as being "muy violenta."

The lengthiest press account of violent actions by the public comes from Sevilla where a "juzgado de instrucción" was dispatched to "instruir diligencias relacionadas con la reciente gripe en el pueblo de Santiponce" ("Después de la gripe," *El Liberal*). The neighbors of the town received the *juzgado* "con actitud francamente hostil," though no reason was given for their attitude. *El Liberal* then mentions how a group of forensic doctors and journalists disinterred some of the victims (presumably of the epidemic). For some unspecified reason, a judge ordered that five neighbors be detained. While taking their declarations, more than 600 people gathered in the street "pidiendo en actitud amenazadora que fueron libertados los cinco detenidos." The lone Guardia Civil agent was ordered to seek help from a neighboring town. The judge called the local authorities. However, they refused to help, citing a lack of sufficient forces, a situation for which they blamed the governor. Although he sustained "diversos altercados," the judge was reported to have maintained his dignity the entire time. The forensic doctors and journalists, one of whom had a contusion on his hand, left for Sevilla to inform the governor of what was taking place. The governor sent in the proverbial cavalry—a section of the Guardia Civil—who dispersed the protesters, "logrando [así] restablecer el orden." Although the article does not causally link the citizens' behavior to their resistance to these disinterments, its organization makes this the likeliest interpretation.

One of the most suggestive representations of the Spanish *pueblo* as panic-prone comes from a curious episode that took place in the province of Toledo. Apparently, a

certain individual sent to render medical assistance, and who carried a Real Orden signed by the Subsecretario de Gobernación, was discovered to be an imposter. In the "Informes Oficiales" section of *ABC*'s story of the event, it was reported that "[s]e le ha retirado la credencial, y ha pasado a disposición de los Tribunales" ("La salud pública," 23 Oct. 1918, 14). Conversely, in a subsequent section, it was claimed that, having realized he had been outed, the phony doctor left under pretense of going to dinner "cuando estaba a punto de ser linchado por el vecindario." By juxtaposing the reaction of the authorities with that of the neighbors, the article reinforces the association of the former with reason and the latter with irrationality. Whereas the authorities turn the case over to the legal system, the neighbors seek their own barbaric justice to satisfy their visceral desire for violence. It is also important to note that no actual violence was reported. To refer to the *vecindario*'s desire to lynch the specious physician represents the bias of the journalist at least as much as it does reality.

As I have argued, these examples of social unrest or violence were largely exceptional. The generally tranquil behavior of Spaniards was so pervasive that it even surprised Pablo Iglesias who, in *El Socialista*, wrote: "Lo verdaderamente sorprendente, lo casi maravilloso es que el pueblo español que da lo necesario, y más que lo necesario, para que todos los servicios estén bien atendidos no se levante como un solo hombre contra los culpables de la estupenda desorganización o no lleve a cabo siquiera una formidable protesta" (1). To be sure, one could argue that Iglesias was capitalizing on a rhetorical opportunity to take the government to task over its inadequate response to the epidemic, especially as it negatively impacted the lower classes. However, even so, in a period marked by increasing social tensions—tensions that often led to large-scale social

disruptions like the events of the previous year—the sparse number of violent episodes casts a shadow of doubt over the convention of representing the Spanish public as an alarmed mob in need of containment.

In this vein, it seems appropriate to offer some counter-examples of unheroic doctors and selfless citizens as a corrective to this dominant convention of representing physicians and laypersons. In Almería, doctors reportedly charged patients 7.50 pesetas per visit and refused to write prescriptions without first being paid ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 22 Oct. 1918, 16). The town doctor and pharmacist in Blanca (Murcia) refused to assist people because they said the government owed them too much money. When residents tried to send a telegram denouncing their refusal to help, the mayor intercepted the message, forcing them to travel to a neighboring town to send their complaint ("El estado sanitario," *El Sol*, 9 Oct. 1918). In contrast, during his visit to San Sebastián to assess the public health measures being taken, García Prieto traveled to Behovia where he witnessed Spanish women passing bread and other foodstuffs to French women in baskets suspended on ropes ("La epidemia en España," *El Sol*, 11 Oct. 1918). In Torquemada (Palencia), a group of residents proved officials were not the only ones who could organize their efforts—they formed a commission to request assistance from the authorities ("La epidemia de gripe," *El Sol*, 3 Oct. 1918). On October 21, *ABC* reported numerous examples of spontaneous philanthropy. In response to passengers of the Infanta Isabel who had lost their luggage, "la población [de Tenerife], con movimiento espontáneo y generoso, ha empezado a enviar al lazareto cantidades en metálico y de ropas, calzados, etc." ("La salud pública" 12). Lastly, many people in the province of

Palencia offered to serve as nurses without pay ("La salud pública," *ABC*, 23 Oct. 1918, 15).

Although these examples of magnanimous citizenship include individuals and groups, they are isolated and occur in flu discourse only sporadically. Represented in this fashion, these shining examples of selfless citizenship never carry the rhetorical weight of the masses. As a result, although examples of individual Spaniards provide exceptions to the general rule that the Spanish people as a whole, because of their irrationality, represented a danger that must be contained, the rule obstinately obtains throughout flu discourse. Not surprisingly, and as I noted earlier, of the various groups discussed in this chapter—physicians, politicians, the press, the people—only *el público* had no voice in flu discourse. If physicians, politicians, and the press all engaged in the public debate about the epidemic as subjects, *el público* always remained an object to be represented. In this sense, Jo Labanyi's argument about the working classes in Restoration Spain applies to *el público* of "Spanish" flu discourse: "The Restoration…cannot be accused of 'betraying the working classes' because it never promised to include them in 'society'" ("Relocating Difference" 173). Given that *el público* was constitutively excluded from Spanish society, is it any wonder they were perceived as a danger in flu discourse?

To conclude, I want to suggest that the relegation of the Spanish public to the bottom of the social totem pole in flu discourse betrays what might be called the monstrous/mundane dynamic of "Spanish" flu discourse. The increased virulence of the flu during the second epidemic wave suggests that the disease had become a legitimate empirical threat, in other words, monstrous. On the other hand, the medical profession insisted the epidemic was just the flu, a supposedly mundane disease. The supposedly

mundane nature of the flu created expectations about how the epidemic would progress. However, these expectations contrasted sharply with Spaniards' experience of the epidemic. It is this tension between expectations and experience that defines the monstrous/mundane dynamic of "Spanish" flu discourse. In the present chapter, I have discussed one discursive response to this dynamic: the distinction drawn between an "epidemic Spain" and a "sanitary Spain." This distinction allowed those in positions of power, especially medical professionals, to emphasize action over explanation. Rather than engage in protracted debates about the identity of the epidemic disease, they accepted the flu diagnosis and then went to work. In the next chapter, I will discuss a different discursive response to the monstrous/mundane dynamic of flu discourse, one that privileges explanation over action. Specifically, I will show how the cultural figure of Don Juan is invoked to mediate the tension between the two opposing terms of the monstrous/mundane dynamic.

Chapter 2: Figuring (out) the Epidemic: Don Juan, the *Soldado de Nápoles*, and the "Spanish" Flu

> Diseases understood to be *simply* epidemic have become less useful as metaphors, as evidenced by the near-total historical amnesia about the influenza pandemic of 1918–19.
>
> –Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor*, 71

On November 17, 1916, a one-act *zarzuela* titled *La canción del olvido*, with libretto by Federico Romero and Guillermo Fernández Shaw and music by José Serrano, debuted in Valencia's Teatro Lírico. The play was originally scheduled to premiere in February of 1916 at Madrid's Apollo Theater, though tensions between Serrano and the Sociedad de Autores Españoles prevented the show from going on. As a result, Serrano left for Valencia where, with the help of his compatriot José Navarro, he rented the Trianón cinema, turning it into the Teatro Lírico. Dedicated entirely to representing works from Serrano's repertoire, the new theater's first performance was *La canción del olvido*. The play was an instant success and continued to be performed for a year and a half, traveling to Barcelona, Bilbao, and Zaragoza, before finally premiering in Madrid at the Teatro de la Zarzuela on March 1, 1918. As it had elsewhere, the play experienced "un éxito descomunal" in the Spanish capital and was staged through the end of the theater season (15 June) (Romero, qtd. in Encina Cortizo 379).

Apparently considering the play's success a stroke of fortune given the historical timing of its premiere in Madrid, Romero remarked how it "[s]oportó heroicamente la terrible epidemia de gripe apodada 'el soldado de Nápoles' porque esta serenata era tan pegadiza como la enfermedad, aunque menos mortífera" (qtd. in Encina Cortizo 380). Similarly, Echeverri has remarked how "[l]a gripe era motivo de broma y se le apodó con el nombre de 'soldado de Nápoles' por una canción de una popular operetta que decían

era tan pegadiza como la gripe" (84). Indeed, as history would have it, the 1918 theatrical run of *La canción del olvido* coincided with the first wave of the "Spanish" flu epidemic. As a result, the epidemic that has come to be known throughout the world as the "Spanish" flu was actually dubbed the *soldado de Nápoles* in Spain. Before long, *soldados de Nápoles* were showing up in editorial cartoons, advertisements, and even in articles by medical authorities.

But what does a one-act musical operetta have to do with a flu epidemic? Is it, as Romero quipped, simply a matter of the one being as catchy as the other? Can we reduce it, as Echeverri seems to do, to a "motivo de broma"? Or are there deeper reasons tucked away in the nether recesses of the Spanish cultural psyche? What makes these questions so provocative is the fact that despite the ubiquity of the *soldado de Nápoles* in the Spanish public sphere, the epidemic has left only the slimmest of traces in the so-called artistic sphere. Other than the various editorial cartoons that deal with the "Spanish" flu, I have found only three references to the epidemic in artistic works: a 1919 *zarzuela* titled *Pulmonía doble*; another that debuted October 1, 1918, titled *El soldado de Nápoles*; and Josep Pla's chronicle, *El Quadern Gris*. Curiously enough, the *zarzuela El soldado de Nápoles* has little to do, as one might have expected, with the flu epidemic. Rather, it tells the story of a bullfighter nicknamed "el Soldado de Nápoles." Only once does the text directly relate the bullfighter's nickname to the epidemic. In a review of the play for *ABC*, an anonymous writer commented how "[l]os Sres. López Monis y O'Ley no aluden, como por el título era de presumir, en su sainete estrenado anoche, a la epidemia

gripal que ha invadido actualmente media España, sino a la otra especie de epidemia o fiebre taurina que padecen la mayoría de los españoles" ("Notas teatrales").[67]

It might well be argued that to hazard a guess as to why the *soldado de Nápoles* came to characterize the "Spanish" flu is to resort to conjecture. And no doubt any conclusions would remain strongly qualified. But the unknowability of *why* the connection was made does little to make sense of the fact *that* it was. In other words, if historical vicissitude has bequeathed us with such an awkward association of art and epidemiology, the critic's task must take this awkward association as his point of departure. As I noted in the introduction, the play happens to be one of many period treatments of the Don Juan story. This point is important because it not only casts the epidemic in theatrical terms, but it also binds flu discourse to Don Juan discourse in such a way as to establish a metaphorical bridge over which issues common (and perhaps uncommon) can and do traffic. As Mark Turner has argued, "the ability to activate simultaneously, without confusion, two or more different stories that conflict resolutely" plays a fundamental role in human cognition and, in fact, is part of what makes us "cognitively modern" (24, 5). In what follows, I will articulate this astoundingly provocative metaphorical link between the flu epidemic and Don Juan. In doing so, I maintain that Don Juan is an eminently social figure, extending beyond Aestheticist boundaries of art. Far from a humorous footnote to the epidemic, the link between the flu and Don Juan provides privileged insights into Spaniards' experience of the epidemic that are otherwise inaccessible. To understand this better, I will first turn to the *zarzuela* itself to determine what elements of *La canción del olvido* inform flu discourse. I will then discuss key texts that render explicit the link between the Don Juan figure and flu

[67] My thanks to Ignacio Jassa Haro for calling my attention to this review.

discourse. Finally, I will focus my attention specifically on the figure of the *soldado de Nápoles*.

Although it may be impossible to assert why Spaniards referred to the flu epidemic as the *soldado de Nápoles*, I will argue that the Don Juan figure operates as a template for the social processing of the epidemic. In other words, the figure of the *soldado de Nápoles* enabled Spaniards 1) to speak about something that had no available cultural script from which they could take cues and, 2) to process the monstrous/mundane dynamic of flu discourse. As I explained in the introduction, the discrepancy between Spaniards' expectations vis-à-vis the epidemic, activated by the flu diagnosis, and their actual experience of it, left Spaniards on slippery cognitive ground. They were not entirely sure how to speak about or process their experience. Throughout this chapter it will be important to keep in mind the following question: to what degree does the initial association of the epidemic with the *soldado de Nápoles* shape subsequent flu discourse? In other words, is Spaniards' ambivalence about the epidemic reflected in or conditioned by flu discourse? I maintain that the specific ending of *La canción del olvido* filled in the narrative gap left open by the fact that the end of the epidemic lay somewhere off in the future, thus providing prospective closure to an experience that by its nature remained unresolved.

La canción del olvido

La canción del olvido is set in the imaginary city of Sorrentinos, Naples in 1799. Rosina, a 20-year-old princess, follows Captain Leonello to Sorrentinos, arriving four days after he does. In those four days Leonello is involved in four amorous adventures and has his sights set on Flora Goldoni when Rosina arrives. Rosina overhears Leonello's

conversation with his companions in which he reveals his plan to seduce Flora and decides to intervene to win Leonello over for herself. She hatches a plan in which she convinces the musician Toribio to play her husband. As Rosina's husband, Toribio is to try his own luck seducing Flora. Meanwhile, Rosina, dressed as Toribio's page, intercepts Leonello on his way to Flora's and convinces him to take revenge on Toribio by going after his wife (Rosina). Unlike Tirso's or Zorrilla's Don Juans, for example, Leonello remains ignorant of his developing role in Rosina's plan while other characters like Casilda, Toribio, and Rosina are constantly in the know. The librettists maintain Leonello's ignorance through an interesting twist on Zorrilla's model. When the hotelier asks whether he should speak to Leonello about Rosina, she responds: "¡Líbrete Dios! No le dirás mi nombre aunque te lo pague á peso de oro" (11). She, then, not Leonello, is the nameless lover of the play. However, unlike various other interpretations of Don Juan, Rosina seems more intent on shoring up social mores through her "conquest" of Leonello—their happily-ever-after ending—than she does on leaving a woeful trace of social disruption in the wake of her promiscuous exploits: "[c]on dinero y verdadero amor no hay nada imposible. El capitán debe venir á mí, debe quererme" (13). For his part, true love also effects a change in Leonello, effectively breaking his cycle of seduction. At the beginning of the play, he is a heartless womanizer. In their first conversation, the hotelier informs Rosina that "El capitán Leonello no se enamora de nadie. . . No tiene corazón" (12). Later, in Leonello's first musical number, he sings: "'Mujer / primorosa clavellina / que brindas el amor, / yo soy caminante / que al pasar / arranca las hojas de la flor / y sigue adelante sin recordar tu amor'" (15). As his confession to Rosina in part three insinuates, however, Leonello's repentance seems to be

genuine: "Un cariño / verdadero / dormidito en el alma tenía, / y, al mirarme / junto á vos, / mi cariño despertó" (47). Three specific characteristics of Leonello stand out from this stanza: his wanderlust ("caminante / que al pasar"), his reduction of women to amorous conquests ("Mujer, / primorosa clavellina"), and the implied repetition of his seduction ("sigue adelante"). The song continues with references to other components of a traditional Don Juan story: bribed *criadas*, duels with rivals, and plenty of prevaricating (16). When, however, he arrives at Rosina's room, he is seized by a newfound sense of propriety. He decides to leave rather than take advantage of the sleeping Rosina, though as he makes to leave, Rosina wakes up and castigates him for his impropriety at having entered her room. He confesses his love and she openly hints that he should pursue this love. Ultimately, Rosina reveals her scheme and the play ends with their implied marriage. Whatever the nuances of the dynamic of desire from, say, a psychoanalytical perspective, Rosina's emphasis that Leonello "debe quererme" suggests that their "verdadero amor" serves to reinforce social mores. As James Mandrell argues: "seduction serves the aims of patriarchal society, and. . .it does so quite well by means of the appropriation and elaboration of the *burlador* and his story" (279).[68]

The three elements of *La canción del olvido* that bear suggestive relation to the flu epidemic are the roles of *mise en abyme* and re-writing and the play's ending. *La canción*

[68] It is not entirely clear how Mandrell defines patriarchal society. Although Girardian and psychoanalytical perspectives figure throughout his work, he does not necessarily limit himself to an outright acceptance of them *in toto*. Moving as he does from medieval times to at least the 19th century, one can understand the difficulty in arriving at a unified definition of the term. In this study, I am concerned only with maintaining the structure of Mandrell's astute analysis of Don Juan without necessarily endorsing his implicitly negative assessment of "patriarchal" society. This does not mean that I would in any way justify unequal treatment based on sexual criteria. It simply means that I am not as concerned with judging the value of, in this case, the resolution of *La canción del olvido*—reading the union between Leonello and Rosina as either ideology or happy ending—as I am with recognizing how the resolution through the union of Rosina and Leonello serves a social function (or at least has social repercussions). For more on this problem of resolving the "battle of the sexes" as it relates to contemporary society, see Steven Pinker's *The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature*.

del olvido is, in many ways, the imbrication of two framed plays: the first is the plan hatched by Leonello to woo Flora; the second, Rosina's plan to conquer Leonello. It would not be difficult to argue that the driving force of the play is just such an imbrication, for it forms the basis of the dramatic *enredo*. In other words, the play's denouement deals specifically with the resolution of these two competing plays within a play. *La canción del olvido* is not just a love story about Rosina and Leonello, but a play that pits two authors and their stories against one another. The happy ending depends on Rosina's story winning out over Leonello's. In this regard, the play's self-referentiality corroborates Mandrell's affirmation that re-writing is central to the Don Juan story, literarily and critically. It is no surprise, then, that the end of the first *cuadro* contains a stock reference to Don Juan's letter, with the concomitant interpretive potential associated with the Spanish term *papel*. Though this key term does not actually appear in *La canción del olvido*, it would be a mistake to discard the connection between "role" and "paper" embodied in the term *papel*, especially given that *La canción del olvido* is performed in a cultural context in which the importance of the letter would not have been lost on its audience. The stage directions read: "*Leonello, sugestionado ya, ha vuelto á la celosía. Cuando Rosina dice los últimos versos, él, sin darse apenas cuenta de lo que hace, rompe el sobre y sus trozos se le van cayendo de las manos*" (25, italics in the original). Leonello's semi-consciousness in shredding his letter is important because it is not until the end of the play that his new "role" in Rosina's love story is assured. His is a symbolic gesture that effectively signals the beginning of the end of one story—his own as a run-of-the-mill Don Juan—and the beginning of a new one—in which he abandons his seductive ways to marry Rosina.

I have suggested that the structure of *mise en abyme* and the propensity to re-write are key factors in the metaphorical connection between *La canción del olvido* and the flu epidemic. The former draws the spectator into the story, causing the spectator/reader to do something of a double take in an effort to determine the frame in which she finds herself, while the latter signals the openness of a given storyline. What I propose is that these structures of Don Juan discourse provide a methodological model for writing and reading—and by extension, experiencing and processing—the story of the flu epidemic.[69]

The flu is cast as the Don Juan protagonist in the play that is the "Spanish" flu epidemic. As the infamous *burlador*, the flu threatens Spanish society, which prompts society's best efforts to contain and neutralize the threat. If this interpretation strikes one as frivolous or even somewhat *cursi*, it nevertheless emanates from the discourse itself. This is one reason the cultural narrative of the "Spanish" flu is so provocative. The value of my "reading" of the flu epidemic does not lie in the degree of precision to which one can create a *dramatis personae* based on *La canción del olvido* or *Don Juan Tenorio*. Rather, given that the connection between Don Juan and the flu emanates from flu discourse, it lies in illuminating how the basic structures of Don Juan discourse—*mise en abyme* and the propensity to re-write—serve to mediate the monstrous-mundane dynamic of flu discourse.

Don Juan and the "Spanish" flu

Consider, for instance, the humorous editorial by José Escofet entitled "Comentarios leves. El 'Tenorio' inoportuno," which appeared in *La Vanguardia* on October 26, 1918. Although the connection between Don Juan and the flu epidemic

[69] To be sure, the experience of the epidemic contains myriad narratives in embryo. This fact does not, however, negate the "Don Juan-flu" narrative, especially in light of how prominent this narrative was.

originated long before Escofet's editorial, his text is valuable because of how specifically it spells out the metaphorical link between the literary figure and the epidemic. In fact, it is noteworthy that Escofet's text appears at the height of the most virulent wave of the epidemic, when the greatest amount of attention was being paid to the flu. In a way, he coherently illuminates the story that Spaniards had been living for the last five months. In his brief article, tucked away on page eight, he provides the clearest example of how the connection between Don Juan and the "Spanish" flu was perceived by Spaniards. In fact, to read Escofet is to read nothing less than the re-writing of the foundational Spanish ritual associated with *Don Juan Tenorio*, which strikes at the very core of *lo español*. In such deep waters, no wonder humor is his preferred mode. Indeed, even before the title, one reads the framing words: "comentarios leves." In his opening paragraph, Escofet references Spaniards' yearly ritual of attending Zorrilla's *Don Juan Tenorio* on or around All Soul's Day, commenting that this year (1918), the ritual is not such a good idea: "En mal momento vuelve *Don Juan Tenorio* á pisar los escenarios, aunque venga, según es costumbre, cuando nos embargan el ánimo las melancolías otoñales. . . Es la visita que viene repitiéndose todos los años en la misma época, pero esta vez llega *Don Juan* inoportunamente: no vamos á poder atenderle." To imply that something could interrupt the ritual of attending a representation of Zorrilla's play is striking given how ingrained the tradition had become. In his contribution to the *Historia del teatro español*, Miguel Ángel Lama, citing Dougherty and Vilches, writes: "El *Tenorio* de Zorrilla no desaparece de la escena española a pesar de altibajos o incidencias que se mencionan como hechos destacados en la historia de una transmisión sin parangón, como ocurre en la temporada 1924–1925. . .sobre que 'sólo cuatro compañías llevaron a la escena el *Don Juan*

Tenorio'" (2096). Escofet then tells of having recently attended a *Tenorio* performance "en uno de nuestros teatros más populares." Notwithstanding the venue, "[e]l teatro estaba vacío . . . [y] reinaba espantosa soledad." Attempts by the play's extras to rouse the audience fail. The emptiness and silence of the theater are taken by Don Juan as an affront (*desaire*).

Escofet's rhetoric and wit are at their sharpest when he describes how the unprecedented circumstances of the play affect Don Juan: "En el curso de la representación el empecatado libertino dió señales no sólo de mal humor, sino también de una extraña inquietud, así como si se sintiera enfermo ó como si le preocupara la gripe." Don Juan's inquietude is manifest in his clothing, his words, and his actions: "Decía sus versos maquinalmente. . .En el segundo acto salió con el cuello abrigado con un pañuelo de seda, y en el cuarto, interrumpió la escena del sofá para advertir á *Doña Ines* que le molestaba una corriente de aire." In light of Don Juan's pathetic condition, Escofet wryly remarks: "[e]videntemente, *Don Juan* no las tenía todas consigo." The flu is so ubiquitous that it penetrates the boundary separating the fictional world of the stage from the real world of the spectators. Moreover, its virulence is strong enough to interrupt the very scene in which Don Juan declares his love to Inés. In the equivalent scene from *La canción del olvido*, Leonello experiences a change of heart, shrinking at the prospect of taking advantage of Rosina while she sleeps. Dramatically speaking, it is the scene in which his character changes from incorrigible to restrained, and he from a libertine to a genuine lover.

Thus, given the importance of the sofa scene for the plot's denouement, it is telling that at this point in the play, Don Juan transgresses the fourth wall and becomes a

spectator of the events taking place in the audience: "le vimos interesarse por lo que se decía en un palco proscenio, hacia donde dirigía sus miradas recelosas, y luego nos fué fácil averiguar que los ocupantes del palco hablaban de la epidemia reinante." Ironically, Don Juan, a character defined by the mistrust he engenders in others, finds himself casting a mistrustful eye at the audience. The reason for his mistrust, according to Escofet, is one of two things: "o el burlador de Sevilla estaba inquieto por el temor al contagio, lo cual sería una mancha en su fama de valiente, o creyó encontrar un rival en el bacilo de Pfeiffer, que le está quitando popularidad." To rob Zorrilla's *Don Juan Tenorio* of his popularity is no small task. It will be remembered that, as Timothy Mitchell remarks, "No tragedy or comedy has ever stayed so popular for so long in the history of the Spanish theatre" (*Violence and Piety* 170). Furthermore, Mitchell adds that "*Don Juan Tenorio* became traditional because it was an aesthetically and emotionally pleasing synthesis of the social and religious values most important to the popular classes of Spain" (170). The *soldado de Nápoles*'s threat to replace Zorrilla's Don Juan thus strikes at the very heart of what constitutes the Spanish people. If Don Juan serves as the unifying principle over and against which Spanish society defines and constructs itself (Mandrell, *Point of Honor* 227), then to replace Don Juan is to reconstruct Spanish society, beginning with its mythological roots.

Escofet juxtaposes the exploits of the two Don Juans to emphasize how innocuous Zorrilla's *burlador de Sevilla* is compared to the flu—the escapades of the former pale in comparison to those of the latter. After citing the well-known lines "Yo a las cabañas bajé, / yo a los palacios subí," Escofet writes:

> Si en Nápoles y en Roma dejó *Don Juan* un recuerdo amargo de su paso, este rival que le sale ahora cuenta por miles los muertos en París, en Londres, en Berlín, en Viena, Estocolmo, Copenhague, Madrid, Barcelona y ha penetrado en los pueblos, ha cruzado los mares, ha estado en Africa, en América y en Oceanía; en fin, ciento cincuenta mil víctimas dejadas sólo en Buenos Aires dan testimonio de su brío y su poder.

The "brío" and "poder" of the *soldado de Nápoles* render the thirty-two deaths at the hand of Don Juan—deaths which had shocked his rival Don Luis—comparatively innocuous: "no [son] para infundir pavor a nadie en estos tiempos de guerras y de pestes." Escofet's comparison between Don Juan Tenorio and the "Spanish" flu actually brings up a valuable point of comparison with *La canción del olvido*. The soldier of Naples in *La canción del olvido*, Leonello, is, for all intents and purposes, the innocuous character. This is signaled in two ways. First, he remains oblivious throughout the play to Rosina's plan to woo him. Meanwhile, the rest of the main characters are in on the plan. At the beginning of the play, when Rosina overhears Leonello's conversation with his cohorts in which he informs them of his plans to seduce Flora, she listens to him sing of his "mujer, primorosa clavellina," through the latticework (*celosía*) of her hotel window (15). The Real Academia Española's dictionary includes this suggestive detail in its definition of *celosía*: "para que las personas que están en el interior vean sin ser vistas" (494). Unwittingly, then, Leonello becomes an actor in Rosina's personal "play," and his ignorance becomes a guarantee of Rosina's control over him. Second, Leonello is also at the mercy of Rosina in the bedroom scene—the equivalent of the sofa scene—when she catches him uninvited in her room:

Leonello: Ved que os ofrezco / vida y honor. / Y honrarse mi espada quería / sabiendo, alma mía, / que el premio sois vos.

Rosina: ¡Callaos!

Leonello: Prestadme oído.

Rosina: *Aparte.* Ya está en mis redes.

Leonello: Miradme al menos; / ya arrepentido.

Rosina: No seguid.

Leonello: ¡Escuchad!

Rosina: Desistid. (47–48)

Formally speaking, Rosina's repeated interruptions of Leonello serve to assert her dominance over him. Consequently, as the subsequent stage direction asserts, he grows increasingly desperate (*desesperado*), which is to say, increasingly subjected to Rosina. When she finally asks him to leave, Leonello, "*[c]ediendo de mala gana*," declares: "[o]bedezco" (49). Symbolically, Leonello submits to his new role in the play Rosina has written for him. In this sense, the perspective of the *soldado de Nápoles* offered in Escofet's article differs completely from that of Leonello, the soldier of Naples in *La canción del olvido.* This suggests that, although the metaphorical connection between Don Juan and the flu is valid, it is not a matter of forcing the experience of the epidemic to fit in the mold offered by *La canción del olvido.*

At this point in his text, Escofet changes his tune. Apparently concerned that he carries the comparison between Don Juan Tenorio and the "Spanish" flu too far, he suggests: "Pero con todo—y hagamos á un lado una rivalidad que sería un desatino—*Don Juan* habría hecho mejor este año con quedarse en casa." Though he never explains

why the perceived rivalry would be a "desatino," Escofet's tone becomes progressively ambivalent towards the end of his article. His initial humor grows sour. After mentioning the "tradición cómico-macabra" in which every year Spaniards combine viewing dancing skeletons with visiting the graves of their own dearly departed, Escofet gives a clue as to why he cuts short his comparison: "Otro embozado de peor catadura, más diestro en el matar, y más impenitente, se adelantó á su visita [la de Don Juan Tenorio]." Having arrived prior to seasonal celebrations (e.g., All Soul's Day and All Saint's Day), the epidemic changes the terms on which these celebrations take place. For instance, Porras Gallo has noted how "se impidió la visita de los madrileños a los cementerios con motivo de la fiesta de todos los Santos a primeros de noviembre" (*Ciudad en crisis* 639). In any event, the coincidence of the epidemic and the seasonal celebrations was simply too much for Spaniards. To continue with the established routine, as Escofet suggests, "nos [habría] parec[ido] demasiado *fúnebre*." In other words, the comparison between Don Juan Tenorio and the "Spanish" flu is not erroneous; rather, it simply means Spaniards had had more death than they could stomach.

As I suggested above, Escofet's article explicitly spells out the connection between the flu epidemic and Don Juan. It serves as a connecting link between flu discourse and the *soldado de Nápoles*. In a similar fashion, Salvador Bartolozzi's "El microbio fanfarrón" (Fig. 33) also links the flu discourse to Don Juan.[70] By itself, neither

[70] Artistically speaking, Bartolozzi's work is heterogeneous and diverse. He is probably best known for his contributions to theater, especially children's theater, and illustration. He collaborated with Ramón Gómez de la Serna for almost a decade as illustrator of the latter's narrative production, illuminating "la evolución del literato desde la estética finisecular hacia el arte nuevo" (Vela 5). His place in Madrid's artistic scene in the years surrounding the flu epidemic is well summarized by Vela: "Salvador Bartolozzi fue una de las figuras características del ambiente artístico e intelectual del Madrid de entreguerras; habitual de cafés y tertulias, fundador de Pombo con Ramón Gómez de la Serna, animador de las reuniones de los 'Humoristas', miembro destacado del Ateneo y del Círculo de Bellas Artes, Bartolozzi personifica. . .la nueva consideración que los profesionales del dibujo alcanzaron en este período" (14).

the title nor the image would necessarily indicate any connection to Don Juan. However, the caption, a direct quotation (actually a misquotation) from Zorrilla's *Don Juan Tenorio*, leaves no room for doubt: "Yo a los palacios subí, / yo a las cabañas bajé…." I have already discussed how Spaniards would likely have understood the metaphorical connection between the flu and Don Juan in my treatment of Escofet's article above. I would like to add a few more thoughts before turning specifically to issues related to the *soldado de Nápoles*. The words of the microbial Don Juan are the same as those uttered by Don Juan to his rival Don Luis Mejía in Zorrilla's *Tenorio*. The complete sentence reads: "Yo a las cabañas bajé, / yo a los palacios subí, / yo los claustros escalé / y en todas partes dejé / memoria amarga de mí" (19). As Maurice Molho has suggested, Mejía is Don Juan's double, the inclusion of which represents a unique innovation to the Don Juan myth on the part of Zorrilla (175). *Mutatis mutandi*, it seems plausible to state, as does Escofet, that the microbial Don Juan is perceived as a rival of Zorrilla's Don Juan, as his double. Just as the latter bested Mejía, the microbial Don Juan bests him. Figure 33 thus shows a Don Juan who has appropriated the role of the mythical Don Juan.

This gesture of appropriation has two key elements: imitation and performance, specifically out-performance. In his verbal and body language, the microbial Don Juan mimics the language and gestures of his rival. Furthermore, in terms of the characteristics that define who Don Juan is, his microbial double outperforms him. In this regard, the gesture of appropriation places Bartolozzi's Don Juan alongside a number of other "models of violence." The term comes from Timothy Mitchell who, following Caro Baroja, writes: "Over the centuries, as Caro relates, this bellicose notion of honor underwent a process of individualization…In the new context, the figure of Don Juan can

be considered the paradigm of the conceited, defiant, and aggressive young man" (173–74). Part of the Don Juan model of violence involves evincing a "maximum of nonchalance" in the face of death, hell, or divine wrath (175). Don Juan's nonchalance is actually a part of his defining characteristic, hubris, which, as Mitchell suggests, is bound up in a social dynamics with very high stakes: "everything indicates that the inordinate pride that characterizes the archetypal matador, bravo, or Don Juan is created and nourished by rivalry, that this rivalry is itself traceable to social crisis, and that a sacral dénouement is inevitably involved" (178). The eyes of Bartolozzi's *microbio fanfarrón* embody the Don Juan trait of nonchalance. Moreover, by imitating Tenorio's Don Juan, Bartolozzi's engages in the dynamic of rivalry mentioned by Mitchell. Bartolozzi's Don Juan seeks to outperform his rival, which, as Escofet recognizes, spells death for thousands more than Zorrilla's Tenorio could ever have imagined.

If Escofet and Bartolozzi's anthropomorphization of the flu microbe and subsequent comparison between rival Don Juans strikes one as an (injudiciously) extreme example of what Susan Sontag calls "metaphoric thinking," it should be remembered that the historical period in question is ripe with just such uses of the Don Juan figure. Gonzalo Sobejano summarizes part of the situation as follows:

> Importancia mayor tiene aquí el debate ensayístico entablado alrededor de 1920 por Ramón Pérez de Ayala, Ortega y Gasset, Ramiro de Maeztu y Gregorio Marañón. Movía a los tres primeros un impulso reivindicativo [de] librar a Don Juan de la trivialidad a que en España fácilmente se le reducía por culpa de las fanfarronadas, sentimentalismos y funereidades de cada mes de noviembre, y, con

> cabal conciencia de la universalidad alcanzada en tantos pueblos e idiomas, entregarle estudiosa atención y medir trascendencia. (334–45)

The writers mentioned by Sobejano are important because they engage Don Juan in specifically non-literary discourses.[71] Marañón's treatment of Don Juan created the most waves: "Ni los deleitosos artículos estético-culturales de Ramón Pérez de Ayala, ni lo escrito por Ortega con un propósito de esclarecimiento filosófico y antropológico, ni las admoniciones del severo Maeztu lograron la popularidad tan rauda y prolongada como el ensayo clínico de Gregorio Marañón" (Sobejano 336). Given the medical framework in which Marañón treats Don Juan, his essay offers valuable contextual information for understanding the relationship between the *soldado de Nápoles* and the 1918 flu epidemic.

In 1924, Marañón spoke to the Real Academia Española de la Medicina on the "[p]sicopatología del donjuanismo," which was later published in *Revista de Occidente* under the title: "Notas para la biología de Don Juan." Ostensibly, his purpose in wading into the waters of the Don Juan debate, as his biographer Gary D. Keller notes, is to "puncture a pervading literary and cultural myth extolling Don Juan as a model of masculinity and virility" (26). The myth of Don Juan's "false virility" (Marañón's term) depends on Marañón's distinction—following Otto Weininger—between primary and secondary sexual functions (Wright 724). The first refer to the reproductive act, the second to social activities like politics, science, and war. Because Don Juan operates only at the level of primary sexual functions, he is, in fact, only half a man. That is, his preoccupation with women leaves him, vis-à-vis his social role as a man, impotent. For

[71] My point is not to implicitly reinforce a hierarchical preference for non-literary sources over their literary counterparts. Rather, I merely desire to call attention to the fact that, as a cultural figure, Don Juan commanded the attention of a non-literarily trained person of the stature of Marañón.

Marañón, Spaniards' inability to recognize Don Juan's pseudovirility for what it was thus represented a grave problem. To elevate Don Juan as a social model, especially for adolescent males, threatened the social foundations of Spain. As Keller suggests, Marañón's interpretation of Don Juan "must be understood as entries into a milieu, the unique and defining characteristic of which is the effort to establish a Spanish national identity through recourse to classical Spanish literature" (Keller 47).[72] It is this notion of Don Juan as a social model—in its generic sense, more so than in its gender or sex-inflected sense—that is important to "Spanish" flu discourse, the subject to which I now turn.[73]

The New Don Juan: The *soldado de Nápoles* and the "Spanish" flu

Having laid the groundwork for understanding the link between the flu epidemic and Don Juan, I want now to turn specifically to the *soldado de Nápoles* in flu discourse. In terms of procedure, my discussion will alternate between editorial cartoons and texts about the *soldado*. In the methodology of content analysis, scholars are wont to assess images according to variables and values. Philip Bell defines a variable as "any such dimension (size, colour range, position on a page or in a news bulletin); or any range of options of a similar type which could be substituted for each other—for example, a list of represented participants (male/female; adult/child) or a number of alternative 'settings' such as kitchen, bathroom, street, automobile, shop, and so on" (15). By comparison, values are "elements which are of the same logical kind" that can be "substituted for each

[72] Sarah Wright has also recognized that Marañón's preoccupation with Don Juan reflects the latter's penchant for disrupting the eugenic paradigm in which Marañón operated. For a fuller treatment of the role of gender in this paradigm, see Nerea Aresti's *Médicos, donjuanes y mujeres modernas: los ideales de feminidad y masculinidad en el primer tercio del siglo XX*.

[73] Were the flu a sexually transmitted disease, I would be more inclined to pursue issues of sexuality in flu discourse. As it is, I follow Escofet's lead in commenting other aspects of the metaphorical link between Don Juan and the epidemic (e.g., the number of deaths inflicted by the *soldado de Nápoles*).

other because they belong to the same class" (16). So, for instance, male and female would be different values in the variable gender. The *caricaturas* of the *soldado de Nápoles* can be fruitfully analyzed according to five major variables: body, voice, space, source, and page number. Body refers to whether a particular *soldado* is embodied or not. Of the twelve images from the *soldado* category that I have found, eight are embodied, whereas four *caricaturas* reference only the name "soldado." Voice refers to whether or not a *soldado* speaks. In this sense, the variable of voice is not, strictly speaking, a variable because it depends on the status of a *soldado*'s body. Curiously enough, no *soldado* speaks; rather, all are silent. Space refers to the distinction between public and private space. Two of the twelve images depict the private space of homes, while the remaining ten depict public settings. Source refers to the newspaper in which a *caricatura* appears. Subsumed in this variable are values like average size of print run, geographic reach of the paper, and ideological leanings of the paper. Given the relationship between the editorial cartoonist and his newspaper, especially in terms of ideological leanings, any discussion of the artist or his function will occur in this section. The page number variable is a basic attempt to determine the importance of a given image to the news source in which it appears. Images that appear on the front cover are more important than those that appear on, say, page five. Table 1 summarizes the editorial cartoons from the *soldado de Nápoles* category. Space limitations will not allow me to treat each one. Nevertheless, all of the images are included with this chapter in the hopes that the reader will gain a greater sense of how the *caricaturistas* engaged the epidemic.

Table 1. Soldado de Nápoles figures

Fig.	Body	Voice	Space	Source	Page number
3	No	No	Public	*La Tribuna*	1
4	No	No	Public	*Blanco y Negro*	22

5	Yes	No	Private	*El Fígaro*	5
6	Yes	No	Public	*ABC*	?
7	No	No	Public	*ABC*	?
8	Yes	No	Public	*El Fígaro*	5
9	No	No	Public	*El Tiempo*	1
10	Yes	No	Public	*Heraldo de Madrid*	1
11	Yes	No	Public	*El Tiempo*	1
12	Yes	No	Public	*El Fígaro*	5
13	Yes	No	Public	*El Tiempo*	1
14	Yes	No	Private	*El Tiempo*	1

As Table one indicates, the *soldado de Nápoles* was predominantly imagined as a silent, embodied entity that inhabited public spaces. In this sense he both resembles and differs from a stereotypical image of Don Juan. So, for instance, unlike the Don Juan, for whom his way with words often opened many a door of exploitative opportunity, the *soldado de Nápoles* operates in silence. On the other hand, his being embodied aligns him with numerous Don Juans whose exploits were always a corporeal function. In other words, it seems difficult to imagine Don Juan as he is without a material body. In terms of identifying the epidemic pathogen, I would also add that the anxiety fostered by inconclusive laboratory results can be seen as an anxiety to find the cellular body of the flu. In this sense, to imagine the *soldado de Nápoles* as embodied is already to take the first step toward containing the epidemic threat he embodies. That he inhabits public spaces would seem to emphasize both the collective threat of the epidemic and the need for a collective response. In this sense, the "Spanish" flu subjugates the individual to the collective (i.e., national) through the *soldado de Nápoles* figure. With these general remarks in mind, I want to discuss specific details of some individual images.

Figure 3, by K-Hito, depicts two men engaged in a "duelo a muerte." Little information about who they are is readily forthcoming. Their dress seems to indicate a

certain social status; we know they are both men; one is balding and portly, the other skinny. They are not, however, labeled as the doctors, politicians, or prominent citizens that were dealing with the epidemic in Spain; rather, they are in many ways the average middle-class Spanish male citizen. The insults the men trade evince an escalating tone: "— ¡Asesino! —¡Así lo parta á usted un rayo! —¡ Así le canten á usted el 'Soldado de Nápoles'!" In the verbal *crescendo* of the men's exchange, the gravity of the flu surpasses that of human violence (murder) and acts of nature (lightning), reaching, as it were, cosmic proportions. In this sense, the rhetorical force of the verbal onslaughts recalls the editorial cartoons from the last chapter that deal with the extent of the epidemic. The flu is the *ultimate* threat because there is nothing worse than it and there is nothing that follows it.

A striking feature of the image is the relation between language and body language. K-Hito suggests the force of the verbal blows in the way he depicts their clothing and hair. Both men are knocked on their heels by each other's words. The hat and scarf of the man on the left and the hair and coat tail of the man on the right look as though opposing gusts of wind were blowing against them. In many ways, K-Hito's image embodies, though in a peculiar sense, J.L. Austin's notion of doing things with words. In his *How to Do Things with Words*, Austin occupies himself with performative statements, those enunciations that do things as opposed to simply describing things (60). For the "smooth or 'happy' functioning of a performative…there must exist an accepted conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect" (14). The conventional procedure of figure 3 is the duel. Or, rather, by titling the cartoon "duelo a muerte," K-Hito signals to the reader that the conventions of a duel are in effect for the two men. The

chosen weapon for the duel is language. In uttering their insults (and this is where the *peculiar* embodiment of Austin comes into play), the men actually realize, not necessarily any actions associated with their utterances, but, rather, generic physical impact. By calling the man on the right an "asesino," there is no implied text (e.g., "I declare you…") whereby the man on the left turns him into an assassin. Conversely, the shape of the broken cane does allow us to interpret the threat from the man on the right as actually realizing a bolt of lightning (albeit one that is slightly off the mark). The final threat is somewhat more ambiguous. The indirect imperative form is used instead of the direct form, which points to the gap between intention and actualization. The man intends that "they" sing his rival the *soldado de Nápoles*, though it remains unclear whether they have indeed sung it. That the threat culminates the verbal *crescendo* suggests that the threat is sincere and its effects are real. I will return to these effects, the generic physical impact mentioned above, below. To flesh out what is at issue in the threat of the *soldado de Nápoles*, however, it is helpful to turn to figure 4.

If figure 3 points to the power inherent in the song *soldado de Nápoles*, the drawing by Tovar in *Blanco y Negro* renders it explicit. A well-dressed man passes an obviously less well-to-do pair singing "soldado de Nápoles." They have the air of street performers playing for loose change. Although no receptacle to collect money is visible, the popularity of the song would have been a logical choice for street performers. With his hand raised in a gesture to keep their words—and by extension, the epidemic—at bay, the well-dressed man complains: "¿Pero a quién no le da la epidemia?" As does figure 3, figure 4 points to the power of words to do things. The well-dressed man tries to keep the effects of the song at bay by warding them off with his hand.

The repulsion the man feels vis-à-vis the two singers communicates another anxiety, that of class distinction, and can be seen in the different clothes worn. Whereas the well-clad man sports a top hat, vest, black coat, and leather shoes, the singer on the left wears a patched-up apron and the coat of the singer on the right contains three stains of some sort on the right shoulder. Moreover, the guitar string of the latter needs trimming, suggesting he is more concerned with functionality than aesthetic appearance. To highlight class distinctions is an important feature of the drawing since the epidemic hardly affected one class more than another. If the epidemic was, as some have suggested, democratic in terms of whom it affected/infected, reactions to it were anything but equal. And this is one of the accomplishments of Tovar's drawing. The singers are, after all, simply going about their business making some extra money. Other than adding a catchy new tune to their repertoire, the epidemic does little to change their daily reality. In this sense, they have assimilated the popularity of the *zarzuela*'s music into their daily lives as though oblivious to the epidemic. In fact, it might be suggested that to them, the content of the song matters little compared to its effect. The song is merely a means to an end. If today they sing *soldado de Nápoles*, tomorrow they could just as easily adopt a different tune. In this sense, the attitude of the two singers is marked by a certain indifference to the song's meaning. In contrast, the well-dressed man seems particularly interested in the meaning of the song. His body language communicates a desire to pass by unaffected—and uninfected!—by the lower-class street artists. Indeed, whereas there is no indication the singers refer to the epidemic, it is suggestive that the well-dressed man assumes just such a connection. The perfunctory assumption of the *zarzuela* music into the repertoire of the singers contrasts the passion-riddled assumption by the well-

dressed man that the singers are a threat to him. It is here that Tovar's choice to depict class distinctions takes on added layers of meaning.

Avoiding the flu entails avoiding the singers, a move that subtly associates them with the disease. In other words, the man's desire to avoid contamination becomes indistinguishable from his desire to avoid the singers. They, as a consequence, acquire all the characteristics that correspond to the disease. There is a subtle slide from metaphor—with its Greek root of "to transfer"—to metonymy—which indicates a changing of names. Etymologically, the term *contagion* develops from the Latin word for touching. Following this, it is not surprising that Tovar's editorial cartoon plays on the link between physical contact and illness. There is, however, an irony in Tovar's calling attention to the slippage between contagion as medical phenomenon and as interpersonal phenomenon. Although the slippage has a long history in medicine, stretching back to ancient and medieval times, as Martin S. Pernick notes: "as *contagion* became equated with modern microbiology in mass culture, the term was dropped from the lexicon of medical science" (860). Pernick remarks how "[c]urrent medical dictionaries consider the label *contagion* outdated" (860), quoting *Stedman's Medical Dictionary* which suggests: "[t]he term originated long before development of modern ideas" (qtd. in Pernick 860). Despite the implicit desire in this definition to dissociate medicine (no doubt thoroughly drenched in "modern ideas") from scientifically suspect uses of the term *contagion*, the polyvalence of the term persisted in cultural discourse, as evidenced by Tovar's drawing.

The metaphorical/metonymical association of the singers with the flu has suggestive repercussions in light of the historical moment in question. In his study of American popular music in the early 20th century, Matthew Mooney has noted how

market-driven forms like rag-time and jazz challenged the cultural hegemony of more classical forms of music, inciting many bourgeois to decry their debasing effects. Indeed, popular music was indicted as "both a source of social disintegration and as a symptom of the dehumanizing industrial order relentlessly transforming America into a spiritually empty, impersonal realm where nothing was safe from the commodifying effects of the market" (no pagination). Consequently, many of the bourgeoisie "were appalled by the seething, heterogeneous mob of urban working class America, swollen to appalling dimensions by decades of immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe, which they believed threatened to swamp the remaining citadels of bourgeois culture in a torrent of ignorant sentimentality designed to satiate only the most vulgar, unrefined corporeal impulses." In short, the socioeconomic developments of modernization carried with them unseemly cultural consequences, one of which was the dissolution of the high/low divide, a matter of cultural distinction that ensured the separation (or definition) of classes.

Similarly, in figure 4, the well-dressed man's desire to dissociate himself from the vociferous, pestiferous riffraff corresponds to the cultural tensions of early 20th-century America noted by Mooney. Their song of choice—*soldado de Nápoles*—comes from the *zarzuela* genre. The *zarzuela*, especially in its *género chico* form, was eminently popular. As Emilio Casares Rodicio suggests: "[n]inguna música define con más propiedad que la zarzuela lo que podríamos considerar el 'yo musical' de España. . . .Es por ello una constante de nuestra cultura y existen pocas instituciones que como ella representen y caractericen la vida nacional" (2052). As a popular form, the *zarzuela* was, to quote Burnett James, "looked down upon by the musical idealists and propagandists who instigated the renaissance [in Spanish music] around the turn of the century. . .[being

considered] frivolous and shallow" (40–41). José Deleito Piñuela tells of how the press "combatió [el *género chico*] a sangre y fuego. . .acusándole de desmoralizador" (4).[74] As in so many other areas of cultural production, the prominence of popular forms over and against elitist notions of art threatened to blur the distinction between what counted as art and what did not.[75] Or rather, the aesthetic value of a work of art was fast becoming a function of market demand, rather than a matter to be debated by discriminating critics steeped in a particular historical tradition. At issue, then, was nothing less than the status of the artistic canon, which, to expand Wadda Ríos-Font's comment on literary canons, is "linked to the concept of nation and to nation-building practices" (15). Artistic authority cannot be divorced from social authority, such that to tamper with artistic canons is to tamper with the imagined community of the nation. The fact that the majority of those who initially resisted the *género chico* "en nombre de la dignidad del arte," ultimately succumbed to market pressure—"la ganancia creciente que obtenían las estrenadas allí fué desarrugando ceños y suavizando intransigencias"—only reinforces this point that nations (or at least national images) are deeply impacted by aesthetic matters (Deleito 5). Critics' fears that popular art's tendency to displace elite art would have significant national consequences were, in this regard at least, well placed.

Given the ideological underpinnings of aesthetic questions (like canonicity), it is not surprising that at the center of the *zarzuela* debates one finds Don Juan. In the 1868–69 theater season, he was added to the shows being played at the *Variedades* theater. Deleito refers to the ensuing scandal in this fashion: "El caso pareció una profanación, y

[74] For James, the problem with the *zarzuela* stemmed from its "parochialism and localism," a problem composers associated with the musical revival of the late 19th century in Spain worked to overcome (40).
[75] For a study of the complex relation between (supposedly) high and low narrative literature in late 19th-century Spain, see Sieburth's *Inventing High and Low*.

promovió un verdadero escándalo en el mundillo de bastidores. Se acudió a todos los recursos para ahogar a la nueva especie teatral. Hubo quien apeló a las autoridades para que la prohibieran. Pero éstas, faltas de toda razón legal para tal medida, se abstuvieron de intervenir" (5). It is rather suggestive that Don Juan's move to *Variedades* coincided with the downfall of Isabel II in the *Gloriosa* revolution, which initiated popular rule (democracy) in Spain. Whatever the meaning of this coincidence, what I want to suggest is that the debates over Don Juan's aesthetic place in Spanish society—whether he belongs in *zarzuela*s or high art venues—are part and parcel of the discursive construction of the Spanish nation as a community under perennial construction. To invoke him in flu discourse is thus to indicate that flu discourse shares certain similarities with this discourse. In other words, Don Juan appears in flu discourse because the threat of the epidemic strikes at the heart of the Spanish nation as discursively imagined/constructed.

That Don Juan is an integral thread of the Spanish national fabric hardly bears mention. Since at least 1744, when Zamora's *No hay deuda que no se pague ni plazo que no se cumpla y convidado de piedra* was first staged, Don Juan, in one version or another, has graced Spanish stages every year. In 1844, the torch was passed to Zorrilla's *Don Juan Tenorio*, the play that continues to be performed annually on or around All Soul's Day. The reason *why* Don Juan, specifically *Don Juan Tenorio*, has attained ritual status is a question that has intrigued critics since even before its first performance (Mandrell, "Nostalgia," no pagination). For Mandrell:

> Whereas *Don Juan Tenorio* is performed annually on All Soul's Day as a means of commemorating the dead, the ritual performance of the drama also serves to

> unify the Hispanic community in its resurrection of past cultural, economic, and political triumphs, in its escape from the tedium of current everyday existence. The nostalgia evinced by Zorrilla in his *refundición* of Tirso's *El burlador de Sevilla* thereby translates into a type of collective exercise, an attempt to return to and to rewrite the past as a mode of creating the fiction of a more positive present, in the sense that Don Juan's debacle becomes his salvation. ("Nostalgia," no pagination)

For Mandrell, the "everyday existence" of Spaniards apparently reeks of "tedium," prompting them to "escape" into the theatrical performance of *Don Juan Tenorio*, which allows them to re-imagine a more tolerable present. Similarly, and in more explicitly nationalistic language, Alberich has claimed that "[l]a representación del *Tenorio* puede a veces parecer un acto patriótico—o, tal vez, patriotero—porque su protagonista encarna, mucho mejor que los 'Tenorios' foráneos, en incluso el de Tirso, una concepción española del amor" (16). Timothy Mitchell also links the canonical status of Zorrilla's play to its elucidation of Spanish traits: "*Don Juan Tenorio* became traditional because it was an aesthetically and emotionally pleasing synthesis of the social and religious values most important to the popular classes of Spain" (170).

In the arguments of each of the aforementioned critics, there is an emphasis on the singularity of Spanish society. Mandrell speaks of the "Hispanic community," Alberich of "una concepción española del amor," and Mitchell of a synthesis of values (though he does speak of "the popular class*es*"). In the case of the debates initiated by Don Juan's move to the popular theater, it seems more appropriate to speak of Hispanic communities, for what underlies the jingoism of the debates is nothing less than competing images of

what constituted the Hispanic community (i.e., the Spanish nation). If one accepts Don Juan's move to the *zarzuela* as evidence of the popular will, and reaction to his move as evidence of the elites' will, then it can be argued that to claim Don Juan as one's own was to stake one's claim as to what constituted the Spanish nation.[76] Market demand for the *zarzuela* was one type of social development that worked to erase or blur class distinctions. "The people," feeling themselves as much a part of the Spanish nation as anyone, desired to see Don Juan, too. That this took place in *Variedades* rather than, say, the *Cruz* theater mattered only to those who sought to retain the aesthetic-social boundaries that this new development challenged.

At this point, I want to return to figures 3 and 4, for in the mutual inflection of nationalistic and flu discourse, the threat posed to the nation by the flu comes in the form of a song. Edward Lippman opens his substantial *A History of Western Musical Aesthetics* with a brief overview of the two views of the nature of music—metaphysical and ethical—that are fundamental to Western civilization (3–16). The first deals with the natural constitution of souls, societies, and the cosmos. The second deals with the proper functioning of these entities. The concept of harmony remains important to both views, especially if, in reference to the ethical perspective, medical antecedents are borne in mind (10). It was held in ancient times that music had the power to restore harmony to individuals as well as societies. Conversely, the lack of harmony spelled disaster. Referring to the introduction of "vulgar and lawless innovation" to poetry, the Athenian protagonist of the *Laws* writes:

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[76] I retain the term *nation*, despite the possibility for certain historicist wrangling, because Don Juan's relation to the flu epidemic falls squarely in the historical moment, in fact at the height of, the modern nation state.

> And by composing such licentious works, and adding to them words as licentious, they have inspired the multitude with lawlessness and boldness, and made them fancy that they can judge for themselves about melody and song. And in this way the theatres from being mute have become vocal, as though they had understanding of good and bad in music and poetry; and instead of an aristocracy, an evil sort of theatrocracy has grown up. (qtd. in Lippman 11)

Tovar's drawing in figure 4 equates the social implications that are believed to follow from the *zarzuela*'s transgression of aesthetic laws with the threat of the flu epidemic and vice-versa. Figure 4 represents the aesthetic, and by extension social, modifications introduced by the *zarzuela* into the Spanish musical and theatrical scene as epidemic. Likewise, the epidemic threatens to modify Spanish society in the way the *zarzuela* is perceived as doing.[77] In contrast, figure 3 demonstrates the impact of the epidemic on the individual. I have already mentioned the physical posture of the men and the position of their clothes and suggested that their words act with physical force. Their hands also evidence the generic physical impact of the threats mentioned earlier. That of the man on the left looks as though it has been partially erased, while that of the man on the right has an undistinguishable pinky and ring finger. In effect, then, the physical force of their words has deformed their bodies. And if, in Lippman's characterization of classical civilization, "[w]orld and man are. . .composed according to a musical, or 'harmonic,' principle," the deformation of the men's hands in figure 3, especially when juxtaposed

[77] Ironically, two short years after the flu epidemic, the hierarchization implicit in the good bourgeois' dismissal of the lower-class singers of *soldado de Nápoles* was turning against him. In 1921, José Ortega y Gasset published his essay on modernist music, "Musicalia," in which he contrasts the inferior aesthetic judgment of the "good bourgeois" to that of a more informed elite. As Carol A. Hess notes, in Ortega's essay "[m]odern art, as exemplified in Debussy's music, was the litmus test that separated the 'good bourgeois' from the informed elite" (80). In using aesthetic means to depict sociopolitical matters, Tovar mimics a then-common artistic strategy. The hapless musicians and perturbed bourgeois are caught in a social dynamic of taste and distinction that envelops all of Spanish society.

with figure 4, indicates a harmonic disturbance. In other words, the music of the flu epidemic grotesquely distorts the harmonious composition of both individuals and society.

Given that figure 4 is not technically an editorial cartoon, but a *dibujo*, its relation to flu discourse bears further comment here. Kenneth T. Rivers distinguishes between the micro and macro contexts of the matrix of caricature. Micro context refers to the newspaper in which an editorial cartoon appears and involves issues like the size of an image, its reproduction quality, its relation to other texts and images in the same paper, etc. (183). Macro context refers to "such elements as the readership, the economic system in which (or because of which) the cartoon is created, the political climate, the legal system, the technological milieu, the extent of the dissemination of the work of art, and the like" (183). Unlike figure 3, which appears as the only image on the front page of *La Tribuna*, Tovar's drawing (figure 4) accompanies three others (all his own) on page twenty-two of *Blanco y Negro* in a section entitled "La semana cómica." *Blanco y Negro* was owned by Prensa Española, parent company of the monarchic daily *ABC*, Spain's conservative paper with the widest distribution.

The section of "La semana cómica," with text by Luis Gabaldón, is dedicated entirely to the epidemic and, as the title suggests, is lighthearted. The content of the text focuses on two matters: the etiology of the epidemic and measures to be taken in light of it. As with various editorial cartoons seen in the last chapter, doctors were an easy target for Gabaldón and Tovar. The former writes: "Hay quien asegura—y sus razones tendrá para ello—que la importación de la epidemia se debe a un mosquito muy conocido en la Dalmacia y en la Herzegovina, que 'atiende' por 'papatazzi.' Más parece el título de una

ópera del antiguo régimen—*I papatazzi*—que la denominación de un diptero tan agresivo." Just under these words one finds a drawing in which a doctor, up to his waist in a pile of books, mutters to himself: "Bacilo cocosoldadinapoli…estudiemos." Presumably searching for the established scientific opinion of the epidemic, he orally walks himself through key phrases. The misspelled words—soldadi, napoli—embody not only the doctor's stream of consciousness, but the fact that knowledge of the epidemic hardly respected disciplinary boundaries. Practically speaking, scientists were almost as well off looking for answers to the epidemic under headings like "soldado de Nápoles" as they were with headings like "cocobacilo." Also, the contiguity of scientific and popular language mixes serious and humorous elements of the epidemic.

The text that immediately surrounds figure 4 also gives a taste of the humorous tone of "La semana cómica," this time as it concerns health measures to be taken: "Reglas higiénicas que se imponen en cualquier epidemia. Las bebidas, ya desde ahora, deben ser ligeramente aciduladas, no sólo porque calman mejor la sed, sino porque el paladar las encuentra más agradables. Una botella de Burdeos, acabadita de sacar de la bodega, y una copa de Champagne *frappé*, de buena marca, tampoco son cosas despreciables." Gabaldón's humor results from maintaining markers of distinction—"el paladar las encuentra más agradables," "una copa de Champagne *frappé*, de buena marca"—amidst the hard times of the epidemic. As Echeverri has argued, although maintaining a balanced diet was one of the various health measures advocated by doctors, "[c]on una lamentable incultura sanitaria y una gravísima carestía, es dudoso que muchos españoles siguieron [sic] los sabios consejos del doctor" (*Gripe española* 150). Similarly, one Ariel, writing in *La Vanguardia* on October 17, 1918, tells of a family left destitute

after the death of the father, the bread winner, because of the flu. Extrapolating from their experience, Ariel sheds light on the truly tragic side of the epidemic:

> Asusta más el hambre que la muerte, y no hay duda que los estragos causados por la gripe han sido mayores á causa del encarecimiento insoportable de la vida. Los pobres viven aldía y no alcanzan sus haberes á procurarles lo estrictamente necesario. La enfermedad hace presa en cuerpos ya minados por las privaciones, con lo cual aumentan los víctimas, y cuando los miembros de una familia pobre caen todos enfermos, como se han dado muchos casos, su situación es de las que llenan el alma de espanto. (14)

Indeed, Gabaldón's joke would evince rather bad form if it did not effect, in Henri Bergson's words, "something like a momentary anesthesia of the heart" (no pagination).

I have argued that Tovar's image (figure 4) effects a metaphorical slippage whereby the cultural anxieties of Spain's middle class vis-à-vis its lower class are related to those of the flu epidemic. Gabaldón's text, specifically the way he speaks of food, corroborates this idea in an interesting fashion. In his *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, Pierre Bourdieu argues that taste as gastronomic function and taste as function of cultural distinction are bound by the same logic:

> It is no accident that even the purest pleasures, those most purified of any trace of corporeality. . .contain an element which, as in the 'crudest' pleasures of the tastes of food, the archetype of all taste, refers directly back to the oldest and deepest experiences, those which determine and over-determine the primitive opposition...which are as essential to gastronomic commentary as to the refined appreciations of aesthetes. (79–80)

For Bourdieu, then, taste boils down to making distinctions, which is to say, making value judgments. One's ability to distinguish, moreover, stems from one's "oldest and deepest experiences" with food. Thus, as he waxes nostalgic about a bottle of French wine and champagne "de buena marca," Gabaldón reveals more than his own cultural status as one of certain means. If one accepts that humor during the epidemic operates as a coping mechanism, a means for dealing with the anxiety caused by the flu, one can suggest that Gabaldón's humor (and Tovar's, too, for that matter) reveals, even as it conceals, deep-seated anxieties about the continuing existence of the social structure that has placed him where he is.[78] He perceives the flu not so much as a threat to his biological life, but his social life.

But why would an epidemic produce anxiety in Spain's well-to-do classes? Charles Rosenberg argues that stakes are high during epidemics because they carry the risk of social dissolution (281). In 1918, the threat of social dissolution was a reality staring many European nations squarely in the face. WWI was already four years old and the recent October Revolution had forced Russia to withdraw from the conflict. Though neutral, Spain was hardly immune to the structural tensions that swept through Europe. Romero Salvadó refers to 1918 as the year of "the structural crisis of the liberal democracy" (150). The *turno pacífico* political system inaugurated by Cánovas del Castillo 42 years earlier had reached its breaking point.[79] The financial windfall (for some, at least) of WWI notwithstanding, the majority of Spaniards were suffering from the widespread *crisis de subsistencias*. Less than a year previously, social tensions

[78] Bourdieu writes that "it is probably in tastes in *food* that one would find the strongest and most indelible mark of infant learning, the lessons which longest withstand the distancing or collapse of the native world and most durably maintain nostalgia for it" (79).
[79] The liberal regime was able to limp along until the military dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, initiated in 1923.

erupted in the tripartite crisis of 1917, referenced, incidentally, in "La semana cómica." Whereas public health was still the purview of the ministry of the interior, the epidemic became one more political crisis for an already beleaguered system. (This may explain why it has attracted comparatively less historiographic attention). The epidemic severed the relationship between knowledge and power upon which the powers that be justified the social organization. The lack of scientific knowledge of the flu curtailed the ability of the government to do anything about the epidemic. Those not in power recognized this fracture in the knowledge-power relationship and reacted in one of two ways: they either enacted their own response plan or grew increasingly demanding of and impatient with the inability of government to remedy the situation. In either case, the epidemic did its share to dissolve the glue that was tenuously holding Spanish society together.[80] Consequently, the effects of this systemic dissolution trickled down into various forms of cultural expression, of which "La semana cómica" is one such example.

Figures 3 and 4 are the only two images from the *soldado de Nápoles* category that pertain to the first wave of the epidemic. Space will only permit me to discuss, among other important matters, two images from the second wave: figures 8 and 10. Figure 8, by Aguirre, depicts the *soldado de Nápoles* sitting on the ground reading a newspaper. Surrounding him are crosses that dot the geographic expanse of Spain, signaling the fact that the *soldado* has left a trail of death behind him. According to the title—"Última hora"—and caption—"Sigue presentándose con carácter benigno. Faltan cementerios"—the *soldado* is reading about the epidemic. (The caption mimics the

[80] By this I do not mean to suggest, in an extremist tone, that Spanish society teetered on the brink of total collapse or extinction. I do, however, (and here I am following myriad critics) want to give due credit to the fact that Spain was at a critical moment of its history. It would only be a few short years before the crisis led to the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera.

language of myriad news articles on the flu). In other words, he is reading his own story. This embedded experience of reading, or *mise en abyme*, adds a critical dimension to the reader's experience with the editorial cartoon; it elicits from the reader a cognitive engagement with the image for purposes other than, or at least in addition to, entertainment. As Lucien Dällenbach has argued: "[t]he common root of every *mise en abyme* is clearly the idea of *reflexivity*" (42). The importance of reflexivity lies in its creation of double meaning in a text. Speaking of the function of *mise en abyme* in narrative, Dällenbach states that "any reflection represents a semantic superimposition, or, in other words. . .the utterance containing the reflexivity operates on a least two levels: that of the narrative, where it continues to signify like any other utterance, and that of the reflexion, where it intervenes as an element of metasignification" (44). Dällenbach's comments on narrative *mise en abyme* apply, I think, to the image (and its accompanying text) of figure 8, which is no longer only about the epidemic. Also at issue is the experience of reading about the epidemic, especially the reader's, since seeing the *soldado* read the same thing as he does jolts the reader from his "normal" reading experience, causing him to reflect on what it is he is engaged in. The distance between the world of art and that of the reader has been called into question.

In other words, the conventions that typically govern the reader's reading of the newspaper have been modified by Aguirre's implementation of the artistic device of *mise en abyme*. The device serves to interrupt what Kendall L. Walton might call the game of make-believe that is art: a game implied by the editorial cartoon. Taking his cue from children's game playing, Walton defines representations as "things possessing the social function of serving as props in games of make-believe" (69). A prop, in turn, "is

something which, by virtue of conditional *principles of generation*, mandates imaginings" (69). He gives the example of tree stumps standing for bears in the game of two children. The stump is a prop and the fact that both of the children agree that stumps are bears is what he means by "principles of generation." The children generate the principles that will govern their game of make-believe. For Walton, works of art are representations, which means that art is governed by conventions. And, what is more important for our analysis of figure 8, the disruption of these conventions has important consequences in the psychology of a (in this case) reader's participation in the game of art.[81]

Walton distinguishes between the acts of observing and participating in games of make-believe like art. Participation (more correctly psychological participation) is another way of communicating what is at issue when one speaks of getting lost in a good book. In short, to psychologically participate in a work of art is to accept the conventions of its game. So, for instance, the fact that one can fictionally fear the creature from the black lagoon even though one knows that one is not *really* at risk carries with it psychological consequences. Walton speaks of experiencing quasi-fear, for example (244).[82] Important for our discussion of figure 8 is the fact that reflexive works discourage this sort of participation in the game of art (275). Indeed, he argues that "[e]mbedding a fictional world within another one puts it at a certain emotional 'distance' from us" (284). In contrast to participation, observation implies a more objective perspective: "The intensity of the participant's experience when she is emotionally involved may hinder 'objective' observation of the experience" (288). As a reflective

[81] I would add Walton's own proviso that games, or art, are not frivolous or lacking in seriousness (12).
[82] Walton points to various benefits of psychological participation (271-74).

gesture, observation "may make it easier to see connections between possible or actual fictional experiences and actual or possible real-life ones" (289). In this way, Walton allows that "it may be desirable to 'break the spell' of a representational work," though he adds the proviso: "if only temporarily" (289).[83]

By using the technique of *mise en abyme* to break the fictional spell of figure 8, Aguirre places the reader in a position to observe the epidemic objectively, which "makes it easier" for him to see the connections between the *soldado*'s reading experience and his own. Figure 8 thus seems aimed at drawing the reader's attention to the disconnect between the macabre reality of the epidemic and flu discourse. Flu discourse, as figure 8 depicts, maintains contradictory perspectives. On the one hand, it asserts the flu's benignity. On the other, it reports that cemeteries are in short supply. Moreover, the *soldado de Nápoles* reads this contradictory message against the backdrop of widespread death as visually portrayed in the long trail of crosses marking gravesites in various Spanish cities. In fact, figure 8 is quite accurate in its depiction of this tension in flu discourse. On September 15, 1918, *El Sol* reported the following: "El subsecretario de Gobernación tenía mejores impresiones acerca de la situación sanitaria. La gripe sigue su curso, sin que hasta ahora tenga consecuencias importantes" ("Epidemias"). The same article reported a few lines below that in Alicante "la epidemia de gripe se extiende de una manera alarmante." This mixture of benignity and alarm was also noted in Cadiz, Valladolid, and Tarragona. Five days later the same news source reported that "El subsecretario de Gobernación dijo ayer que las noticias que se reciben respecto de la epidemia gripal eran francamente tranquilizadoras" (no pagination). On September 26,

[83] It seems clear not only that Walton favors maintaining a distinction between the real world and fictional worlds, but that the latter are, in a sense, subordinate to the former. This explains the generally utilitarian tone of his discussion of the value of games of make-believe.

1918, it called attention to the discrepancy between the official version of the epidemic and the reports received on the ground: "La salud pública en España: *Pese a los optimismos oficiales*, la epidemia va en aumento y causa muchas víctimas" (4, emphasis added).[84] Porras Gallo describes the impact of high mortality rates occasioned by the flu on cemetery availability and other issues in these terms:

> Pero las dificultades para los ciudadanos no terminaban cuando fallecían al haber sido alcanzados por la gripe. Los problemas surgían entonces a otros niveles: había escasez de vehículos para trasladar los cadáveres a los cementerios; faltaban en ocasiones los ataúdes; hubo que habilitar nuevos cementerios; y fue preciso suspender las ceremonias religiosas y cualquier signo propio de los entierros. (*Ciudad en crisis* 89–90)

By accurately representing how flu discourse reported on the epidemic, figure 8 embodies the tension between the monstrosity of the epidemic and the mundane characterization of the flu. Formally speaking, the image simultaneously captures and renders humorous the tragic reality of the epidemic. In terms of content, it portrays a realistic experience of reading about the epidemic.

In foregrounding the *soldado de Nápoles* reading his own story, three details stand out: the fact that the *soldado* is sitting, the fact that he is smoking, and the act of

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[84] The discrepancy between the epidemic as catastrophic and simultaneously benign, what I have called the monstrous/mundane dynamic, suffuses flu discourse. For the most part, reporting during the first wave called attention to the gap between the flu's high mortality and low morbidity. This tendency, as figure 8 implies, carried over into the second wave of the epidemic. In response, Ariel, writing for *La Vanguardia* on October 3, 1918, carped: "*Hasta ahora hemos podido gastarle bromitas al* Soldado de Nápoles *impunemente; pero ya nos falta el humor, ya nos hemos puesto serios y apenas nos llega la camisa al cuerpo. La gripe es una enfermedad que mete miedo, digan lo que quieran los informes oficiales*" (11, italics in the original). For other examples, see *Heraldo de Madrid* ("La gripe," 27 Sept. 1918; and "La gripe." 13 Oct. 1918). It is telling that the conservative press (e.g., *ABC*) does not express any concern with the official story of the epidemic, whereas the further left on the political spectrum one gets (e.g., *El Socialista*), the more strident the criticism.

reading itself. The first two signal that the *soldado* is enjoying a moment of leisure. In reference specifically to pipe smoking, G. L. Apperson has written:

> To the solitary man the well-seasoned tube is an invaluable companion. If he happen, once in a way, to have nothing special to do and plenty of time in which to do it, he naturally fills his pipe as he draws the easy-chair on to the hearthrug, and knows not that he is lonely. If he have a difficult problem to solve, he just as naturally attacks it over a pipe. It is true that as the smoke-wreaths ring themselves above his head, his mind may wander off into devious paths of reverie, and the problem be utterly forgotten. Well, that is, at least, something for which to be grateful, for the paths of reverie are the paths of pleasantness and peace, and problems can usually afford to wait. (200)

Similarly, Alfred H. Dunhill has written: "many men have affirmed that pipe smoking is one of the most satisfying pleasures on earth" (148). By drawing the *soldado* smoking a pipe, Aguirre thus draw's the viewer-reader's attention to his disposition. The trail of death he has left behind him is hardly news to the *soldado*; he remains unperturbed by what surely must have disturbed many Spanish viewer-readers. In this sense, he evinces the previously discussed Donjuanesque nonchalance that Mitchell mentions. This indifference to the catastrophe he has caused is reinforced by the fact that, as he smokes, he is sitting. Of the other editorial cartoons that depict sitting readers, all involve private settings. Readers who stand are depicted in public settings. This suggests the *soldado* is right at home in Spain. His private sphere is the public sphere of Spain; for him, there is no difference.

In addition to the *soldado*'s indifference, the pipe also reflects another stereotypical Don Juan characteristic: his flaunting of social conventions. In his *The Social History of Smoking*, published two years prior to the flu epidemic, Apperson declares "that a pipe is vulgar" (194). He explains the reason for social prejudice against pipes in this fashion:

> The only conclusion the observer can come to is, that the fashionable attitude towards pipes is one of the last relics of the old social attitude—the attitude of Georgian and Early Victorian days—towards smoking of any kind. The cigar and the cigarette were first introduced among the upper classes of society, and their use has spread downward. They have broken down many barriers, and in many places, and under many and divers conditions, the pipe has followed triumphantly in their wake; but the last ditch of the old prejudice has been found in the convention, which, in certain places and at certain times, admits the cigar and cigarette of fashionable origin, but bars the entry of the plebian pipe—the pipe which for two centuries was practically the only mode of smoking used or known. (194–95)

Just as class anxieties suffuse figure 4, by placing a "plebian pipe" in the *soldado*'s mouth, Aguirre associates him with the common people: a people who, through subtle discursive slippages, acquire the undesirable characteristics associated with the disease.[85] In this sense, the *soldado de Nápoles* is represented as a class-based threat. Over and against the real unknown origin of the flu epidemic, the common people are its imagined origin. I would add the proviso that when I speak of "class-based" threat, I do not mean

[85] For issues related to this type of slippage, see Bashford and Hooker's *Contagion: Historical and Cultural Studies*.

the *soldado* represents the proletariat, that class of people forced to sell their labor for survival. Rather, the *soldado* is one of those who, because of the forces of modernization, finds himself alongside the haves as opposed to the have nots. He is, then, a threat because he is an up-and-comer. That he reads already distinguishes him from a large portion of the Spanish population. According to Antonio Viñao Frago, in 1920, 43.3% of the population ten years old or older was illiterate (584). That he prefers a pipe suggests he has the means to weather the economic pressures that caused cigarettes to surpass cigars and pipes as the most economical and even fashionable form of smoking tobacco (Corti 251). The act of smoking and sitting are visual clues that allow us to interpret figure 8 in light of its context. The act of reading also sheds light on this context.

In many ways, 1918 is a watershed moment in the history of European artistic endeavors. As the year that marked the end of WWI, it signals the end of what is often called the long 19th century. Rather than unduly emphasize the singular importance of the year, however, it is sufficient to recognize that 1918 falls within the broader historical context that had such an impact on artistic trends.[86] In terms of reading conventions, which concern us here because of their relation to figure 8, Germán Gullón has argued that "[r]eaders of the time were split in two, their cultural lives governed by conventions deeply embedded in literary tradition, while everyday life presented them with an arena of human activity where the unexpected and exceptions to the rule abounded" ("Sociocultural context" 158). Gullón refers to this new reality—the juxtaposition of real events, communicated in the mass media, with imagined events in literary works (156)—as evincing a "malfunction…in the cultural system" (158). The most important feature of this "malfunction" for understanding flu discourse is that the synchronicity of news

[86] See, for example, Marjorie Perloff's "The Great War and the European Avant-Garde."

coverage results in memories of isolated events divested of a "great ideological plan" (158). My argument in this chapter is that whatever the initial reason that sparked the connection between Don Juan and the "Spanish" flu, the fact that flu discourse maintained this connection throughout the epidemic reflects just such an attempt to provide the cultural narrative of the epidemic with some sort of "ideological plan," or at least an interpretive template, albeit a highly problematic and richly suggestive one. I will have more to say on this below. For now, I want to discuss figure 10 and its surrounding text because they embody the disconnect (per Gullón) readers of the period would have conceivably experienced when reading about the epidemic.

In many ways, figure 10 (2 Oct. 1918)—"La epidemia gripal se extiende"—resembles figure 8. Like Aguirre, Sileno depicts a *soldado de Nápoles* who is larger than life; in one stride his *soldado* covers the ground between Burgos and Toledo. As the caption affirms: "El soldado de Nápoles ha ido ascendiendo, asc[e]ndiendo, hasta llegar a ser. . .general en toda España." Through a wordplay with the difference between the military rank of soldier and general, Sileno draws attention to the spread of the flu throughout Spain. Although Sileno does not depict the *soldado* reading his own story, the news article below figure 10 does embody what Aguirre accomplishes through the device of *mise en abyme*. As the subtitle of the article, which deals with "La cuestión sanitaria," suggests, one topic of debate and interest was the so-called "régimen de silencio." By September 16, two weeks prior to the *Heraldo* story, the government had already been forced to admit that the epidemic had returned to Madrid, and that it was not merely a provincial problem. However, it did insist that there were very few cases. In the words of Porras Gallo, government officials soon "dieron paso a un silencio mantenido con el que

pretendían convencer de que la gripe no había alcanzado carácter epidémico en la capital por segunda vez" (*Un reto* 84). On October 18, "el subdelegado de Gobernación rompió el silencio oficial, pero fue para calificar esas noticias como simple rumor" (84). That Sileno's *soldado de Nápoles*, which appears in the middle of this "régimen de silencio," passes squarely over Madrid explicitly parodies the official version of the epidemic. Ostensibly, the official silence was aimed at avoiding public panic (84). Ironically, if Sileno's or Aguirre's editorial cartoons are any indication of public knowledge, silence would have made no difference; people were well aware of the return of the epidemic.[87]

The text of the article, "La cuestión sanitaria," augments the sense of irony that pervades figure 10. The article can be divided into two sections: that dealing with governmental questions and that dealing with prophylactic measures. These sections can be further subdivided into two parts. The first treats the general question of the section while the second discusses the question as it relates to various parts of Spain outside the capital. The juxtaposition of so many points of view invariably produces a reading experience of the type visualized by Aguirre in figure 8. In some places, the epidemic is reported as spreading; in others, as decreasing. In Madrid, the Director General de Seguridad ordered the disinfection of theaters before, during, and after performances in light of the fact that the epidemic was then known to have returned to Madrid. Amidst these various opinions, and against accusations that it was covering up information, the Ministro de la Gobernación stated: "'hemos considerado desde los primeros momentos que la publicidad era un poderoso complemento del régimen de profilaxis, y así no se ha

[87] In terms of how many people the editorial cartoons themselves reached, Urgoiti lists print runs of *Heraldo de Madrid* in October of 1918 at between 50,000 and 55,000 (458). By contrast, Aguirre's paper, *El Fígaro*, had a print run of only 7,000 and 8,000 (458). In addition to figures 8 and 10, I have found at least 33 more editorial cartoons dealing with the extent of the epidemic that appear during the second wave, including from major sources like *ABC*.

ocultado ninguno de los informes que debían llegar a conocimiento de la opinión pública, porque creemos que ésta debe tener una sensación exacta de la situación sanitaria.'" It should be noted that the words are a direct quotation from the Ministry. In fact, the first half of the first section is almost entirely a direct quotation.

The choice of phrases like "desde los primeros momentos," "*ninguno* de los informes," and "sensación *exacta*," raises the stakes of the argument, from a rhetorical point of view. That is, if one takes the words at face value, the fact that they constitute a direct quotation serves to reinforce their authority. On the contrary, if one reads them ironically, the direct quotation merely serves to intensify the irony. This ambiguity is especially pertinent for the final paragraph of the Ministry's statement: "'El régimen de silencio, a pretexto de evitar alarmas, no debe prosperar, y el Gobierno es el primer interesado en que los periódicos cooperen a su obra recogiendo aquellas informaciones que contribuyan a intensificar la acción sanitaria, y de este modo será más fácil el atajar los progresos del mal y evitar su difusión.'" Here the government directly addresses the accusations that it was involved in a regime of silence. In seeking to discredit the accusations, it implicates the press.[88] Figures 8 and 10 clearly demonstrate how the *soldado de Nápoles* points to inconsistencies in flu discourse. Where one finds the *soldado*, one finds the discursive tensions associated with reporting on the epidemic. These inconsistencies result from the combination of limited knowledge about the flu and attempts to overcome those limitations to make sense of the epidemic. It is not surprising, then, that the phrase "soldado de Nápoles" often became shorthand for reporting on the

[88] The concern over widespread panic during pandemics, and the often conflictive roles of governments and media in mediating it—whether in terms of fomenting or placating it—continues to inform discourse on pandemic preparedness and response in our day. If the role of doctors and media in current avian flu discourse is any indication, neither party is immune to fanning the flames of panic. For a discussion of panic as it relates to public health, see Bonneux and Van Damme's "An iatrogenic pandemic of panic."

epidemic. The name is both apt and ironic because it attempts discursively to tame an unruly experience with the name of an unruly character. At this point, I want to return to my idea that the *soldado de Nápoles*, as the new Don Juan, provides an interpretive template for understanding the "Spanish" flu.

Germán Gullón's assessment that the news in the years surrounding the 1918 epidemic lacks a "great ideological plan" (158) closely resembles Benedict Anderson's comment: "Reading a newspaper is like reading a novel whose author has abandoned any thought of a coherent plot" (33 n54). The statement comes from his influential work on nationalism, *Imagined Communities*, in which he claims that the experience of reading the daily news is shared by countless people at the same time, thus allowing each to imagine the community that is his or her nation.[89] It is telling that the most prominent names given the epidemic within and without Spain—respectively, the *soldado de Nápoles* and the "Spanish" flu—both reinforce the construct of the nation. To call the flu "Spanish" is to mark it as exogenous (I have found no reference to the flu as "Spanish" in Spanish sources except to comment on foreign news coverage); conversely, to figure it as an avatar of Don Juan is to mark it, *pace* Marañón, as endogenous. In either case the boundary defining national self and national other is buttressed.[90]

In pointing to the nationalistic overtones of the choice to call the flu the *soldado de Nápoles*, I have gotten ahead of myself. My point is that to call the flu the *soldado de Nápoles* is to cast the events of the epidemic in a specific light. As Steven G. Kellman has said of titles, they are "an attempt to impose some order on the vast field [an author]

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[89] I will deal with the act of reading in greater detail in the following chapter.

[90] The question remains as to why Spaniards did not, like their counterparts in other nations, insist more adamantly on an exogenous origin of the epidemic. Perhaps, in keeping with Anderson's powerful notion of simultaneous imagining, the censorship of flu information in other countries supported the erroneous assumption that Spain's experience of the epidemic was somehow unique or exceptional.

is surveying" (155). Similarly, Harry Levin has stated that "[titles are] cultural signposts, frames of reference, proclamations of individuality, signals for our guidance through surroundings otherwise dark, notices that we depend upon to alert ourselves to the plenitude and variety and quality of the communications that we may choose to receive" (xxxv). And, finally, Louis O. Mink argues that "narrative form in history, as in fiction, *is an artifice*, the product of individual imagination. Yet at the same time it is accepted as claiming truth—that is, as representing a real ensemble of interrelationships in past actuality" (145, emphasis added). By referring to the flu as the *soldado de Nápoles*, flu discourse thus establishes a relationship between the events of the epidemic and those of the *zarzuela* (and, more broadly, those of the Don Juan story). Now, James Mandrell has rightly pointed to the difficulty of ever arriving at a degree zero version of Don Juan—*the* Don Juan story. However, the fact that only two versions are explicitly referenced in flu discourse—*Don Juan Tenorio* and *La canción del olvido*—suggests that the narrative form of these two versions is the one imposed on the events of the epidemic. This means the epidemic acquires meaning as it takes shape through the narrative form of these versions of the Don Juan story. To use Mink's language, the narrative imposed on the epidemic by the *zarzuela* title served the cognitive function of "making the flux of experience comprehensible" (13). We have already seen how Aguirre's *caricatura* adopts *mise en abyme* as a strategy, just as the strategy figures prominently in *La canción del olvido*. We have also seen how Escofet compared Zorrilla's Tenorio to the *soldado de Nápoles*. Similarly, a happy ending is common to both. This point can hardly be understated, for happy endings provide closure. It is helpful to remember that representations of Don Juan, specifically *Don Juan Tenorio*, had been a yearly ritual for

Spaniards since the mid-1800s. And we have seen how this ritual was part of a broader tendency to debate the state of the Spanish nation through the central figure of Don Juan. In light of this, we can state that by writing the epidemic in the form of a Don Juan story, Spanish sources opened up the possibility for Spaniards to adopt reading conventions and expectations associated with that story. This includes an implicit desire that, like *Don Juan Tenorio*, the epidemic also end happily, that the story provide readers with a satisfactory sense of closure. This closure would occur to the degree that individual and national identities remained intact. In fact, by reading the *soldado de Nápoles* version of the epidemic, Spaniards actually went through a specific cognitive process that reconstituted them as individual and national subjects.[91]

The most significant way the *soldado de Nápoles* component of flu discourse provides closure occurs on November 23 when an editorial cartoonist by the name, coincidentally, of Juan, published the only image in flu discourse (Fig. 14) that actually represents the death of the *soldado de Nápoles*. Even the advertisements that depict the soldier stop short of representing his death. The caption of the image, titled "Cuadro Histórico," reads: "La muerte del 'Soldado de Nápoles' después de su largo reinado en el suelo español." Speaking of closure in novels, Marianna Torgovnick remarks how "endings confirm the patterns of both lives and texts, but are always unknown for lives in progress" (7). In a similar fashion, I maintain that figure 14 confirms the "patterns" whereby Spaniards would most likely have understood the connection between Don Juan

[91] In saying this, I would add the following caveat. As any casual reading of Spanish sources reveals, the *soldado de Nápoles* is hardly the only title given the flu. Consequently, the story of Don Juan is not the only interpretive template adduced by the Spanish press to render the epidemic meaningful. Moreover, the multiplicity of narratives created out of the events of the epidemic highlights the possibility for competing visions not just of the epidemic, but, consequently, of the Spanish nation. That there was (or should be) a Spanish nation was never called into question by the various narratives. What it should look like, however, was entirely open for debate.

and the flu epidemic. (As was seen earlier, the connection with Zorrilla's Tenorio was made explicit by José Escofet). The *soldado*'s death confirms what Spaniards had come to expect with regard to the *burlador*—that he would ultimately be reined in. This reining in implied that the epidemic, too, would have its happy ending. It is worth noting that figure 14 is chronologically the last editorial cartoon that depicts the *soldado de Nápoles*. His death thus provides closure in both the sense that the epidemic is over and in the sense that Spaniards had come to grips with the event of the epidemic. In other words, Spaniards were finally able process the experience of the epidemic by squaring it with the epistemological framework of the period (i.e., positivism).

The closure provided by figure 14, which, as will be demonstrated, is problematic, is signaled by two details of the image. The first is the chair. That the *soldado* sits dead in an armchair already places him in a specifically bourgeois setting. In this, the *soldado* of figure 14 contrasts sharply with that of figure 8—the scope of the flu's sphere of influence has been greatly reduced. The *soldado* himself has been domesticated. The second, related detail is the presence of the doctor, who verifies the *soldado*'s death. In fact, for positivism to remain epistemologically viable, the doctor must verify the *soldado*'s death. To record the end of the epidemic as merely a passing event, essentially unaffected by human influence, would have called into question positivism as the epistemological ground of that particular historical moment. The doctor's presence thus serves to shore up the discourse (with all its concomitant institutions, conventions, and assumptions) that sought to make sense of the epidemic. Ironically, although the doctor verifies the end of the epidemic, no satisfactory explanation of it was ever provided by

the medical profession.[92] No one knew who the *soldado* was, only that he was dead. I say ironically, because the epidemic had not in fact ended. Indeed, the third wave was more virulent than the first (Echeverri, *La gripe* 88–94). Coverage of the third wave of the epidemic, however, was greatly reduced. It was as if, as has often been suggested, the epidemic was simply too much to stomach. In light of the other crises through which Spaniards were then passing, many of which were perceived as graver because deeply systemic, there was little energy left, whether collective or individual, with which to confront the epidemic. Depicting the death of the *soldado de Nápoles* thus carried with it the weight of overcoming Don Juan's threat (Don Juan as threat), which, as we have seen, serves to reinforce Spaniards' individual and collective identity. In the absence of alternative, supposedly more qualified explanations of the epidemic, the figure of the *soldado de Nápoles* allowed Spaniards, however problematically, to make sense of their experience and move forward with their lives, a noteworthy feat for a human mode of expression (art) that had and has been so often marginalized in the public sphere. Put otherwise, he enabled Spaniards to collectively imagine their national community as safe from the epidemic threat. In the following chapter, I will show how, despite this collective act of imagining, the Spanish national community had, discursively speaking, both its constitutive members and its outcasts.

[92] The situation changed when the 1918 flu virus was genetically decoded between 1997 and 2005. I would add, however, that certain oddities about the "Spanish" flu continue to puzzle scientists. See Reid and Taubenberger's "A Continuing Enigma."

Chapter 3: Imagining the Epidemic Nation: Editorial Cartoons and the "Spanish" Flu

In the last chapter, I suggested that associating the flu with the soldado de Nápoles and, by extension, the epidemic with the *zarzuela*, *La canción del olvido*, gave a narrative structure to the epidemic experience that allowed Spaniards to make sense of it. Specifically, the soldado de Nápoles, as a Don Juan figure, served as a foil for (re)articulating a specific concept of the Spanish nation as conceived at the time of the epidemic. In the present chapter, I will focus on the cultural sphere to elucidate similar preservation efforts vis-à-vis the imagined nation. Specifically, I will be concerned with tracing the articulation of national identity, which is to say, Spanish subjectivity. To do so, I will deal primarily with editorial cartoons, though I also discuss some important opinion pieces that help flesh out the cultural values that inform this subjectivity. In terms of chapter organization, I will first discuss the cultural status of editorial cartoons (*caricaturas*) in early 20th-century Spain. Then, in discussing various images, I will show how Spain is imagined along the lines of gender, class, and culture. Not surprisingly, Spain as imagined community is a masculinist, bourgeois construct. If these categories of inquiry are not strikingly original, it nevertheless remains that analysis of the epidemic according to them has, to date, remained absent from modern Spanish cultural studies.

Caricatura in Early 20th-Century Spain

The early 20th century in Spain witnessed a resurgence of critical interest in editorial cartoons, or *caricaturas*.[93] A central feature of this interest revolved around the issue of the artistic status of Spanish *caricatura*. Some argued it had finally come into its

[93] For studies of caricature in its Spanish context, see Valls Vicente, Perales Piqueres, Mingote Barrachina, Barros, Picón, del Socorro Arroyo, Marcos Villalón, Junceda, and Francés. On the subject of graphic humor in Spain in the years surrounding the epidemic, see Mainer and González-Grano del Oro. For more on the nature, role, rhetoric, and rise of caricature in general, see Rivers, Gombrich, Gombrich and Kris, Coupe, and Streicher.

own as a legitimate art form, while others continued to view it as the purview of second-rate artists producing little more than poor imitations of foreign models, which at the time were called *fusilamientos*. In other words, the debate was divided between those who defended Spanish *caricatura* as high art and those who continued to dismiss it as low art. Given that this critical exchange contextualized both the production and reception of editorial cartoons about the epidemic, it is important to consider in some detail the terms of the argument. Specifically, I will address the relationship between *caricatura* and *humorismo* and the role of the Salones de Humoristas. In relation to the former, I will show how there is an important tension that obtains between surface, or superficiality, and depth. In broad terms, *humorismo* referred to an artistic sensibility that gave *caricaturistas* privileged insights into life and the world. To associate Spanish *caricatura* with *humorismo* was thus to emphasize that the apparent superficiality of the art form actually masked deeper meaning. In this sense, the tension between surface and depth that characterizes editorial cartoons in general implies that those produced in response to the epidemic were particularly well suited to express the monstrous/mundane dynamic of "Spanish" flu epidemic, which I discussed earlier.

For their part, the Salones de Humoristas were exhibits where the work of these artists was made accessible to a wide audience. In the period between 1914 and 1923, numerous such exhibits were organized, thanks in large part to José Francés, the most ardent apologist of Spanish *caricatura*. As David Vela Cervera has noted: "[l]a definitiva consolidación de los Salones de Humoristas madrileños se debe…al empeño del crítico y novelista José Francés" (30). The purpose of these Salones, I will argue, was to educate the Spanish masses according to the aesthetic sensibilities of the bourgeoisie. In other

words, they played a conservative social role, reinforcing the cultural values of the bourgeoisie in the face of the epidemic threat.

As I have noted, the crux of the argument of those who defended Spanish *caricatura* as high art depended on associating it with *humorismo*. To understand this argument better, it will be helpful first to outline briefly the attitude against which they were fighting. In the December 1918 edition of the literary journal *Cervantes*, an anonymous critic reacted to a recent exhibit of *caricaturas* by suggesting that "[e]stos [caricaturistas] hacen caricatura, pero no hacen humorismo" (96). As evidence for his position, he noted how

> Esta caricatura no puede servir más que para los periódicos, pero nunca para ser asunto de un cuadro que pueda colocarse como elemento decorativo en cualquier habitación. Esta es la causa de que los *humoristas* que concurren a estos Salones vean transcurrir los años, salvo contadísimas excepciones, sin que un alma piadosa se acerque comprar sus obras. (97)

The distinction between *caricatura* that was fit for newspapers versus that which was fit to hang on the wall of the Spanish well-to-do highlights the tension underlying the artistic status of *caricatura*. The anonymous critic assumes both that the purchase of a *caricatura* reflects its artistic value and that said purchase evidences the cultural sensibility of the buyer. In this he seems to ignore the broader cultural tendency whereby, in the words of Jo Labanyi, "the capitalist subordination of culture to the laws of the market, via the newly developing culture industries, took the control of taste—and hence over the policing of the class system—away from the bourgeois cultural elite" ("Engaging with Ghosts" 5). In other words, artistic taste as measured by the power of one's pocketbook

had begun to overshadow artistic taste that was measured by one's membership in the culturally marked group of the bourgeois elite.

Given this trend to subordinate culture to the laws of the capitalist market, it is important to note that Francés sought to defend Spanish *caricatura* solely on cultural grounds. For him, the relationship between *caricatura* and *humorismo* was a function of the high/low divide, not market economics. Thus, in adopting the terminology of Galacian artist Alfonso Castelao, he defines *humorismo* in opposition to *socarronería*: "el humorismo…es la socarronería de las gentes cultas, así como la socarronería es el humorismo de las gentes incultas" (*Caricatura* 19). Moreover, although he recognized that *caricatura* had historically been used as a means for exacting vengeance, he argued that it could not be reduced to this: "aun en las aparentes degradaciones, latían [sic] un impulso elevado, ansia de belleza, de libertad, de ética inclusive, que la levantaba por sobre las adulaciones pictóricas y escultóricas, de los ditirámbicos comentarios de los artistas y cronistas de cada época" (*Caricatura contemporánea* 12). The distinction between the "impulso elevado" of *caricatura* and its "*aparentes* degradaciones" (emphasis added) reflects the tension between surface and depth that defines editorial cartoons.[94] For Francés, not only was there more than meets the eye when it came to *caricatura*, but what underlay the art form reflected an elevated aesthetic sensibility.

[94] Ernst Gombrich and Ernst Kris trace this tension to the origin of caricature as an art form: "Thus even when caricature became possible it was not wholly appreciated as an art. That is not surprising because if we analyse a little more deeply the aim of the caricaturist we learn that image magic survives under the surface of fun and play" ("The Principles of Caricature," no pagination). They explain the relationship between caricature and image magic this way: "Caricature is a play with the magic power of the image, and for such a play to be licit or institutionalized the belief in the real efficacy of the spell must be firmly under control. Wherever it is not considered a joke but rather a dangerous practice to distort a man's features, even on paper, caricature as an art cannot develop." Without attributing to Francés a belief in the image magic of caricature, I nevertheless maintain that he did perceive something similar to this by insisting on the deeper meaning hidden beneath the surface of *caricaturas*.

In this sense, the use of *caricatura*, say for vengeance, should never be confused with its essence.

In his boldest move, Francés compared artists of *caricatura* to the great romantic poets. Citing Percy Shelley's "Defense of Poetry," he suggested: "Esto que el gran poeta inglés afirmaba de sus compañeros de ensueño y de quimera, podría afirmarse también de los caricaturistas. Don de profecía tienen sus lápices, y así como adivinan en las personas o en los acontecimientos el rasgo característico o el episodio que les resume, así también adivinan y presienten los moldes de la vida futura" (*La caricatura* 32). *Caricatura* artists had privileged access to knowledge about people, events, and the future. Their capacity for insight recalls a similar comment by Francés in *La caricatura contemporánea*: "estos hombres, [que] en apariencia, [son] de tan frívola y poco transcendental ocupación como la de hacernos reír o sonreír, son aquellos que, detenidos al borde del camino, ven pasar la vida y disfrazan de arlequín su corazón y le ponen cascabeles al propio dolor" (9). Here again, Francés's emphasis on appearance ("en apariencia") underscores his point that *caricatura* by definition engages the tension between surface and depth. Moreover, he likens the men who practice this art to "los magos, sacerdotes y sibilas de las antiguas teogonías, [quienes poseían] secretos incomprensibles e inexplicables para los hombres de su época" (32). In sum (and with a pinch of hyperbole, perhaps), by comparing *caricatura* artists to Shelley's poets and the magicians, priests, and sibyls that dated back to the origin of the gods, Francés sought to definitively ensconce them as the irreproachable arbiters ("incomprensible e inexplicables para los hombres de su época") of the spirit of their age.

Francés was not alone in defending Spanish *caricatura* as high art by associating it with *humorismo*. In his 1936 *Assaig Sobre l'humorisme grafic* (*Ensayo sobre el humorismo gráfico*), Joan Junceda, himself an artist and critic, distinguished between artistic means and ends. The general public, and even some artists, he argued, "[t]enien la gran equivocació de creure que el 'fi' de l'humorisme era la deformació, essent així que aquesta no passa d'esser un 'mitja'" ("tenían la gran equivocación de creer que el fin del humorismo era la deformación, cuando aquél no es más que un medio") (4). The point was rather that *humorismo* gave the artist access to "alguna cosa que no fos tangible, que fos espiritual, que pertangues [sic] a l'anima" ("alguna cosa que no fuera tangible, que fuera espiritual, que perteneciera al alma") (4). In this regard, "l'humorista fa com el poeta, vol expressar totes les coses de la terra materials o espirituals, visibles o invisibles, tristes o aleres, dolces o agres, aspres o delicades" ("el humorista hace como el poeta, quiere expresar todas las cosas de la tierra, materiales o espirituales, visibles o invisibles, tristes o alegres, dulces o agrias, ásperas o delicadas") (7). That Junceda places *caricatura* artists like Apa and Opisso alongside great *humoristas* like Goya, Brueghel, and Daumier, combined with the fact that he himself participated in at least two Salones de Humoristas suggest that he viewed *caricatura* as a legitimate (read: high) art form.

The privileged status of *caricatura* did not mean that the work of artists who engaged in this art form was inaccessible. In fact, Francés went to great lengths to bring the masses to view their work. In this, the aforementioned Salones de Humoristas played a key role. The first Salón took place in 1914 in a small locale in the Plaza de Santa Ana that was owned by Ildefonso Alier (Cervera 31). By 1917, a mere three years later, the success of the Salones was solidified. As David Vela Cervera has remarked:

> El III Salón de Humoristas, celebrado en enero de 1917 supone la confirmación del éxito de la iniciativa de Francés, que recibe además el reconocimiento oficial con la asistencia en la inauguración del subsecretario del Ministro de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, Natalio Rivas, el director general de Bellas Artes, Virgilio Anguita y el presidente del Círculo de Bellas Artes, José Francos Rodríguez. (31)

After the success of the 1917 Salón, those of 1918, 1919, and 1920 were moved to the galleries of the Círculo de Bellas Artes on the Carrera de San Jerónimo (32). To be sure, there were those who continued to berate the second-rate work of Spanish artists; however, when the Spanish contingent took home the most awards from the 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes (International Exposition of Modern Industrial and Decorative Arts) in Paris, it must have seemed that Spanish *caricatura* had officially arrived.[95]

Reflecting on the purpose of the Salones de Humoristas, Francés wrote in his *Año artístico 1922*: "El Salón de Humoristas respondió desde el primer instante a la necesidad de situar debidamente al caricaturista y al ilustrador" (96–97. qtd. in Vela 32). That he would choose the term "situar" is doubly suggestive given the polyvalence of the term. On one hand, Francés concerned himself with the figurative situation of *caricaturistas* vis-à-vis other artists, defending their work as *humorismo*. On the other hand, by housing the exhibitions in bourgeois spaces, he clearly sought to situate *caricatura* within the institution of bourgeois art. This becomes especially evident in the following passage from his *Año artístico 1921*:

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[95] Francés would also go on to enjoy great personal success, ultimately being elected to the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando between the eight and ninth Salones (of 1922 and 1923, respectively).

> Cada día estos Salones eran un gran espectáculo de multitudes lentas y gustosamente entregadas al placer de contemplar cosas bellas y divertidas, escenas ingeniosas.
>
> Gran número de gentes de esa multitud no las hemos visto en otras Exposiciones; pero son las que acuden a los conciertos populares, a las paseatas reparadoras de los campos, las que agotan los libros de los grandes escritores y en silencio de sus lecturas les rinden un homenaje mudo de admiración.
>
> A esa multitud buscábamos nosotros. Espíritus que ignoran el rencor profesional o el prejuicio de las nombradías; seres normales, propicios de un modo ingenuo y cordial a la comprensión de las normas estéticas, dichas de un modo fácil o encendidas en fulgores tibios.
>
> Frente a los dibujos expuestos en este Salón, como en los seis anteriores, van renovando y concretando el acaso rudimentario, el tal vez ya definido esteticismo que les caldea el alma. Se acostumbran al sentido de la belleza, y, poco a poco, estas obras, que tienen precios humildes y un propósito de legítimo orgullo, encauzan a las gentes sencillas hasta los museos, a un contacto más frecuente con las Bellas Artes y con los artistas. (*Año artístico 1921*, 39–40. qtd. in Vela 34–35).

Read in conjunction with Francés's insistence on the high art status of *caricatura* and the political overtones implied by his reference to Shelley's "Defense of Poetry"—which famously concludes with a reference to poets as the "unacknowledged legislators of the world" (535)—the *Año Artístico 1921* passage offers insights into both the ostensible pedagogical purpose of the Salones de Humoristas and the tensions that militate against

it. Essentially, Francés argues that through the contemplation of "cosas bellas y divertidas," the uninitiated masses would be guided to places like museums that would augment their contact with the fine Arts and artists. And, to continue with his logic, through this contact they would have access to the secrets of their age that otherwise would remain "incomprensibles e inexplicables" (*Caricatura contemporánea* 32).

In short, the stated purpose of the Salones de Humoristas evinces both the promise and the problems of the project of modernity as articulated by Jürgen Habermas. The viewing masses were to become "competent consumer[s] who [used] art and [related] aesthetic experiences to [their] own life problems" (106). Their "own life problems," however, would now be perceived through a new and unique prism: namely, that of the beliefs and behaviors of the culturally sophisticated bourgeois elite (the "nosotros" referred to by Francés). Indeed, these beliefs and behaviors constituted the "secretos incomprensibles e inexplicables" that *caricaturistas* were believed by Francés to possess. In fact, they were ostensibly to replace the "modo ingenuo" of the masses, their ignorance of "[el] rencor profesional," and to refine their "acaso rudimentario, el tal vez ya definido esteticismo que les caldea el alma." One reason Francés so adamantly defended the fact that the *caricaturas* on display in his Salones de Humoristas were high art—and indeed the very *raison d'être* of the Salones as a marked *space* of exhibition—stems from the need to position artists within the (bourgeois) institution of art, for it was only from that position that they could properly educate the masses in matters of aesthetic values.

As a counterpoint to considering Francés in light of Habermas's thinking on the project of modernity, further insight can be gleaned by analyzing the Salones de Humoristas—and Francés's writings in general—through the prism of Antonio Gramsci's

notion of hegemony, which refers, roughly speaking, to rule by consensus and not merely by force. Given that for Gramsci hegemony pertains to a society's superstructure and not its base structure—where the modes of economic production operate, and therefore where real power resides—, I want to suggest that Francés's efforts to mold the masses into bourgeois subjects is hegemonic in that the process of enculturation that is the Salones de Humoristas will endear the masses to bourgeois cultural values without actually integrating them into the bourgeoisie. In other words, the Salones de Humoristas grant the masses access to bourgeois values, but not their modes of production. They are one of what Gramsci calls "a multitude of other so-called private initiatives and activities [that] tend to the same end—initiatives and activities which form the apparatus of the political and cultural hegemony of the ruling classes" (*SPN* 258).

Another reason Gramsci's notion of hegemony is valuable for understanding Francés and the Salones de Humoristas is because, like the constructed, dynamic nature of identity formation, it, too, is dynamic. As Raymond Williams writes: "[Hegemony] does not just passively exist as a form of dominance. It has continually to be renewed, recreated, defended, and modified. It is also continually resisted, limited, altered, challenged by pressures not all its own" (112). In the case of the Salones de Humoristas, one of the challenges to their hegemony actually comes from Francés. Not long after lauding the Salones as a first stop on the road to museums (in the *Año Artístico* quote above), where the bourgeois enculturation of the masses can continue, Francés adopts a strikingly contrastive metaphor: "Como una feria, este Salón ha bullido en risas, en colores y en rostros alegres de mujer. Como en una feria acá hemos ido poniendo nuestros carteles hechos a mano, un poco vocingleros y fanfarrones; como una feria,

entraban a la barraca de la cuchufleta, y a la barraca del ensueño, y a la barraca de los monstruos" (*Año artístico*, 60; qtd. in Vela 35). The difference between a *barraca de feria* and a museum could hardly be more pronounced. The first is a dynamic, provisional artistic space, whereas the second is an established/establishment space characterized by stasis and permanence. Although exhibitions inside museums may change, the structure—and the symbolic weight that it carries—remains the same. By contrast, as the Real Academia notes, a *barraca de feria* is a "[c]onstrucción *provisional* desmontable, que se destina a espectáculos, diversiones, etc., en las fiestas populares" (my emphasis). Moreover, museums evince authority from a perceived artistic center, whereas the *barraca* speaks with a popular voice and evades clear-cut distinctions between center and margin, or, to adopt the complementary symbolic spatial dichotomy, high and low.[96]

My point in juxtaposing Francés's *feria* metaphor with his quotation about museums is to highlight how the constructed nature of the borders between high and low, center and periphery, masses and elite, masses and bourgeois, can be detected in the specific language he adopts. In fact, in the earlier quotation, one already finds Francés calling the Salones a "gran espectáculo de multitudes" (*Año artístico 1921*, 39; qtd. in Vela 34). The term "spectacle" recalls the slippery slope from being to having to appearing that Guy Debord articulates in his *Society of the Spectacle* (thesis 17, no pagination). That the Salones are spectacles betrays the fact that they traffic in cultural copies rather than originals. In other words, the fact that the masses are enculturated with bourgeois values matters more than actually integrating them into the bourgeoisie. The

[96] Lorca's theater company, *La Barraca*, provides an interesting example of the mixing of high and low culture. It was a company that traveled to peripheral towns to perform high-culture, canonical plays. For Lorca's impact on Spanish theater, see Suzanne Wade Byrd's *García Lorca: "La Barraca" and the Spanish National Theater.*

"horizontal comradeship" that is the nation turns out to be imaginary, not just imagined (Anderson 7).

In order to turn now to the editorial cartoons, I want to summarize the process of enculturation into the Spanish national (read: bourgeois) community as follows. Ultimately, the construction of an aesthetically sensitized multitude really signals their *re*construction into specifically bourgeois(-ified) subjects. Moreover, this re*construction* of the masses could easily be termed a (re)*production*, since "we" (i.e., Francés's "nosotros") (re)produce "us" out of "them" (i.e., the masses). This is an important feature of the cultural context of the epidemic for, as I will show in greater detail below, there remains little room for different subjects (or: subjects of difference) in a flu discourse inflected by modernist ideology.[97] The various tensions that play out along the lines of gender, social class, and culture speak both to the constitutive exclusions of the bourgeois public sphere and to the underlying anxiety inherent in this reconstructive/reproductive process that they (the editorial cartoons) reveal.[98] By reproducing bourgeois subjects, Francés implicitly sought to solidify the power of the Spanish bourgeoisie.[99]

In response to the flu epidemic, which threatened to dissolve *real* Spanish subjects, *caricaturistas* produced numerous images of what can be considered the (supposedly) *ideal* Spanish bourgeois self. By scrutinizing these images, it becomes possible not only

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[97] One reason for this, I believe, is that discursively articulated subjectivity remains a comparatively static construct that fails to embody the more textured reality of lived lives. Eventually, someone, usually a definitionally excluded other, calls into question the ability of such a construct to adequately and accurately represent them (or even other others).

[98] In this vein, Nancy Fraser has criticized "the official public sphere [which] rested on, indeed was importantly constituted by, a number of significant exclusions," including those of social class and gender (113).

[99] It is worth noting that although Francés early on shared some anti-bourgeois sentiments with the historical avant-garde (e.g., an anti-establishment bent), after his election to the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, and especially in post-Civil War Spain, he became increasingly conservative.

to see the discursive boundaries of this constructed subject, but to recognize the limits of Spain as an imagined community.

Editorial Cartoons about the Flu Epidemic

The first image I want to discuss is figure 8, which also appeared in the previous chapter. To recall, figure 8, entitled "Ultima hora," depicts the soldado de Nápoles sitting on the ground reading news coverage about the epidemic, surrounded by crosses that dot the Spanish landscape. Although I will be primarily concerned with the act of reading in this and similar images, I want to discuss briefly the depiction of geography and how it relates to the nation as imagined community. Anderson describes the nation "as *limited* because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations" (7). Although he italicizes the word "limited" for emphasis, I would emphasize the importance of both it and "imagined" for figures 8, 10, and 30. Each of these images depicts Spanish geography in a very nondescript way, making no effort at cartographic verisimilitude. In other words, unlike figure 31, they do not trace the outline of Spain's territorial border. Of course, the representational conventions of editorial cartoons no doubt allow for some leeway in this regard, but this is precisely the point. Anderson's idea about the nation being imagined is borne out by the fact that the artist need only provide a few signposts to the reader/viewer who then uses this information to fill in the gaps with the missing information. And these gaps, the missing information, are nothing less than geographic limits, or, national borders. In other words, the reader/viewer cognitively aligns what he sees in the editorial cartoon with the idea of the geographically delimited Spanish nation he has in his mind.

The connection between the editorial cartoons and the mental world of the reader is further established through the adoption of the literary device of *mise en abyme*. According to Brian McHale:

> Such structures *en abyme* have typically been treated as uncanny disruptions, fatally compromising fiction's world-modeling function, at worst summoning up the specters of crippling paradox and infinite regress. In fact, world-modeling and self-modeling are interdependent functions of fiction…Far from disrupting the primary world, they [internal scale-models] hold a mirror up to it, providing the reader with a kind of schematic diagram of it, or a user's manual for its proper operation. (202)

Rather than disrupt the reader's ability to understand the epidemic, then, Aguirre's editorial cartoon (figure 16), as well as the others (figures 15 and 17–20), enables the reader to process it by modeling the experience of reading about it.[100] In this sense, the *mise en abyme* structure collapses the distance between the "real" and represented worlds. Or, as Anderson explains, it "fuses the world inside the novel," or, in this case, newspapers, "with the world outside" (30). The importance of the act of reading, depicted *en abyme*, in figures 15–20 can hardly be overstated. For Anderson, it is central to his conception of the nation as imagined community:

> The significance of this mass ceremony [i.e., the "almost precisely simultaneous consumption ('imagining') of the newspaper-as-fiction"]—Hegel observed that newspapers serve modern man as a substitute for morning prayers—is paradoxical. It is performed in silent privacy, in the lair of the skull. Yet each

[100] This seems to be what Anderson had in mind when, in reference to a scene in *El Periquillo Sarniento*, he speaks of "the doubleness of our reading about our young man reading" (32).

> communicant is well aware that the ceremony he performs is being replicated simultaneously by thousands (or millions) of others….What more vivid figure for the secular, historically clocked, imagined community can be envisioned? (35)

For Anderson, the paradox of the act of reading as it relates to imagining the nation stems from the relationship between the individual and the collective. It is through the former's act of reading that the identity of the latter as a community coheres. Thus, in depicting the individual act of reading so explicitly, figures 15–20 are best understood as reflections on Spanish subjectivity and national identity rather than as portrayals of specific individuals. The sheer quantity of such images reflects the fact that it was precisely the imagined national community that was threatened by the epidemic and that therefore needed reinforcement through the reading/viewing act. Thus, on October 2, *El Fígaro* publishes figure 16, which depicts a man reading the October 1 edition of the same paper. The temporal coincidence between the two acts of reading—that depicted in figure 16 and that engaged in by the reader/viewer of it—further "fuses the world inside the novel with the world outside" (Anderson 30). Similarly, as the title of figure 18 suggests, the epidemic threat was "[l]o de todos los días," thus recalling Anderson's assertion that the imagined world is "visibly rooted in *everyday life*" (35–36, emphasis added).

The intersection of the epidemic, everyday life, and the nation in crisis takes on historical significance in figure 15. Titled "Gran mundo," the caption of figure 15 reads: "– Después de una excursión veraniega, han regresado del extranjero nuestros queridos amigos el 'Pneumococo', el "estreptococo' y el 'Estafilococo', y de la Habana, el 'Coco'." The humor of the image stems from its punning of the Spanish word *coco*, which can mean either coccus (a spherical bacterium) or the bogeyman. The various

cocci—pneumococcus, streptococcus, and staphylococcus—were believed to play a part in causing the flu. Thus the syntactical juxtaposition of the flu-causing cocci and the bogeyman establishes an analogous relationship between them, one that is marked by what Kenneth T. Rivers calls transmutation, the central feature of the rhetoric of caricature: "transmutation occurs when any two objects or entities that would not normally become one another in nature are perceived, through art, as exchanging identities or traits" (93). The different cocci resemble the bogeyman in that they inspire fear in those they threaten to infect with the flu. Similarly, the bogeyman returning from Cuba may be said to function metaphorically as an agent of infection that threatens Spain. The specter of past imperial dissolution raises its head in the present moment of the national epidemic crisis.

This latter point recalls the broader historical context in which the epidemic occurs. It hardly seems a stretch to think that the reference to Havana would have evoked for Spanish readers memories of Spain's colonial disaster of 1898, wherein it lost most of its remaining colonial possessions, including Cuba. In their response to this crisis, the so-called generation of '98 filled their writings with numerous and prominent references to Spain's condition as one of illness and degeneration. In this sense, by referring to Cuba as the bogeyman that haunted Spain's nightmares about its lost empire and by highlighting the resemblance between *coco* and the different cocci, figure 15 seems to suggest that the flu epidemic can be read according to the conventions that characterize the disaster of 1898 and its aftermath. If the events of 1898 were an illness that impacted the geographic body of Spain—leading to the military/surgical removal of certain colonial parts, like Cuba—the flu epidemic of 1918 threatened Spain's body politic. If 1898 added a sense of

urgency to the need for national regeneration—a perceived need that actually predated the colonial crisis—1918, in its own way, also fostered the need to preserve the nation from an impending epidemic disaster. In this sense, figure 15 posits the flu epidemic as a subsequent episode in Spanish history that follows the portentous events of the turn of the century.

That the flu epidemic threatens the body politic of Spain becomes especially evident in figure 17. Drawn by Sileno, pen name of Pedro Antonio Villahermosa, the image depicts a man reading the "Instrucciones para combatir la gripe" from the newspaper. (Their publication in news dailies was a common practice during the epidemic). Various symptoms of the flu—congestion, paralysis, syncope, etc.—are written alongside the man in a disorderly fashion. In response to the instructions, he exclaims: "¡Caracoles! ¡La primera, no leer las alarmantísimas [noticias] de la Junta Provincial de Sanidad!" As with the other images that depict scenes of reading about the epidemic (figures 15–20), figure 17 portrays it (the epidemic) as a crisis. At the heart of this crisis is the dissolution of the boundaries of the body, both individual and national, which functions as the material grounding of, again, individual and national subjectivity. As Sander Gilman has argued, "[i]t is the fear of collapse, the sense of dissolution, which contaminates the Western image of all diseases" (1). The experience of Sileno's "implied" reader of flu discourse, a reader that his drawing actually renders explicit, potentially resonates with each individual reader of the news. Each member of the Spanish reading public is threatened by the flu in the manner represented in figure 17, which is to say, with the dissolution of his body. At the same time, as Anderson argues, the simultaneous repetition of the scene of reading is what serves to connect the reading

public into a more or less coherent, collective community. In this sense, Sileno's rendered-explicit reader of flu discourse is also the everyman of the epidemic experience, or, put otherwise, the embodiment of Spanish subjectivity at the time of the epidemic.

In referring to the construct of the implied reader, I implicitly signal my debt to the work of Wolfgang Iser. In *The Implied Reader*, Iser develops a phenomenological approach to reading (274–94). He posits an implied reader that, somewhat like Booth's implied author—a construct related to, but not to be conflated with, the flesh and blood author—, is a construct that signals the dependence of a text's meaning on its actualization through the process of reading. In other words, for a text to acquire meaning, it must be read. And for it to be read there must be a reader. The flip side of the coin is that the contours of the implied reader are laid bare in the specific way he negotiates the "inexhaustibility of the text"—i.e., the plurality of possible meanings (280). Whereas Iser's primary interest lies in the act of reading itself, however, I am more concerned at present with certain characteristics of the implied reader of flu discourse than with the particular textual meanings of the epidemic he actualizes.[101] Thus, although the rendered-explicit readers of figures 8 and 15–20 are constructs just as the implied reader is, they offer clues about probable real readers not available from the implied reader construct. In what follows, I will focus on gender, class, and culture.

Gender and the Spanish Nation

Tamar Meyer has stated in relation to nationalism in general that the "discourse of 'unity' is often challenged when the nation's inner workings are examined, especially in relation to gender and to sexuality" (12). In other words, "in determining who belongs to

[101] My discussion of the gender of the rendered-explicit reader of flu discourse implicitly signals the limitations of Iser's construct.

the nation and who does not, elites construct a code of 'proper behavior' for members of the nation which becomes a sort of national boundary" (13). If the images discussed here can be taken as indices of Spanish cultural values at the time of the epidemic, it seems clear that Spanish nationalism was articulated very much along gender lines. The readers in figures 15–19 are all male. One could also point to a number of other images that depict men reading other material like public health notices posted on buildings. By contrast, only two images that deal ostensibly with the epidemic portray women reading (figures 5 and 20). In fact, this dearth of such images corroborates Lou Charnon-Deutsch's research into magazine depictions of women in the late 19th century: "images of adult women reading are rare (unless they seem to use reading as a method to induce sleep or excite desire)" (79). The differences between the two women in figures 5 and 20 actually provide an illustrative contrast between two competing models of femininity in Spain that had, by 1918 and especially because of WWI, gained immense social prominence: the *ángel del hogar* and the *nueva mujer moderna*. At their most basic level, both of these models responded to two interrelated questions: what was woman's nature and what was her social role? The former posited woman as inherently weaker than man and sought to relegate her to the domestic sphere where she could best realize her role as spouse and mother. The latter posited her as more independent, including in the areas of employment and education. According to Mary Nash, it was Spain's experience of modernity that prompted the transition from the older model of the *ángel del hogar* to the newer one of the *nueva mujer moderna* (32). That this experience seemed to produce its own concomitant anxieties related to gender is noted by Nerea Aresti. Speaking of the impact of WWI on gender roles and relations, Aresti states that "por un lado…[la Guerra

facilitó] el cuestionamiento de los prejuicios sobre la capacidad de las mujeres para un buen número de actividades tanto manuales como intelectuales; por otro lado, y ligado al o anterior, la guerra generó miedo e inquietud sobre el futuro de los roles tradicionales femenino y masculino" (92).[102] These contextual forces that forced the issue of gender relations to the foreground of social debate, and the potential national crisis portended by the changes they were undergoing, inform the images about epidemic readers.

In general terms, the woman of figure 5 (and one could add figure 18) embodies the ideals of the *ángel del hogar* while that of figure 20 embodies those of the *nueva mujer moderna*. As indicated by her comment, the woman of figure 5 has waited home all day, acting as the personal secretary of the man working with the *soldado de Nápoles* skeleton: "De casa del coronel han venido ya dos veces a decir que está muy mal con el 'soldado'." Equally significant is the fact that, while waiting on him, the woman has passed the time reading a book of poetry (*coplas*). In contrast, given her message about the colonel's illness and the skeletal bones, compass, and bottle that populate his work bench, it would appear that the man is a doctor or scientist. I have already discussed in previous chapters the rhetorical strategies involved in the representation of doctors and scientists in flu discourse. Suffice it to say here that not only did the advancement of the twentieth century usher in changes in the feminine ideal, but those associated with man were also evolving. In Nerea Aresti's words, the "nuevo tipo de hombre…[era] el varón trabajador, responsable y racional" (120, see also 138). Moreover, as she continues, "el científico pasaría a representar la quintaesencia del nuevo modelo" (122). It is rather

[102] For Aresti, although the new medical perspectives on woman in the first three decades of the twentieth century discredited the inherited notion of her inferiority to man, the insistence on the fundamental difference between the sexes nevertheless allowed for the perpetuation—under the guise of scientific fact—of more or less traditional gender roles.

suggestive, then, not only that figure 5 depicts the man as working, but that he is engaged in scientific work. It is also worth recalling that the figure of Don Juan occupied a central position in the cultural debates about shifting gender roles and relations. In this regard, not only does the figure of Don Juan give a narrative/dramatic structure to flu discourse generally, as I discussed in the previous chapter, whereby Spain was able to fortify its national identity by containing the epidemic threat, but it also seems to highlight a key conflict: that between the *soldado de Nápoles* and doctors/scientists. The former represented the old model of masculinity; the latter, the new model. It follows, then, that since doctors/scientists were perceived as having played a minimal role in the eradication of the epidemic, this new Spanish man they embodied was in a very apparent (if implicit) fashion, impotent. The experience of the epidemic cast serious doubt as to whether the new pillars of Spanish masculinity were able to preserve the Spanish nation in any meaningful sense.[103]

The fact that no doctor Centellas ever successfully bested the *soldado de Nápoles* during the epidemic must have exacerbated the already extant gender anxieties in modernizing Spain. In figure 20, for example, one sees conflicting representational conventions associated with the woman. On the one hand, her clothes, the large swaths of her exposed female figure, the form-fitting bust of her garment, her high heels, bobbed hair, and appealing gaze all characterize her as a *nueva mujer moderna*. (By contrast, notice how the bodies of the women of figures 5 and 18, and that of the mothers in figures 24 and 25, remain almost completely covered and none retains her hourglass

[103] One of the criticisms leveled against Don Juan by Gregorio Marañón, who, perhaps more than anyone, embodied the "nuevo tipo de hombre" discussed by Aresti, was his aversion to work (137-42). Ironically, the fact that the work of scientists and doctors ultimately proved (in many ways) futile against the *soldado de Nápoles* proved to be the proverbial monkey wrench that frustrated their attempts to satisfactorily resolve the epidemic. In other words, their work failed to bring closure to the epidemic-as-don-Juan-story.

figure.) Whatever else she may do, she certainly seems poised to "excite desire" (Charnon-Deutsch 79). Moreover, unlike the woman of figure 18, who depends on her husband for information about current events, she seems to have read about the epidemic herself, as implied by the subject matter of her comment: "No se'ls creguin als higienistes. Si això del contagi fos veritat, jo a hores d'ara ja l'havria agafada" ("No se les cree a los higienistas. Si eso del contagio fuera verdad, yo a estas alturas ya la habría cogido"). Unlike women from an older generation, she engages more freely and more willingly issues of the public sphere. On the other hand, her dismissal of the scientific principle of contagion—"No se'ls creguin"—simply because she has not yet caught the flu earns her the ignominious name of "Una desaprensiva." Her lack of knowledge carries the weight of moral reprobation, which figuratively puts her, a woman, in her proper place vis-à-vis scientific knowledge, conceived of as the sphere of men.[104] Moreover, she is also literally depicted as (put) in her place. In her extensive study of representations of women in illustrated magazines, Charnon-Deutsch notes how virtually all of the 2,000 images she collected for her study depict women as either reclining or sitting (228). In this sense, the portrayal of the woman in figure 20 sitting and waiting—notice the cushions for her feet and derrière—would seem to corroborate Charnon-Deutsch's belief that such representational conventions served a regulatory purpose, that is, putting women in their place. Or, in Charnon-Deutsch's words, of "saturat[ing] the middle class with an ideal, or rather ideals [about the nature and role of women in society], seductive enough to produce emulation or approbation" (7). Mary Nash has similarly argued that "[g]ender identities are, to a large extent, consolidated and disseminated through images

[104] The *Gran Diccionari de la Llengua Catalana* defines *desaprensiva* as lacking moral conscience ("Mancat de consciència moral").

of women" (27). A woman's place in the Spain of 1918, then, even a new modern woman, was still largely circumscribed.

Another way editorial cartoons about the epidemic visualize the Spanish nation along gender lines has to do with representations of the sick. Of the fifteen editorial cartoons I have found that deal with this topic, in only one is the sick person a woman (figure 21).[105] This marks a significant departure from previous representational conventions whereby "men die, but they are never sick" (Charnon-Deutsch 225). Furthermore, not only is this lone sick woman not Spanish, she is not even human. Rather, what we see in figure 21 is the animated statue of Cybele sitting on her chariot in Spain's Plaza de Cibeles expressing surprise at the doctor's diagnosis that she has come down with the "enfermedad de moda." Cybele is the Lydian and Phrygian name for the Great Mother Goddess who, as "guardian of cities and nations…was…entrusted with the general welfare of the people" ("Cybele"). In this light, the title of the editorial cartoon—"¡Hasta la Cibeles!"—functions as a signpost for understanding the rhetorical message of the editorial cartoon. The flu was so contagious that, in crossing the taxonomic category boundary between humans and non-humans, it threatened the very foundation of national life.[106] Putting aside the need to take figure 21 with the proverbial grain of salt—the humor of the image depends on recognizing its exaggerated rhetorical claims as just that,

[105] On October 18, *L'Esquella de la Torratxa* published an image of US president Woodrow Wilson spoon feeding a woman who represents the German nation a broth of "rendició" while uttering: "Cregui'm, prengui's això…Es l'únic que pot salvar-la" (Créame, tome esto…Es lo único que puede salvarla"). However, because the link between the flu epidemic and the editorial cartoon remains tenuous—grounded as it is on the generic illness motif and the fact that the image appeared during the high point of the virulent second wave of the epidemic—I have excluded it from my discussion above. Also, I would add that I count Picarol's eight-panel drawing from May 31, 1918, in *L'Esquella de la Torratxa* (not shown) as a single image.

[106] For more on the Cybele myth, see Lynn E. Roller (especially 237-59).

exaggerated—there is a noteworthy tension that obtains between its representational conventions and those of the other fourteen images mentioned.

As the very first editorial cartoon to engage the epidemic, figure 21 establishes a precedent in terms of how gender will play out in flu discourse that every one of the other fourteen images from this category (representations of the sick) contradicts.[107] Although the so-called "democratic" spread of the "Spanish" flu would have affected women and men equally—a point emphasized by figure 21: everyone was at risk—the fact that no women are ever visually represented as sick points to a critical tension between the reality of the epidemic and how it was represented.[108] This bias, I maintain, reflects a fundamental anxiety about the well-being of the Spanish nation. In the face of the epidemic crisis, Spain's editorial cartoonists adopted (perhaps unconsciously) the very representational conventions that served the purpose of building the nation (as masculine construct). As Tamar Meyer has observed, "while it is men who claim the prerogatives of nation and nation-building it is for the most part women who actually tend to accept the obligation of nation and nation-building" (2). In this light, it bears reiterating that all the sick are men. Moreover, standing beside them (often at their bedside) are often women, dutifully fulfilling their familial and national role as caregivers.[109]

The relationship between nation and gender can be further articulated by noting that, of the three images that depict sick men accompanied only by other men who are not doctors (not shown here), two of these involve Spain's highest ranking politicians. (The

[107] Although I do not discuss each of these images individually, those I do discuss here are representative of the group in emphasizing the gender-specific way illness is portrayed.
[108] It should be noted that numerous reports of sick women do exist in news stories.
[109] For the sake of summary, the fifteen images I have found can be divided as follows (the parenthetic number refers to how many images of the particular subcategory there are): sick woman (1, if you count Cybele); sick man accompanied at least by a woman (i.e., there may also be a doctor present) (6); unaccompanied sick man (3); sick man accompanied only by a doctor (2); sick man accompanied only by another man who is not a doctor (3).

third shows a bellhop—who looks more like a child than a man—playing a record that repeats the diagnosis to the sick person who happens to be a doctor). And if one adds to these two images all of those that foregrounded Spanish politics/politicians, one notes the complete absence of women. In this sense, at least, "politics was," as Victoria Lorée Enders and Pamela Beth Radcliff note in reference to modern Spain generally, "in fact gendered male" (10). And yet, what the aforementioned anxiety—caused by the epidemic and reflected in the conventional choices of the various *caricaturistas*—shows is that despite their exclusion from Spanish politics, women (and gender in general) played a fundamental role in how the Spanish nation was imagined at the time of, and in response to, the epidemic.[110]

Lastly, figures 22 and 23 offer the most explicit examples of the gendered limits of Spanish subjectivity. Both portray the flu microbe as an intersexed monster. In figure 22, the microbe has male genitalia and female breasts, whereas in figure 23, in terms of body parts, it has only female breasts, though it does have facial hair and the doctors refer to it with the masculine title "senyor Microbi."[111] The rendering monstrous of intersexuality reflects, in Aresti's words, "[el] pánico de las clases dominantes sobre la posibilidad de un desbaratamiento del orden social, del que la jerarquía de género era parte fundamental" (110). For one thing, as David D. Gilmore states, monsters "provide a convenient pictorial metaphor for human qualities that have to be repudiated,

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[110] In pointing to various contributions to their collection, *Constructing Spanish Womanhood*, Enders and Radcliff echo this point when they state that "the relationship between women, gender, and politics was much more complex" than that offered by "binary categories of liberalism," which defined woman *a priori* as a non-political being (10).

[111] Although a significant body of criticism now distinguishes between sexuality and gender, in early 20th-century Spain, the latter was perceived as a function of, and was thus reducible to, the latter. For the relationship between biology and gender in Spain, see Aresti (especially 120-130), Wright, Nash, and Marañón's *Tres ensayos sobre la vida sexual*. The facial hair of the feminized flu has something of a precedent in José de Ribera's *La mujer barbuda*. For a discussion of this and other similar works in relation to the monstrous, see Valverde (171-74).

externalized, and defeated" (4). And, what is more, countless examples exist of the belief in early 20th-century Spain that everything in nature pointed to the "diferenciación total entre los sexos" (Aresti 122, n28). One such example was Bugallo Sánchez, a follower of Marañón, who affirmed that "[t]odo tiene sexo en la Naturaleza; pues hasta, para mejor entendernos, hemos tenido que convenir en señalar sexo a las ideas y aun a las palabras mismas" (qtd. in Aresti 122, n28). Thus, by its nature intersexuality challenged not only the natural order but, precisely because of this, the social order.[112] I would add that this challenge depends not so much on the monster's status as "other," as that which is different—a common mantra in studies of monsters—but on the fact that it remains undifferentiated.[113] The either/or logic of the self/other dichotomy is less relevant to figures 22 and 23 than a both/and logic. The monstrous flu microbe is *both* male/masculine *and* female/feminine. In this it resides not outside the system of categorization (sex/gender), but in the liminal space between category boundaries (male/masculine-female/feminine).

The rhetorical importance of this distinction is that it limited how far the perceived threat could be distanced. According to Gilmore, monsters typically inhabit "an 'outside' dimension that is apart from, but parallel to and intersecting the human community" (13). However, since the flu threat was figured through intersexuality, figures 22 and 23 highlight the proximity, not distance, of the monster. Intersexuality, or, to use the term then current in Spain, bisexuality, was part of—indeed, it was the crux of—what Sarah Wright has called the "anxiety about the hyper-erotics of the age" (717).

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[112] For more on the tension between medical and cultural discourses about intersexuality, see Reis's "Impossible Hermaphrodites: Intersex in America, 1620-1960."

[113] In this vein, Paul Yoder and Peter Mario Kreuter have written that "[w]hile monsters…come in all shapes and sizes, to serve purposes both gratifying and disturbing…the one common denominator that unites them all is their function as an *Other*" (ix).

Bisexuality meant that human embryos existed in a sexually undifferentiated state. Aresti describes the process of human development in these terms:

> En el esquema evolucionista de Marañón, desde la bisexualidad primitiva o 'impulso inespecífico' de los primeros momentos de la vida, el ser humano iba realizando una creciente discriminación en la atracción sexual, hasta que el deseo quedaba dirigido hacia individuos únicamente del sexo contrario. Después, explicaba, el impulso se especificaba aún más y se concentraba sobre un tipo especial de individuos, dentro del sexo. Por fin, llegaba a concentrarse el objeto sexual en un solo individuo, cuyo hallazgo suscitaba la máxima diferenciación en la atracción erótica. (130–31)

The threat of bisexuality was thus internal, not external. Indeed, it was grounded in the essential nature of human beings. Thus, its presence—indeed, its epidemic reproduction—signaled that Spain was on a dangerous path of biological devolution and social degeneration that spelled disaster for the nation.

At this point, it is worth recalling the central role played by Don Juan as a foil for Marañón's ideas on bisexuality.[114] The danger of Don Juan as a model of masculinity for Spanish male adolescents stemmed from the fact that he was "un varon a medias" ("Notas para la biología" 78). Not only did he lack the secondary sexual traits of a real man—evidenced by his absence from the social sphere—but the erroneousness of his supposed abundant primary sexual traits was readily explainable: they was merely an illusion. In short, Don Juan's sexual development was dangerously arrested somewhere on the continuum between a sexually undifferentiated person and a fully developed man.

[114] As Wright has noted, "Marañón's theories about Don Juan overlap with his analysis of the evolution of sex and of intersexual states: a theory which asserts the ubiquity of bisexuality" (731).

(Marañón referred to him as *afeminado*). In this, he bears a striking resemblance to the intersexed flu microbe. Both are evolutionary problems that, because of their ubiquity, threaten the social order of Spain. Their relationship recalls Gilmore's definition of a monster: "the familiar self disguised as alien Other" (16). I would argue that the *soldado* and the intersexed flu microbe are simply two different points on the evolutionary continuum of Spanish subjectivity. On that continuum, men occupy the pole of the ideal, women and the effeminate Don Juan an intermediate position, and the monstrous (because sexually undifferentiated) flu microbe the pole of the anti-ideal.

The overlapping of monstrosity, sexuality, and the flu epidemic in figures 22 and 23 is not coincidental. Each has been said to evince an archetypical narrative/dramatic structure. In reference to the "narrative component" of monster stories, Gilmore writes:

> First, the monster mysteriously appears from shadows into a placid unsuspecting world, with reports first being disbelieved, discounted, explained away, or ignored. Then there is depredation and destruction, causing an awakening. Finally, the community reacts, unites, and, gathering its forces under a hero-saint, confronts the beast. Great rejoicing follows, normalcy returns. Temporarily thwarted by this setback, the monster (or its kin) returns at a later time, and the cycle repeats itself. Formulaic and predictable, the dialectic is predictable to the point of ritualism. (14)

Describing the episodic structure of epidemics, Charles Rosenberg has suggested: "Epidemics start at a moment in time, proceed on a stage limited in space and duration, following a plot line of increasing and revelatory tension, move to a crisis of individual and collective character, then drift toward closure" (279). Similar to the community

reactions noted by Gilmore in response to monsters, Rosenberg notes how epidemics "mobiliz[e] communities to act out propitiatory rituals that incorporate and reaffirm fundamental social values and modes of understanding" (279). Lastly, one perceives the same structure in the aforementioned summary of Marañón's ideas on bisexualty by Aresti. I would add to this his idea that becoming a man or woman involves killing the *fantasma* of the other sex that virtually all men and women carry inside.[115] Not only does each author, respectively, view monster stories, epidemics, and sexual development as narratively/dramatically structured, but each posits the central import of a conflict. And since, as H. Porter Abbott notes, the representation of conflict "provides a way for a culture to talk to itself about, and possibly resolve, conflicts that threaten to fracture it," I would argue that understanding the players and actions involved in the conflict in figures 22 and 23 can reveal significant insights into the "values, ideas, feelings, and ways of seeing the world" current in Spain at the time of the flu epidemic (51).

Figure 23 effectively captures, even as it subverts, a common narrative thread of the "Spanish" flu epidemic as it relates to gender. It casts the all male doctors as the protagonists charged with protecting the community (Spain) from the flu-causing microbe, depicted as a threatening (because intersexed) monster that must be vanquished in order to preserve the community. The various books they hold represent the scientific knowledge that underpins their intervention in the epidemic as well as name some of the remedies suggested to combat the flu. Ironically, however, the image subverts the construction of an epic narrative wherein the doctors triumphantly defeat their foe. The "excess of courtesy" alluded to by the title of the editorial cartoon is reinforced both visually and verbally. The monster's bag—labelled "gripia"—resembles the stereotypical

[115] For more on this, see Wright (731).

doctor's bag and thus establishes a parallel between it and the books and instruments in the doctors' hands. Rhetorically speaking, the image pits the respective instruments of the monster against those of the doctors, as if the bodies of knowledge they symbolically represent were the battleground on which the fate of both the epidemic and the concept of gender/sexuality would be decided. As the caption makes clear, the doctors, not the flu, capitulate: "—Consti, senyor Microbi, que no som nosaltres que el tr[è]iem; és vostè que se'n va per sa pròpia voluntat." ("—Conste, señor Microbio, que no somos nosotros que lo sacábamos; es usted quien se nos va por su propia voluntad"). Given the connection between the microbe and gender/sexuality, the doctors' capitulation seems to suggest that their failure to solve the epidemic problem presages their ultimate inability to resolve the issue of gender/sexuality as it plays out in the Spanish context. In this sense, the intersexed monster recalls Roberta Johnson's assertion that ambiguous sexual connotations act as "a layer of nuance that was a metaphor for a troubled nation" (112). During the epidemic, Spain was indeed troubled, and sexuality/gender offered a particularly apt figure for thinking through its troubles. Figures 22 and 23 help illuminate the outer limits of (appropriately) gendered Spanish subjectivity. To stretch gender beyond its appropriate limits is to approach the monstrous, which can be defined as the other of Spanish subjectivity.

Mariano de Cavia offers another perspective on the gendered nature of Spanish subjectivity in an opinion piece about the epidemic in which he discusses the absence of protective masks. To anyone reading about pandemic flu today, whether that of 1918 or the impending bird flu, the mention of masks can hardly seem surprising. The World Health Organization includes a picture of masked individuals on the cover of its

Handbook for Journalists: Influenza Pandemic. Various websites sell them along with myriad other prophylactic products. In the United States, *Pandemicflu.gov* includes a link to images from 1918 that show people wearing masks. Unlike in the United States, though, where the use of masks was "nearly universal" (Crosby 101), in Spain masks were virtually nonexistent during the 1918–19 epidemic. In fact, I have found only two images that include masked persons. One is an editorial cartoon, the other a picture that accompanies an article in the "Biología y medicina" section of *El Sol* that was taken from *España Médica*, which was translated from the original story in *L'Illustration*. The caption beneath the picture reads: "Mascarillas protectivas usadas por los médicos y enfermeras norteamericanas contra la gripe" ("Tratamiento de la gripe"). Much the way masks became the subject of humor elsewhere (e.g., Crosby 105), Cavia's article in Spain also pokes fun at them. However, through this humor he also offers insights into the cultural state of gender in Spain at the time.

Titled "Contra la epidemia: ¡Se suplica el velo!," Cavia's article ostensibly calls for following the advice of Professor Marchoux, of the Pasteur Institute in Paris, who advocated wearing masks as prophylaxis against the flu. According to Cavia, since Pfeiffer's bacillus "no distingue de sexos, claro está que la recomendación del profesor Marchoux alcanza igualmente á los 'niños bonitos.'" In other words, the advice applied to men as well as women. The "niños bonitos" reference comes from his adaptation of some lines from Barbieri's *zarzuela*, *Gloria y peluca*.[116] Cavia notes how "[n]ingun trabajo costará al bello sexo seguir el consejo," but in references to the "sexo feo" he queries: "¿quién vá á ser el primer guapo que se atreva á presentarse en público con su

[116] The original lines, as quoted by Cavia, are: "No te tapes la cara, / niña bonita, / que á quien tapa lo bueno / Dios se lo quita." Modifying these words to echo professor Marchoux's advice, he comes up with: "Si te tapas la cara, / niña bonita, / te librarás de gripes / y escarlatinas."

linda cara arrebujada en un velo colgado del sombrero flexible ó del sombrero de copa?" The challenge (or problem, if one prefers) is that men do not want to appear "afeminados." To encourage people to overcome their fear, Cavia repeats the challenge a French journalist had made to some of France's highest ranking officials. He (Cavia) suggests that Spain's nine ministers and the President of the government appear in public wearing masks. He notes how they had already attended a meeting with the King in San Sebastián in which they were "prudentemente revestidos con ámplios [sic] blusones antisépticos."

Although Cavia adopts a humorous tone, the fear of one gender approximating the other in Spain was, as I have shown, hardly a laughing matter. In this sense, I want to submit that his reference to Barbieri's *zarzuela* is suggestive on at least one count. Barbieri is often considered the father of the *zarzuela*, a specifically Spanish (read: national) art form. In Gilbert Chase's words, "Barbieri was perspicacious enough to perceive that a really national lyrical art, even in the domain of 'grand' opera, could not be created by the importation or imitation of foreign models, but must have its roots in the innate characteristics of the Spanish people and in the glorious traditions of the Spanish classical drama-an essentially popular art" (33). Formally speaking, Cavia's modification of Barbieri's lyrics in order to give voice to a French doctor goes against the national grain of the *zarzuela*. Not only is the text of the (national) *zarzuela* rendered foreign, but this marks the prophylactic advice given about masks as foreign. The epidemic thus exercises a disturbing effect on things national. Responding to it (and one might add, understanding it) requires the importation of something foreign than ends up effecting a change in the national.

Class and the Spanish Nation

In addition to gender, social class also figures prominently in the discursive articulation of Spain as imagined national community during the flu epidemic. In speaking of the culture/class dyad, I mean to invoke the dichotomies that are now commonplace—even if only to problematize them—in discussions of Spanish modernity: those between high and low culture and between the elites and the masses. My purpose, however, is not merely to assert that these dichotomies obtained in writings about the epidemic and that these writings therefore may be seen to engage broader social discourse about Spain at the time.[117] Rather, I mean to draw attention to the tension that inheres in the social dynamics referenced by these dichotomies. Spanish society at the time of the epidemic oscillated, in Paul Aubert's terms, "entre el caos revolucionario y la deriva autoritaria" ("Hacia la modernización" 44). Life on the ground, as it were, was sufficiently complicated that it can hardly be adequately explained by recourse to reductive dichotomies. And yet, taken as poles of a continuum, the terms high/low and elites/masses nevertheless prove useful for discussing the social dynamics at issue in the editorial cartoons that invoke them. The expression "social dynamics" is meant to be a broad term that captures both the social destabilization of the postwar period and the subsequent jockeying for position by the various social sectors.[118] My basic argument is that the imminent national crisis (both political and social) portended by the events of the postwar period, including the epidemic—all of which challenged the status quo

[117] For a discussion of these issues in relation literary production, see Stephanie Sieburth's *Inventing High and Low*.

[118] According to Paul Aubert "las tres fuerzas sociales más importantes del momento…[eran] la burguesía…, el ejército…y el proletariado unido a la pequeña burguesía" (43). Although the issue of social status impacts each of these groups, my discussion of the epidemic will deal mostly with the first and somewhat with the second.

distribution of power—is reflected in the representational conventions of a group of epidemic editorial cartoons that thematize class and culture. In the face of the crisis, these editorial cartoons depicted the epidemic in a way that reveals class-based biases. The most obvious example involves the logic of fashion.

Just as the Don Juan figure provided the cognitive scaffolding necessary for understanding the epidemic experience writ large, the logic of fashion was invoked as a way to impose some sort of hierarchical structure on a Spanish society that was, in many ways, and at least in reference to susceptibility to infection, rendered equal. The class-based biases I mentioned reveal themselves in the transition between the first and second epidemic waves. Whereas in the former, the flu was labeled "the fashionable illness" ("la enfermedad de moda") and considered a sign of desirable cultural distinction, during the second epidemic wave, when it had become extremely virulent, it was associated with lower class-ness as a rhetorical means of distancing the destructive power of both from those in power. The logic of fashion thus provided a way to impose social hierarchy according to culture, but which actually concerned class.

The first images to invoke the logic of fashion are figures 24 through 27, all of which make explicit or implicit reference to the extremely contagious nature of the flu.[119] In doing so, they reflect the consensus among the press that during the first epidemic wave the flu evinced "[un] gran poder de difusión" (Eleizegui 1). López Rubio's title—"La epidemia reinante. Lejos de decrecer, aumenta" (Fig. 25)—even borrows the exact language used in news stories. The epidemic was so widespread, in fact, that it was jokingly called "la enfermedad de moda," thus forging a link between the epidemic and fashion. Moreover, this link was registered almost immediately, as evidenced by the first

[119] I have arranged the four figures according to chronology, though I do not discuss them in this order.

news article to report on the epidemic: *El Liberal*'s "¿Se puede vivir? La enfermedad de moda," which appeared on May 21, 1918. The connection between the epidemic and fashion stems from three traits common to both: their ephemeralness, the fact that both are seemingly superficial yet serious phenomena, and their "popularity" (i.e., the fact that everyone was catching it).

Georg Simmel has argued that fashion "possesses the peculiar attraction of limitation, the attraction of a simultaneous beginning and end, the charm of newness and simultaneously of transitoriness . . . it always stands on the watershed of the past and the future and, as a result, conveys to us, at least while it is at its height, a stronger sense of the present than do most other phenomena" (192). Similarly, individual cases of the flu were extremely short-lived, evincing this trait of transitoriness suggested by Simmel. Early in the epidemic, many people commonly referred to it as "the three-day fever." Moreover, the fact that the epidemic manifested in three distinct and brief waves only reinforced perceptions of it as a fleeting phenomenon. For instance, the apex of the first epidemic wave in Madrid lasted all of two weeks, from May 27 to June 10, and the most virulent wave (the second) only lasted some two and a half months (Porras Gallo 43). Like fashion, then, the flu was something of a flash in a pan. Here today, it was gone the next, quickly replaced by other major news items just as one fad seems to immediately replace another. And in fact, the epidemic was quickly replaced by news of political tensions between Madrid and the periphery (what today we would call the *autonomías*). However, just as fashion is not superficial simply because ephemeral, neither was the epidemic unimportant because it seemed short-lived. Given that fashion and the epidemic intersect in the editorial cartoons studied here, understanding the latter depends on fully

appreciating the connection between the (apparently) superficial and the profound common to both fashion and the epidemic.

In their *¡Agítese bien! A New Look at the Hispanic Avant-Gardes*, María T. Pao and Rafael Hernández-Rodríguez note how the aesthetic production of the Spanish avant-gardes has always evinced a playful, apparently superficial, nature even if critics have traditionally bypassed it "looking for some deep and transcendent idea to focus on" (xii). In recovering the affinity between the superficial and the profound in the work of the literary avant-garde, the various contributors to their collection "explore [the latter's] engagement with sports, fashion, games, gender identity, movies, urban life, and technology" (xii). For instance, Juli Highfill traces the changes in aesthetic sensibility in early 20th-century Spain to suggest that "[t]he vanguardists, in their frenzied quest for new aesthetic models and greater freedom of invention, came to regard fashion as the 'model' practice" (249). Fashion was thus a privileged means to explore issues both playful and serious. Similarly, Georg Simmel has maintained that "it is almost a sign of the increased power of fashion that it has overstepped the bounds of its original domain, which comprised only externals of dress, and has acquired an increasing influence of taste, theoretical convictions, and even the moral foundations of life in their changing forms" (193). In other words, the logic of fashion impacts and is impacted by both the "externals of dress" and the most fundamental elements of a society at a given moment—its theoretical convictions and moral foundations. No wonder, then, that the vanguardists saw it as such a valuable tool for pursuing new aesthetic horizons. It allowed them to

strike at the very core of the artistic establishment against which they so adamantly railed.[120]

The third trait the epidemic shares with fashion—popularity—refers to the democratic behavior of the flu. During the first wave, seemingly everyone was catching it. The low mortality rate at the time prompted the generally humorous tone of first-wave flu discourse reflected in nicknames like "la enfermedad de moda." When the second wave hit, however, this humorous tone was replaced by a somber one as the epidemic was now perceived as a serious threat. Recalling Rosenberg's observation that, in the face of epidemic crises, "communities . . . act out propitiatory rituals that incorporate and reaffirm fundamental social values," I submit that flu discourse registered a heightened sense of anxiety by the ensconced bourgeoisie precisely because of the democratic behavior of the flu (279). The lack of any readily visible distinction between them and the lower classes on epidemiological grounds augmented the pressure to do so on rhetorical grounds. This pressure is reflected in second-wave editorial cartoons that not only depict the flu as out of fashion, but associate it specifically with the lower classes. The editorial cartoons that rhetorically label the lower classes as dirty others by foregrounding fashion thus function as a propitiatory ritual whereby the Spanish bourgeoisie sought to reaffirm its own values and identity. Citing Bourdieu's seminal treatment of the interrelatedness of aesthetic taste and social class in *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, Jo Labanyi reminds us that "the reinforcement of the divide between high and low culture is not a product of a class system, but the means whereby class divisions are constructed in the first place" (168). And since "the power of fashion . . . [can be seen] in its increasing influence over matters of taste," as Simmel suggests, it hardly seems

[120] See Peter Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (47-54).

surprising that the editorial cartoons that foreground fashion also enact the rhetorical struggle whereby the Spanish bourgeoisie sought to (aesthetically) preserve class divisions that, in 1918, were increasingly threatening to crumble (193).[121] Take López Rubio's "La epidemia reinante" cartoon (Fig. 25) in which a mother and her daughter are denied a social visit because "[los señores de la casa] llevan dos días en cama con la enfermedad de moda." Exasperated, the mother responds: "¿Lo ves, niña? Todo el mundo enfermo y nosotras sin un mal dolor de cabeza. Es intolerable. Nos estamos poniendo en evidencia." To be well was to be out of fashion which, as the mother implicitly understood, undermined their social image ("Nos estamos poniendo en evidencia"). Moreover, to be on the outside looking in (i.e., to be healthy and covetous of those who were sick with the flu) smacked of pretentiousness, the quintessential characteristic of lower-class sensibility. This becomes delightfully clear in K-Hito's "El último grito" (Fig 24).

Appearing on the front page of *La Tribuna* on May 26, 1918, K-Hito's cartoon depicts a shell-shocked suitor cowering before an obviously offended mother behind whom her daughter hides her face in embarrassment. The monumental size of the mother's breasts (symbols of maternal concern), her elevated glasses, and the position of her head and shoulders all suggest an air of officiousness that finds expression in her "último grito": "¿Quién? ¿Mi hija casarse con usted? ¿Con un pollo cursi, sin dos pesetas, sin travilla, sin pulsera, sin la epidemia siquiera?" No doubt a common occurrence in matters of marriage and courting, the pretentious little whelp ("pollo cursi"), as the

[121] Francisco J. Romero Salvadó refers to 1918 as the year of "the structural crisis of the liberal monarchy" (150). This structural crisis was, together with the "problem of the masses" mentioned earlier, part of a much broader revolutionary atmosphere in which old social forms were under withering attack from those seeking a more equal division of power.

mother calls him, had obviously been weighed in the balance and found wanting. With a sharp eye, she sees through the suitor's façade. Despite his cravat and jacket, the mother recognizes he lacks certain key marks of social distinction: money, clothing, and jewelry. In fact, the ultimate sign of his lack of social distinction is the fact that he does not even have the flu. Through the mother's use of the expression "sin siquiera," K-Hito draws on the democratic behavior of the flu to emphasize the suitor's exceptionality in not having it. In doing so, he thus converts an epidemiological feature into a rhetorical tool that registers class-based tensions. Equally important is K-Hito's use of the term *cursi*, which Noël Valis has defined as "more than anything else, particularly lower middle class, reflecting the need to keep up appearances and the inability to do so in a satisfactory way" (11). According to Valis, the culture of *cursilería*—and the class-based fears registered in and by it—permeated all levels of Spanish society by the 20th century (11). Thus, figures 24 through 27 are all produced at a specific moment in Spanish history that is marked by *lo cursi*: "Taken in a larger sense, this feeling of being inadequate to the circumstances, whether social, aesthetic, political or economic, appears to drive the thinking and writing of many nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century Spanish intellectuals" (231). In this regard, I submit that the editorial cartoons I am discussing reflect this sense of inadequacy vis-à-vis the epidemic. The fact that the flu did not distinguish its victims according to social class only augmented the drive to do so aesthetically. Thus, the implicit fear of the two mothers in figures 24 and 25 and that of the "nena pressumida" in figure 27 is that they will be associated with lower class-ness.

If, in figures 24 through 27, the flu is considered fashionable, figures 28 and 29 portray it as not only passé, but undesirable. Figure 28, also by López Rubio, depicts a

conversation between a physician and a gentleman who, recalling Valis's definition of *lo cursi*, is obviously trying too hard to keep up appearances. The social status inferred by the pipe and cravat is undermined by the man's filthiness, signaled both by his unshaven face and the doctor's recommendation that, to avoid the epidemic, he try bathing: "Hombre . . . , sí [tengo un remedio contra la epidemia] . . . ¿Por qué no prueba usted a lavarse?" The body language of the two men suggests the doctor fears contagion from the other man. The raised hand of the latter recalls the etymological root of the term (contagion), which comes from the Latin word for touching. Thus the doctor implicitly hopes that if he can avoid physical contact with the man then he can also avoid contracting his illness. Yet the fact that the man does not have the flu suggests that his illness has less to do with the epidemic than with his lower-class identity. López Rubio thus uses the epidemic to articulate the bourgeoisie's fear of their class being contaminated by the lower classes. As Valis has suggested, "[i]n the case of the cursi phenomenon, the margins of a culture have evidently invaded the very center, whether of texts or social groups" (224). However imaginary the boundaries between social classes were, this did not change the fact that these boundaries exerted significant psychocultural pressure on those whose space was being invaded. For what it is worth, the cursi gentleman also wants to avoid the epidemic, as evidenced by his visit to the doctor in the first place. Aversion to the flu for its lower-class resonance is also echoed in figure 29.

A sparse image, figure 29 depicts a man and a woman who, in contrast to the people in figures 24 through 27, all of whom wear nice clothing, are dressed in rather plain-looking attire. The woman's apron identifies her as a member of the working class and distinguishes her from the women in figure 25 who are making a social call.

Moreover, figure 29 lacks the visual clues that point to comfortable bourgeois dwellings like those in figures 24 and 25. The excesses of the bourgeois spaces in figures 24 and 25—signaled by specific items of distinction like paintings, shawls, high heels, and hats—contrast with the bareness of the comparatively lower-class space of figure 29. In this sense, the visual minimalism of the artist highlights the class dynamics that are bound up in the intersection of the flu and fashion. Dated February 21, 1919, the untitled cartoon coincides with the third epidemic wave. Of the three epidemic waves, the last one received the least amount of press coverage. If the flu was passé by the second wave of the epidemic (figure 28 dates from October 17, 1918, the height of the second wave), then by the third it was downright vulgar, as the caption to the cartoon suggests: "Prou, *Xava*! . . . No vui que'm diguis mai més *Gripia*, que és un nom massa vulgar" ("¡Basta, chaval! . . . No quiero que me digas más *Gripe*, que es un nombre bastante vulgar"). In part, this change can be explained by the increased virulence of the flu during the second epidemic wave. The humorous tone that characterized flu discourse during the first wave was replaced with a somber tone when the flu returned with a vengeance in September. However, it also points out the logic of fashion whereby the upper classes (i.e., those producing the editorial cartoons) could reinforce distinctions between them and the lower classes, notwithstanding their equal susceptibility to the flu.

If there is a clear change in the status of the flu—from fashionable to vulgar—that occurs with the onset of the second epidemic wave, and that is reflected in figures 28 and 29, the question that must be addressed is, why? The answer may well lie in the aesthetics of illness of *fin de siglo* Europe, especially as this relates to the notion of degeneration.[122] The year of the flu epidemic coincided with the publication of Oswald Spengler's *The*

[122] For an overview of the cultural context, see Pedro Cerezo Galán (41-61).

Decline of the West, a treatise on the trajectory of civilizations. The West, he maintained—and in this, he was hardly alone—was moving inexorably towards decadence and degeneration. Lily Litvak explains the general idea of degeneration this way: "Los pueblos europeos, herederos de una larga evolución, estaban amenazados por una decrepitud inevitable y condenados a una próxima muerte por el asedio de pueblos más bárbaros y vigorosos" ("Temática de la decadencia" 246). Similar ideas entered Spain prior to the epidemic through the work of Paul Bourget (*Essais de psychologie contemporaine*) and, especially, Max Nordau. In Lily Litvak's words, "Bourget define la decadencia como producto del individualismo: como la aparición de un número creciente de individuos inadaptados o inadaptables al conjunto social" ("Idea de la decadencia" 112). For his part, Nordau sought to link cultural degeneration causally to artistic production in his *Entartung* (1902): "El autor se propuso probar…que la obra de ciertos escritores modernos no era sino el producto de una degeneración mental" (113). As Richard Cardwell has noted, Nordau and his predecessor, Cesare Lombroso (to whom Nordau dedicated *Entartung*), used "the discourses of the new medical sciences of heredity, degeneration and psychopathology as a literary-critical tool to marginalize and control artistic trends they felt to be deeply subversive, even injurious to society" ("Oscar Wilde" 43–44).[123]

Among the artistic trends felt to be subversive, *modernismo* was particularly targeted.[124] *Modernismo*, which includes various other *–ismos* such as *decadentismo*,

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[123] Similarly, Litvak has summarized Nordau's ideas in this way: "la obra de ciertos escritores modernos no era sino el producto de una degeneración mental" ("La idea de la decadencia" 113).

[124] If the *fin de siglo* aesthetics of illness helps explain the trajectory of vulgarization that the flu follows, there is, nevertheless, an important nuance that should be noted. *Modernismo* was not a mass phenomenon. To associate it with editorial cartoons thus seems odd. However, I maintain that the perpetuation of a *modernista* strain in this fashion merely reflects the tendency of (cultural, aesthetic) trends to tarry in mass culture longer than in "high" culture.

remains a complex literary and cultural phenomenon that combines various and sundry elements including linguistic and stylistic experimentation; synesthesia; the cult of the exotic, strange, sensual, and diseased; the rejection of rigid bourgeois cultural values; the search for epistemological alternatives to 19th-century positivism and determinism; a transatlantic link between Spain and Latin America; etc.[125] At one point considered an exclusively aesthetic phenomenon, *modernismo* is now widely considered as engaging more fully the broader cultural context in which it was produced. In this regard, Litvak has noted how the strident *antimodernista* rhetoric of the time reveals the fact that these artistic trends "intentaban llevar a cabo…un cambio de fondo y no sólo de forma, y presentaba una nueva escala de valores que iba más allá de la poesía" ("Idea de la decadencia" 111). And Gullón has argued that "[e]l modernismo a la altura del decadentismo certifica el derrumbe de las formas tradicionales de pensamiento, nutridos por los valores decimonónicos de inspiración burguesa" (53). Because of the perceived threat of *modernismo* to traditional bourgeois values—Nordau saw trends like it not only as a sign of the decadence of Western civilization, but its cause—it was relegated to marginal status.[126] The preservation of civilization—one might even speak of its regeneration—depended on neutralizing its effect.

In light of the foregoing, the fact that figures 24–27 artistically embrace the flu illness as culturally desirable would seem to thematically connect the epidemic to certain currents of the *fin de siglo* aesthetics of illness, specifically as related to *modernismo* and

[125] Of the substantial number of studies on *modernismo* and *decadentismo*, I have found the following works to be helpful: Richard Cardwell's "Médicos chiflados" and "Oscar Wilde and Spain"; Cardwell and McQuirk's *¿Qué es el modernismo?*; chapters six and eleven from Lily Litvak's *España 1900*; Mary Lee Bretz's *Encounters Across Borders*; and, for a perspective of Latin America, Cathy Jrade's *Modernismo, Modernity* and *Ruben Darío and the Romantic Search for Unity*.

[126] For Gullón, this marginalization, which has been unduly perpetuated by literary critics, obscures the contribution of *modernismo*: "que el modernismo propicia lo perceptual, lo subjetivo, lo que procede por caminos paralelos a los marcados por la razón" (*Modernidad silenciada* 85).

decadentismo.[127] The widespread impact of the epidemic, combined with peoples' desire to get the flu, seemed to confirm the notion that Spain really was degenerating. Culturally speaking, the decadent *modus vivendi* of *modernismo* had stepped from the shadows of the margin into the light of mainstream. It is perhaps not surprising, then, to note that the transition from the first epidemic wave to the second—a transition characterized by a sharp increase in the virulence of the flu—is marked by a change in the fashionability of the flu. If figures 24–27, which appear during the first epidemic wave, register the flu as culturally desirable, figures 28 and 29, both from the second wave, depict it as culturally disdainful. Once cultural degeneration began to register in terms of deaths—in other words, once the threat to the nation as bourgeois construct proved to be real—illness quickly faded from fashion. Analyzing the logic of fashion thus reveals how the epidemic stoked certain class-based anxieties inherent to certain fundamental assumptions about what the Spanish nation should look like.

In a related fashion, figures 32 and 19 also deal with class-based anxieties, though by foregrounding mass culture. The former depicts a game of tragic football— "El Futbol Tràgic"—between the flu and Mars (a metonymical stand in for WWI). The caption reads: "Entre la *gripia* i la guerra…com l'han deixat, pobre terra!" ("Entre la gripe y la guerra, cómo han dejado la pobre tierra"). In early 20th-century Spain, the arrival of modern sports and their subsequent diffusion played out according to class-related issues (Calatayud Míquel 34). Francisco Calatayud Míquel has noted how high-brow sports like tennis, polo, field hockey, golf, and sailing were limited to those who could afford to pay

[127] Although critics typically date the beginning of the end of *modernismo* to 1910 (Gullón, *Modernidad silenciada* 38; Litvak, "La idea de la decadencia" 114), I would recall Carlos Serrano's comment that "la historia cultural está obligada a mostrar la coexistencia de tendencias y corrientes diversas" (*España en 1900* 196).

the high costs associated with membership dues, equipment, and location (34–35). On the other hand, "la práctica de los deportes de equipo como el fútbol…se extendió entre las masas de trabajadores" (34). From its earliest days, then, soccer in Spain has been a mass-cultural phenomenon. At the same time, by 1920, the Madrid FC (Fútbol Club) was granted permission by the King to adopt the name Real Madrid, symbolically signaling the arrival of soccer as a *national* pastime. In other words, what was originally an activity of only a certain section of society—the masses—was ultimately subsumed as part of the whole of national culture, and this shortly after the epidemic.

It should also be noted that sports in general were intimately connected to the reformist impulses in society, generally, and education, specifically. In adopting German and English pedagogical models, Spain integrated sports into the curriculum because it was felt that exercise "would improve cellular nutrition…would provide increased appetite, regenerative sleep, calm the nerves, and allow for the possibility of attaining maximum life force" (Ballester and Pediguero 45). In other words, physical education and, by extension, sports, were part of the regenerationist thrust then sweeping Spain.[128] To figure the epidemic and WWI as a football game is thus to conjure up the dynamic nature of Spanish society at the time. On one hand, soccer was a sport clearly marked as lower class. On the other hand, it had received regal sanction and had been integrated into the regenerationist platform. That the soccer game is tragic thus implies that this blurring of social divisions portended calamity of the magnitude of WWI, which would end a mere three days after the publication of figure 32.

[128] *Regeneracionismo* refers to the reformative spirit that infused Spanish political, intellectual, and social life in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As the term suggests, it serves as the obverse of degeneration. For more on the issue, see chapters twelve and thirteen of Carr's *Spain: 1808-1975*.

Like figure 32, figure 19 also deals with a mass-cultural phenomenon: bullfighting. I have chosen to discuss this image last because, in portraying the act of reading, it brings full circle my discussion of the rhetorical conventions related to imagining the Spanish nation adopted during the epidemic. Timothy Mitchell has claimed that "bullfighting has been nothing less than a microcosm of the Spanish social order" (*Blood Sport* 132). Its presence in flu discourse should thus allow one to glean important insights into Spanish society during the epidemic, especially as it concerns the imagining of the Spanish nation. Figure 19 depicts two scientists in their lab. The younger colleague is bent over his equipment while the older one sits in a chair reading the newspaper. Their brief conversation proceeds as follows:

> – Después de esto no podrán asegurar los maldicientes que en España no se trabaja.
>
> – ¿Qué es ello, maestro? ¿Ha descubierto algún español el medio eficaz de librarnos de la gripe?
>
> – Hombre, no; pero se ha inventado una nueva puya para lidiar toros que es una verdadera maravilla.

The juxtaposition of bullfighting and the mass media recalls John Tomlinson's argument that

> [t]he media, then, are *potentially* the source of strong national identification, as when they act as 'the arena of mass ritual' of spectator sports and political ceremonials. But the 'depth', the endurance and the political significance of such mediated identification will probably depend on factors external to the media

itself, for example the general state of social and political stability in the country. (Tomlinson 88)

The manifold crises facing Spain in and around 1918 justify viewing the reference to bullfighting in figure 19 as significant. Historically speaking, the years of the epidemic fall within the period of time in which "bullfighting was far and away the most popular pastime of Spain; it brought together enormous numbers of people, men and women of all social classes" (Mitchell, *Blood Sport* 145). Understanding how all these classes are organized through the spectacle of bullfighting will condition how its reference to the flu epidemic should be understood. According to Mitchell, in providing "a psychological compensation for a national inferiority complex" (152), bullfighting ultimately fostered conservative social ends: "bullfighting is the legacy of obscurantism,…it is emblematic of the manipulability of the people, their gullibility, their irrational hero-worship, their subjection to social and political corruption, their immaturity and incivility" (153). In other words, bullfighting offered a spectacle where Spaniards could imagine (even project) certain changes to the social order without ever realizing these changes in fact. Faced with the epidemic crisis, then, the older scientist sidesteps the issue by reading about the national pastime. Although no Spaniard has discovered the cure to the flu, one has invented a new *puya*.[129] The suggestion seems to be that if the national pastime is alive and well, so, too, must the nation be.

The process of imagining the nation, embodied by the act of reading in which the older scientist engages, is not, however, without its problems. Given their difference in age, the two scientists may be seen as metonymies for the old Spain and the new one,

[129] The dictionary of the Real Academia defines *puya* as a "[p]unta acerada que en una extremidad tienen las varas o garrochas de los picadores y vaqueros, con la cual estimulan o castigan a las reses."

respectively. That the younger of the two is actively practicing his craft in search of a cure thus implies that the new Spain faced its problems head on, whereas the old Spain buried its head in the sand, content to enjoy its national pastimes, but incapable of solving its problems. This distinction between the two Spains is not without its parallels with the "epidemic" and "sanitary" Spains discussed in the previous chapter.

If I began my discussion of editorial cartoons with reference to Anderson's treatment of the act of reading, I want to finish by referring to one of his interlocutors, Homi Bhabha, who sees the nation as "one of the major structures of ideological ambivalence within the cultural representation of 'modernity'" (4). It is fitting that by drawing attention to the "*process* of the articulation" of the Spanish nation in the various editorial cartoons discussed in this chapter, at least one of them should clearly betray this ambivalence (3). Both the old scientist and the new one are interested in the preservation (i.e., imagining) of the nation; however, they go about the task in different ways. In facing the challenge of the present, one looks to the future, the other to the past.[130] In either case, the Spanish nation results from, or at least is perpetuated by, an act of creative literacy. In the current chapter, I have endeavored to show how during the "Spanish" flu epidemic this creative act was inflected by the categories of gender and class in the production of, ultimately, a masculinist, bourgeois notion of Spain.

[130] My analysis in this chapter has largely depicted the imagining of the Spanish nation as a conservative phenomenon. For a perspective of the same process from the opposite end of the political spectrum, see Sandie Eleanor Holguin's *Creating Spaniards*.

Conclusion: 1918, Then and Now

In the preceding chapters, I have articulated the fundamental characteristics of "Spanish" flu discourse, all in an effort to understand and explain Spaniards' experience with the flu epidemic that bears their name. I might point out that virtually all of my analysis has focused on the first and second waves. The third epidemic wave received such scant public attention that it has prompted Porras Gallo to comment how "la escasa atención de que fue objeto este nuevo brote por parte de la literatura contemporánea y de la prensa médica y general, hace que se pueda decir muy poco sobre su desarrollo y sus principales características" (*Un reto* 46). For the most part, the rhetorical conventions of third-wave flu discourse differ little from those of the preceding wave. The same groups had the same problems, the only difference being that they now had to focus their attention on something other than the flu. For physicians, this meant adopting the cause of the medical "class." On March 17, *El Sol* reported on certain *mitines sanitarios* that were held in various locations throughout Spain: Murcia, Segovia, Albacete, Salamanca, Valencia, and Orense. At these meetings, doctors debated how to advocate for their professional interests. In Madrid, the Asamblea de Médicos de la Quinta Region threatened to go on strike if their demands were not met. Not surprisingly, these demands spoke to the central concerns of physicians about the organization of public health in Spain, including the assumption of payment of their salaries by the state instead of the municipality (*El Sol* 7 March 1919, 8). As *El Liberal* reported, these measures sought to "libr[ar a los médicos] de las garras del caciquismo" (13 March 1919). It would be some years before these claws actually lost their grip on Spanish politics and society.

It would seem, then, that just as physicians were trapped in the claws of *caciquismo*, Spanish society was similarly caught up in the same problems that had only briefly been interrupted by the epidemic. Life in the aftermath of the epidemic was not vastly different from life before the flu had arrived. Social unrest continued to rear its head, signaled by strikes, uprisings, and often the declaration of martial law, the *Canadiense* strike being only the most obvious example of how little the structure of Spanish social life had changed since, say, the general strike of 1917.[131] It is not without reason, then, that historians refer to the years between 1919 and 1921 as the Bolshevik Triennium. And then, only two years later, Miguel Primo de Rivera would orchestrate his military coup, the stated purpose of which was to interrupt the political trajectory of the nation. Ultimately, he would prove unsuccessful, though in his failure to alter the course of Spanish political life, he was hardly alone. So, too, would the Second Republic fail. Not until the aftermath of the Civil War, with the onset of what would prove to be the longest-lasting fascist regime of the 20th century, did life acquire some semblance, however unsettling, of serenity. In light of Spain's chronic political problems, which always reverberated in social life, is it any wonder the third epidemic wave ended, as Charles Rosenberg says of epidemics in general, not with a bang, but a whimper (286)?

Even as I conclude this study (2009), renewed anxieties about a potential outbreak of pandemic influenza have again thrust the 1918–19 epidemic into the limelight. Globalization may be shrinking the world, as witnessed by the speed and availability of the latest news about pending epidemic disasters, but it seems to have had the opposite

[131] In February of 1919, the firing of five employees from The Barcelona Traction Light & Power Company, named *La Canadiense* after its major backer, prompted a strike that paralyzed Cataluña's industrial activity. For more on the strike, see chapter six of Carolyn Boyd's *Praetorian Politics in Liberal Spain*.

effect on our perceptions of these brooding public health crises. Adding to our anxiety is the fact that, unlike 1918, at least in Spain, the "Spanish" flu has been appropriated by what Priscilla Wald calls the "outbreak narrative," which I discussed in the introduction. In this vein, Taubenberger and Morens call the "Spanish" flu "the Mother of All Pandemics" (15). Similarly, Mike Davis titles his book about the pending bird flu pandemic *The Monster at our Door*. (Scientists now believe the 1918–19 flu virus circulated in birds before jumping the species divide into the human population). Alas, what is lost in the excitement of the moment is precisely the incertitude about just how to respond to the "Spanish" flu. In fact, one reason I undertook the present study was to correct the growing trend to understand the 1918–19 epidemic *exclusively* as "the most deadly disease event in the history of humanity" (*Avian Influenza and Human Health: Report by Secretariat* 1). I do not doubt that it was, nor would I want to dismiss the devastation it caused. However, when all is said and done, epidemics are about people. And Spaniards were rather more ambivalent about the epidemic than we seem now to understand, especially as we look back on the moment some 90 years removed. And since they have the ignominious distinction of sharing its name, it seems only fair that we take a moment to listen to their side of the story of the 1918–19 "Spanish" flu epidemic.

Figures

Figure 1. “En el museo de historia natural,” *El Tiempo*, 6 November 1918.

Figure 2. “De la epidemia reinante,” *La Campana de Gracia*, 1 June 1918.

Figure 3. “Duelo a muerte,” *La Tribuna*, 25 May 1918.

Figure 4. Untitled, *Blanco y Negro*, 9 June 1918.

– De casa del coronel han venido ya dos veces a decir que está muy mal con el 'soldado'.
– Pues que lo arreste, que para eso es coronel.

Figure 5. "¿Otra vez la gripe?" *El Fígaro*, 14 Sept. 1918.

Figure 6. “Fin de Veraneo,” *ABC*, 15 Sept. 1918.

Figure 7. “Del cupo de Instrucción,” *ABC*, 22 Sept. 1918.

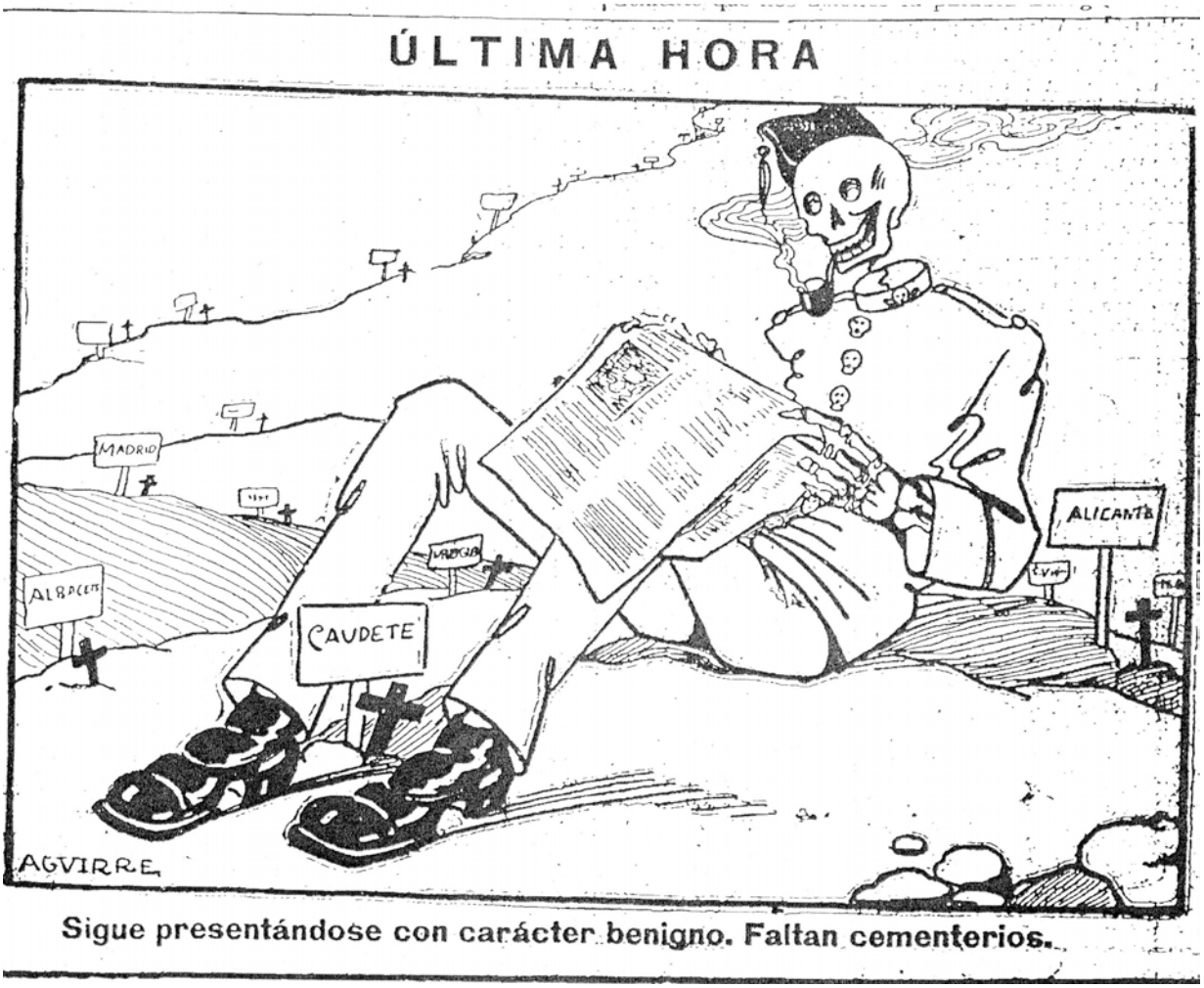
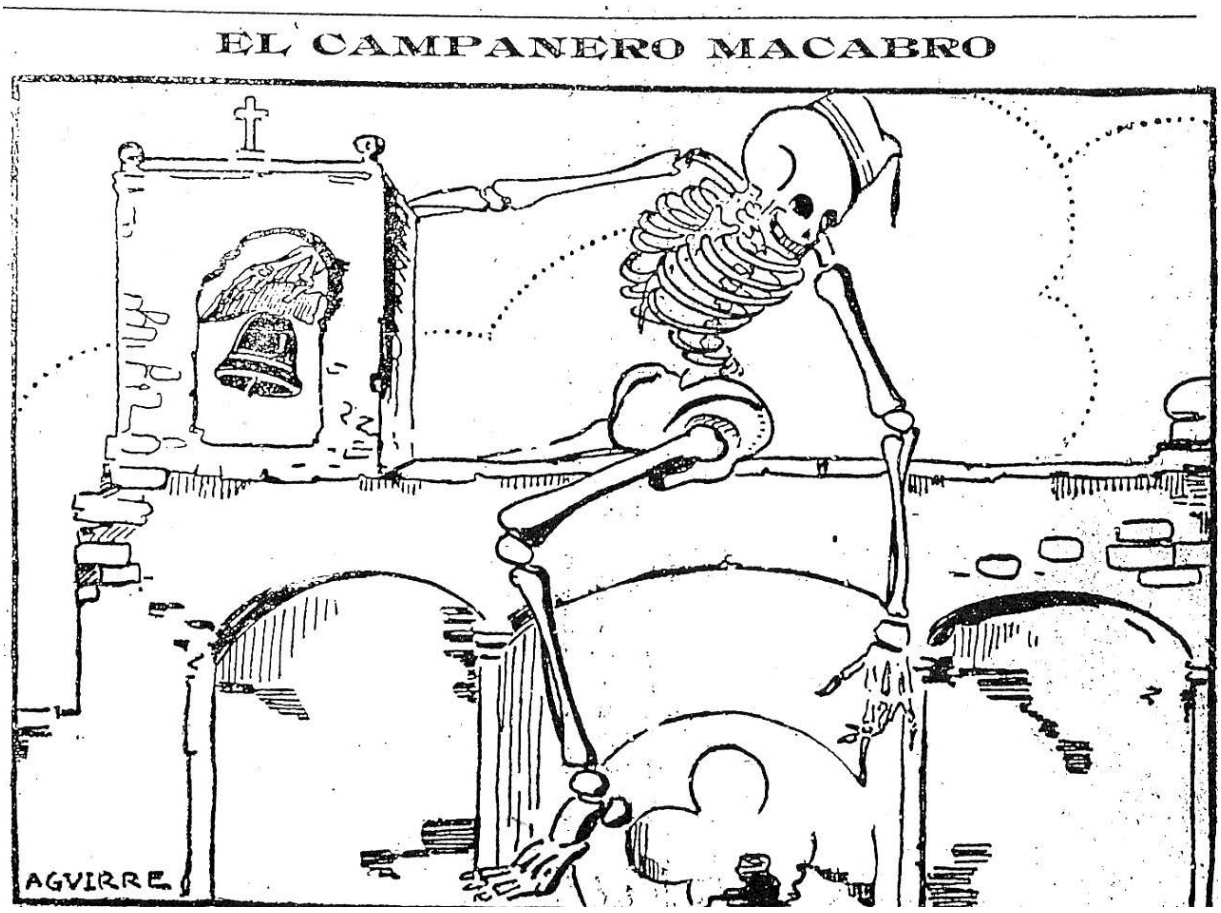


Figure 8. "Última hora," *El Fígaro*, 25 Sept. 1918.

Figure 9. “La enfermedad del día,” *El Tiempo*, 30 Sept. 1918.

Figure 10. “La epidemia gripal se extiende,” *Heraldo de Madrid*, 2 Oct. 1918.

Figure 11. “Importación,” *El Tiempo*, 2 Oct. 1918.



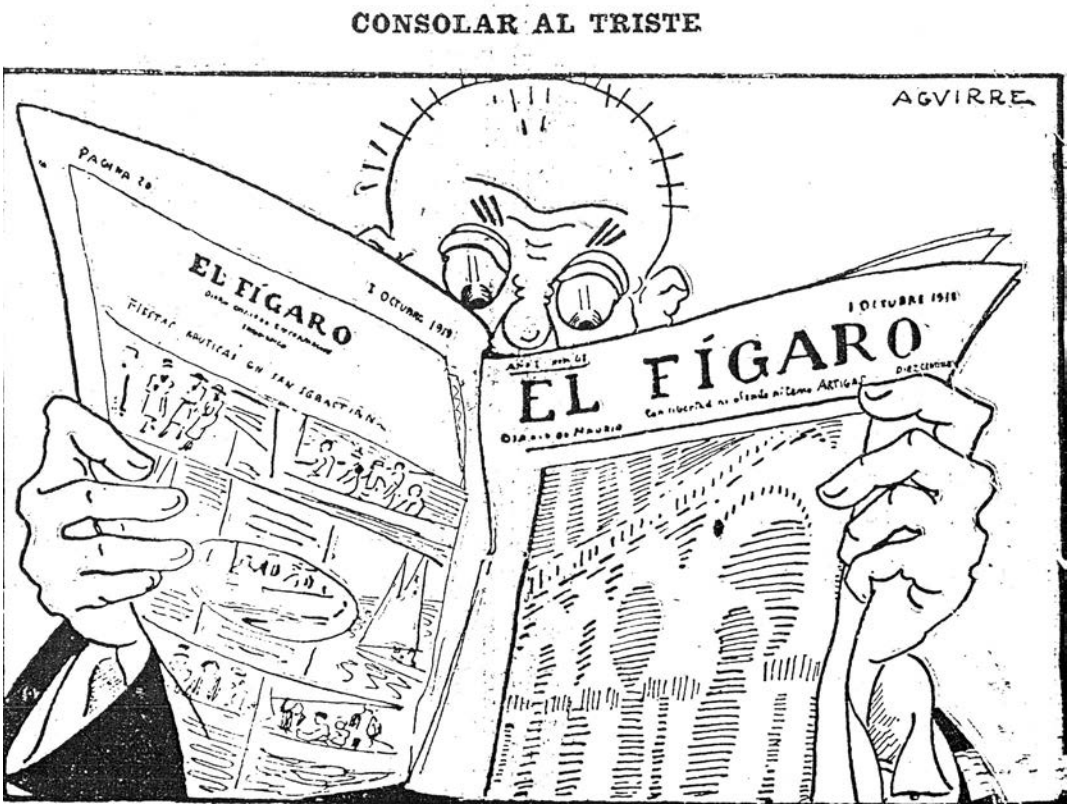
Gripe…Gripe…Gripe…Gripe…

Figure 12. “El campanero macabro,” *El Fígaro*, 18 Oct. 1918.

Figure 13. “La ofensiva del ‘Soldado de Nápoles,’” *El Tiempo*, 1 Nov. 1918.

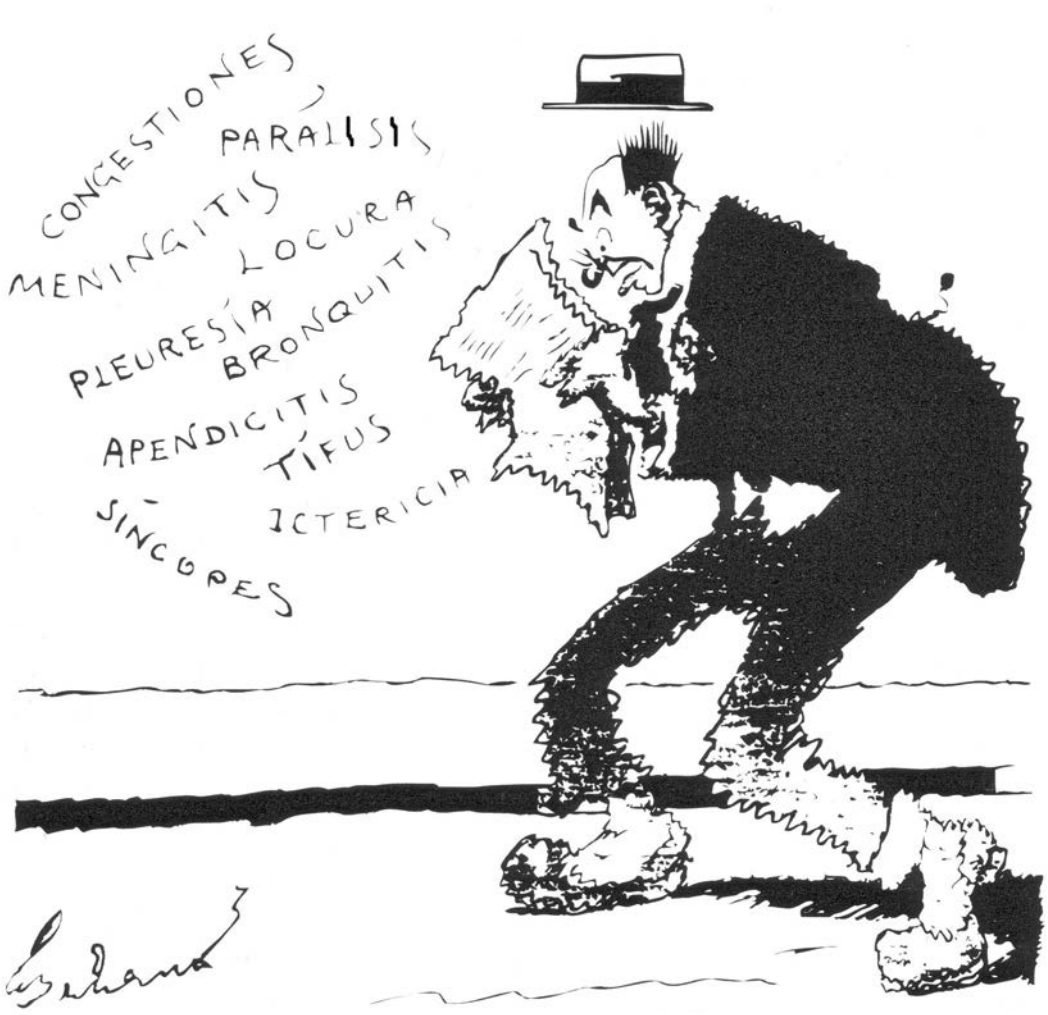
Figure 14. “Cuadro histórico,” *El Tiempo*, 23 Nov. 1918.

Figure 15. “Gran mundo,” *La Tribuna*, 16 Sept. 1918.



Meningitis, parálisis y hasta locura…no siendo eficaz el aislamiento sistemático…¡Bueno; pues que nos entierren juntos!

Figure 16. "Consolar al triste," *El Fígaro*, 2 Oct. 1918.



– ¡Caracoles! ¡La primera, no leer las alarmantísimas [instrucciones] de la Junta Provincial de Sanidad!

Figure 17. “Instrucciones para combatir la gripe,” *ABC*, 3 Oct. 1918.

Figure 18. “Lo de todos los días,” *Heraldo de Madrid*, 20 Oct. 1918.

Figure 19. Untitled, *La Acción*, 21 Oct. 1918.

– No se les cree a los higienistas. Si eso del contagio fuera verdad, yo a estas alturas ya la habría cogido.

Figure 20. "Una desaprensiva," *L'Esquella de la Torratxa*, 25 Oct. 1918.

Figure 21. “¡Hasta la Cibeles!” *La Acción*, 24 May, 1918.

Me parece que entre las subsistencias y yo dentro de pocos días no faltará pisos que alquilar en Barcelona.

Figure 22. "La gripe," *L'Esquella de la Torratxa*, 28 Feb. 1919.

– Conste, señor Microbio, que no somos nosotros que lo sacábamos; es usted quien se nos va por su propia voluntad.

Figure 23. "Exceso de cortesía," *L'Esquella de la Torratxa*, 15 Nov. 1918.

Figure 24. “El último grito,” *La Tribuna*, 26 May 1918.

Figure 25. “La epidemia reinante. Lejos de decrecer, aumenta,” *La Acción*, 27 May 1918.

Figure 26. “La epidemia elegante,” *Heraldo de Madrid*, 29 May 1918.

Figure 27. “El mal de moda,” *L’Esquella de la Torratxa*, 7 June 1918.

Figure 28. Untitled, *La Acción*, 17 Oct. 1918.

Figure 29. Untitled, *L'Esquella de la Torratxa*, 21 Feb. 1919.

Figure 30. “Camino de armisticio,” *La Tribuna*, 1 Nov. 1918.

Figure 31. Untitled, *Blanco y Negro*, 20 Oct. 1918.

Figure 32 “El fútbol trágico,” *L’Esquella de la Torratxa*, 8 Nov. 1918.

Yo a los palacios subí, / yo a las cabañas bajé…

Figure 33. “El microbio fanfarrón,” *El Imparcial*, 6 June 1918.

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