Latinity and Modernity: Cultural Identities and Transnational Exchange in a Globalizing World

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Introduction

Since the mid-nineteenth century, Latinity has emerged as a mobile term in the cultural and political discourse of modernity. Latinity encompasses the cultural sphere rooted in the Latin language and the shared heritage of its Romance descendants (Zantedeschi, "Pan-Latinism: Politics and Culture"). As Amotz Giladi explains, Latinity refers to "the heritage of the Roman Empire, shared by several modern nations, such as France, Italy, Romania, Spain, and the Latin American republics" ("The Elaboration of Pan-Latinism" 58). Indeed, the discourse on Latinity encapsulates both the challenges and the opportunities of an era marked by rapid socio-political change, cultural transformation and the evolving dynamics of global interaction. During this period, shifting geopolitical dynamics and emerging sociological theories sparked intense debates about the position and significance of Latinity in the modern world. Many commentators depicted Latin countries as being in a state of decline, as their cultural and political influence was increasingly overshadowed by the ascendancy of new global powers. Latinity was seen as belonging to the past, while modernity was claimed by these rising powers. This context of perceived decline prompted a profound period of introspection in the Latin world, where intellectuals attempted to understand Latinity's place in the broader trajectory of modern history and its value in modernity. Therefore, the reflection on Latinity was not merely a nostalgic, backward glance at fading traditions but a critical effort to define and interpret modernity itself. By engaging in this reflection, Latin thinkers participated in shaping the discourse around what it meant to be 'modern', and in doing so, contributed to the intellectual discourse on modernity.

This reflective process in the Latin world closely aligns with Zygmunt Bauman's (1991) description of a main trait of modernity, i.e., the deliberate and conscious effort to impose order and make sense of the world, the human environment and the self. According to Bauman, modernity is marked by a reflective practice in which individuals and movements actively seek to organize and make sense of their surroundings, identities and position in the world. Hence, modernity, in Bauman's view, is defined by this self-awareness and the purposeful attempt to shape and control the world through intentional actions. In the same vein, Avijit Pathak (2006) argues that modernity generated a spirit of "critical consciousness" opening up new avenues

for reflection, critical dialogue and debate (13). According to his analysis, the rise of modernity was linked with the emergence of the modern nation-state, which became a primary unit of political organization and identity (67). The idea of nationalism spread globally, often as a result of both imperial influence and resistance to it. However, globalization paradoxically both reinforced and undermined national boundaries as ideas, goods and people moved more freely across borders, challenging the notion of nations as isolated entities. Globalization, in this context, can be understood as the process by which different parts of the world became more interconnected through cultural, technological and economic exchanges. This interdependence was facilitated by innovations in communication (e.g. the telegraph), transportation (e.g. the steamship and railways) and finance (e.g. the global expansion of capitalism).

Despite the optimism associated with cultural, economic and technological progress, the rise of modernity also brought with it a sense of crisis and disillusionment. Authors, intellectuals and artists often saw modernity as a period of decline, characterized by social alienation, moral degeneration and loss of traditional values (Ohana). Indeed, the process of modernization, characterized by secularization, rationalization, new geopolitical power dynamics, and the erosion of tradition, left modern individuals, as Émile Durkheim (1893) stated at the end of the nineteenth century, in a state of *anomie*: a condition of confusion and disorientation stemming from the breakdown of overarching values. This disorientation led to a search for new norms and cultural identities that could offer a "stable *nomos*" to counter the destabilizing forces of modernity (Forssling 43). As this issue will show, the perceived crisis of modernity led to diverse responses, including the search for renewal through literature, periodical culture and politics. While Northern Europe embraced Enlightenment values such as reason, empiricism and secularism, Latin European countries saw a stronger presence of traditionalist intellectual movements that looked back to the past to engage with and respond to modernity. According to Xabier Itçaina (2018), these movements valorized regional identities and supported cultural continuity, creating ambivalence toward the rapid modernization associated with the Industrial Revolution and liberal politics. As we will see in this special issue, writers and public figures from Italy, Spain, Portugal, France and Argentina often mobilized the concept of Latinity to express a distinct cultural identity and contribute to the intellectual discourse of modernity. This distinct identity was based on a shared cultural heritage and a common opposition to the perceived hegemony of a Northern narrative in defining modernity and progress.

The crisis of modernity and the varied intellectual responses it engendered – whether through the embrace of Enlightenment ideals or the valorization of regional identities –

highlight the complex interplay between cultural identity and the forces of modernization. These dynamics underscore the limitations of examining cultural developments strictly through national lenses, as such approaches often fail to account for the transnational and cross-cultural exchanges that shape intellectual and artistic movements. This recognition aligns with broader critiques of methodological nationalism, which, as Magnus Qvistgaard argues, constrains our understanding by presupposing the nation as the primary unit of analysis. Qvistgaard defines methodological nationalism as "the approach of taking the nation as the *a priori* starting point for any given enquiry, either by confining the investigation exclusively within the country's border [...] or by comparing countries without reflection upon their suitability as analytical units" (44).

To better grasp the complex processes of cross-cultural exchange, Qvistgaard advocates for methodologies that move beyond national frameworks, such as the *histoire croisée* approach, which considers multiple, intersecting perspectives across different levels of analysis (Werner and Zimmermann 30). This methodological approach is particularly pertinent when examining how literary and intellectual discourse circulates and evolves across different cultural contexts. To move toward this direction, Qvistgaard advocates for an agent-driven approach which goes beyond national categories and focuses on the mobility and exchange within "a network-based concept of literary history" (62). In addition to Qvistgaard's call for a methodological shift beyond national boundaries, Joep Leerssen (2006) further reinforces the notion of intellectual mobility by emphasizing that ideas are not restricted to the cultural or political frameworks of a single nation, but move across borders like "a weather system or an epidemic" (19).

Following this line of thinking, this special issue seeks to problematize methodological nationalism by examining the literary, cultural and political dissemination of the idea of Latinity in modernity. Far from being confined to national borders, Latinity was inherently transnational or pan-national, as there was, and is, no unified 'Latin' nation-state. Hence, by its very nature, it was shaped by the flow of people, cultural products and ideas that transcended national boundaries. However, this border-crossing nature of Latinity does not imply that it was disconnected from local or national concerns. On the contrary, while the idea circulated across different regions, it was also shaped and reaffirmed by specific local or national issues, reflecting the idiosyncratic context of each interpreter. This dual character highlights the complexity of Latinity as both a shared transnational discourse and a concept that was to serve particular interests. It also implies that the concept of Latinity underwent several processes of resignification or 'acculturation', a fundamental concept in cultural transfer studies (Brolsma).

Acculturation refers to how cultural product or intellectual ideas transform when introduced to new contexts. The movement of an idea from one setting to another involves not only its mere presence but also its adaptation and modification in response to the unique situation of the receiving cultures and the ideological goals of the cultural transmitters facilitating intellectual exchange.

The Genealogy of Latinity: A Very Concise History

The dominant view of modernity as the era of nations and nationalism (Hobsbawm) has often overshadowed scholarly interest in alternative spatial concepts that emphasize (meso-) regional, transnational, and/or pan-national identities – such as Latinity – based on the border-crossing dissemination of cultural products, political ideologies and intellectual ideas. While the idea of Latinity has ancient and premodern roots, it reached its peak of influence in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when the idea became a significant thread of the cultural and political fabric of modernity. Indeed, the question of ethnic identities was one of the main themes of the intellectual discourse on modernity, sparked by considerable social, cultural and political upheavals.

Ethnic identities, in this context, refer to the collective construction of a group's self-identification, based on shared cultural practices and a sense of historical continuity, rather than on objective or immutable characteristics such as physical traits or biological lineage. According to Joep Leerssen (2006), the term *ethnie*, derived from the Greek *ethnos*, should be adopted in its original etymological sense. As such, the concept represents a group bonded by intersubjective self-identification rather than by fixed commonalities (16-17). An *ethnie* is thus defined by the group's collective acknowledgment of shared cultural values and historical experiences, with the focus placed on the group's perception of these elements rather than their objective reality. This understanding shifts the emphasis from biological or racial definitions of group identity to a more subjective understanding of ethnicity in which collective identity is rooted in shared self-image and a sense of continuity over time (Poutignat & Streiff-Fénart; Eriksen). This collective identity is not just about belonging together but is fundamentally shaped by the sense of distinction from others (Leerssen 17). In other words, group identity is constructed through a process of differentiation and exclusion, where a community defines itself by distinguishing its members from those outside the group. This process of inclusion and exclusion is integral to the formation of a collective identity, as it reflects the way human societies tend to order the world, i.e., by dividing it into distinct groups (Leerssen 17). Thus, ethnicity, in this sense, is less about physical or cultural similarities and more about the group's

collective acceptance of a shared self-image, which inherently involves recognizing differences from others.

Hence, human groups are not mainly defined by material factors and or biological traits, but shaped by "cultural patterns and choices of self-identification" (Leerssen 17). As a result, their identities are fluid and subject to change. This fluidity applies both to how groups define who belongs and how they distinguish themselves from others. Historically, as we will discuss, the discourse on Latinity mainly – although not exclusively – defined its identity and purpose through the contrast between the 'civilized' Latins and Germanic 'barbarians'. In modern times, this otherness became also increasingly associated with Anglo-Saxon and Pan-American imperialism and materialism, while, by the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, intellectual discourse often depicted Latins as decadent barbarians and proclaimed the superiority of Northern Protestant cultures. This was the case for thinkers like Giuseppe Sergi, Léon Bazalgette, Edmund Demolins, Édouard Laboulaye whose works were also avidly read at the other side of the Atlantic (Coletta 33). Understanding these identities requires acknowledging their complex, evolving nature, both diachronically and synchronically. Ideologies, in particular, develop what Forssling calls a "composite definition", shaped by the actions, ideas, and historical context they are linked to (Forssling 5).

As a result, the meaning of ideologies and the identities they promote are constantly revised across time and across space. This can be exemplified through the intellectual experience of the Italian historian Guglielmo Ferrero (1871-1942), a key interpreter of Latinity who was mainly known for his work on the decline of the Roman Empire. Ferrero significantly altered his views between the late nineteenth century and the outbreak of World War I, "when Latinity became a commonplace opposition to 'Teutonism' and all that the German enemy stood for, in what was seen as a life-and-death struggle between civilization and barbarism" (Zantedeschi, "Pan-Latinism: Culture and Politics"). At the turn of the century, in his *L'Europa giovane* (1897), a sociological study based on a two-year journey through England, Germany, Russia and Scandinavia, Ferrero reflected on the state of European civilization. He concluded: "How can we fail to see that, while the Germanic races are already securing their future, the Latin races are living of the wealth accumulated from the past?" (Ferrero, *L'Europa giovane* 417). Ferrero offered a grim assessment of Europe's three main Latin nations – France, Spain, and Italy – describing France as slowly decaying, sustained only by selfish population control; Spain as recklessly destroying itself through colonial ventures; and Italy as risking subservience to those it once dominated (Ferrero, *L'Europa giovane* 417). He contrasted the declining Latin nations with the rising Northern nations, structuring his argument around the

concept of Caesarism and three discursive dichotomies: youth versus age, civilization versus barbarism and egoism versus collaboration. He described Caesarism as a societal structure in which elites, detached from productive labor, seek sensory pleasures and the lofty rewards of intellectual pursuits without degrading themselves with the laborious tasks of production. While once embodied by the Roman Empire, this system was, according to Ferrero, in its final stages of decay within the Latin nations, whose achievements were now dwarfed by their past glories. The failure of Latin Caesarism was, for him, the clearest sign of their exhaustion and old age. In contrast, Ferrero saw the Northern nations as embodying youthful vigor, driven by their pursuit of monumental industries and their reshaping of modern moral life (Ferrero, *L'Europa giovane* 417-421). Although often viewed by Latin interpreters as intellectually rigid or even barbaric, Ferrero argued, Northerners had built the "most marvellous civilization" in history through patience, hard work, and a strong sense of duty (Ferrero, *L'Europa giovane* 422). Unlike the egoism prevalent in Latin societies, the Northern nations excelled in collaboration, uniting vast numbers of individuals under a common vision and achieving collective greatness through the coordination of countless small yet essential efforts. This, Ferrero believed, was the true secret behind their colossal success in modernity.

At the turn of the century, Ferrero admired Northern Europe and used 'decline' as a keyword in his analysis of Latin Europe. However, by the outbreak of the war, his stance shifted radically. In *La vecchia Europa e la nuova* (1918), a collection of speeches given between 1907 and 1917 in Buenos Aires, Boston, Turin, Lyon and Paris, Ferrero examined European modernity and the war's causes. Central to his analysis was the opposition between Germanism and Latinity. While in *L'Europa giovane*, Ferrero had championed industrial growth as the hallmark of progress and the measure of a nation's virtues, by the time of these speeches, he criticized the degeneration of industrialism and materialism as signs of decline, which culminated in Germany's disastrous ambition for domination that led to the war. Ferrero argued that European modernity was defined by two competing civilizations: the *quantitative* civilization of modern industrial power, particularly embodied by Germany, and the *qualitative* civilization of the Latin nations, heirs to ancient Greece and Rome, which valued wisdom, beauty and virtue (Ferrero, *La vecchia Europa* 296). According to Ferrero, the conflict between quantity and quality was the driving force of modernity: Germany represented the pursuit of raw power and material dominance, while Latinity embodied the pursuit of moral and cultural beauty. This tension, he claimed, arose from two opposing ideas: perfection, rooted in the Greco-Roman tradition, and power, the cornerstone of quantitative civilization. He criticized

Germany for turning the pursuit of power into a national religion, seeking limitless domination in thought, industry, commerce and warfare.

By the early twentieth century, Ferrero noted, Germany had become the symbol of modern power, admired for its military, industrial, and intellectual achievements. From 1900 onwards, European nations were captivated by Germany's success and felt dwarfed by its colossal presence. However, this admiration quickly turned to horror with the onset of the First World War, as millions cursed Germany for the destruction it unleashed. Ferrero viewed this shift as emblematic of the broader struggle between quantity and quality. While Germany's obsession with power had led to its prominence, it also provoked widespread fear and resentment across Europe. He argued that the ideals of power, embodied by Germany, seduced and contaminated much of the world, as realist politics, nationalism, and imperialism spread across the continent and across the Atlantic (Ferrero, *La vecchia Europa* 299). This shift away from the older ideals of perfection – grounded in the intellectual and artistic traditions of the Greco-Roman world – led many to believe that Latinity was in decline. France and Italy, in particular, seemed diminished in comparison to Germany, struggling to compete in an industrialized world dominated by the logic of numbers and material strength. Ferrero critiqued the notion that the Latin nations had decayed, suggesting instead that they were simply less suited to the mechanized, quantitative civilization that had emerged with the rise of large-scale industry. Ultimately, Ferrero framed the struggle between Germanism and Latinity as a clash between two visions of civilization: one driven by the pursuit of power, the other by the pursuit of cultural and moral excellence. The Latin nations, despite their perceived weaknesses in the industrial age, remained heirs to a rich tradition of intellectual, artistic, and political achievements and still had a role to play in the modern world (Ferrero, *La vecchia Europa* 290-333). This distinction, Ferrero argued, was essential to understanding the deeper ideological currents that led to the outbreak of the First World War and the cultural upheavals of modern Europe. In his view, Europe's crisis was shaped by the barbarous, quantitative and ideological characteristics of Germanism, which needed to be purged to create a better future.

Ferrero's analysis relied on a civilization-barbarism dichotomy, which has been crucial in shaping identities throughout history. The label 'barbarian' has been used in contrast to the self-identified 'civilized' subject, reflecting a dynamic of self-perception rather than inherent qualities (Boletsi 57). Throughout history, this dichotomy has persisted as civilization became a key framework for dominant groups to assert their superiority, determining who was included in the civilized world and who was marginalized as barbaric (Boletsi 64). Furthermore, Ferrero's portrayal of Latin nations as heirs to ancient Greece and Rome reveal the importance

of concepts like Hellenicity and *Romanitas* in Latinity's historical genealogy or ideological prehistory. Indeed, the use of Latinity in modernity can be seen as a modern legacy of ideas from Hellenicity to *Romanitas*, and early modern uses of *Latinitas* in the construction of self-identity and the construction of the barbaric 'other'.

In ancient Greece, Hellenicity referred to a cultural identification, which emphasized education (paideia) over birthright and biological traits. For instance, Isocrates in the fourth century BCE stated being a Hellene was not about one's ethnic background but about sharing in Greek education and culture. Those who adopted Greek learning (*paideia*), even non-Greeks, could be considered part of the Hellenic world (Boletsi 73-74). This cultural definition persisted in the Roman period (Hall 224). The Romans originally established themselves in the region of the Italian peninsula known as Latium. While 'Latin' originally referred to this specific area, it became synonymous with 'Roman' as the Roman Republic and Empire expanded. The Latin language spread across vast territories, including North Africa, the Middle East, southeastern Europe, the Mediterranean, and part of Northern Europe. In many of these regions, the presence of local languages led to regional variants that eventually developed into the Romance languages, named after their roots in the Roman language (Mazzotti 119-120). With the rise of Rome, the civilization-barbarism dichotomy shifted to reflect Roman values. *Romanitas* became the marker of civilization, emphasizing virtues such as rationality, discipline, and adherence to the rule of law. The Romans characterized as barbarians those lacking these traits, and Romanization, through education and cultural assimilation, was seen as a remedy for barbarism. For instance, Cicero, in his *De Republica*, contrasted Roman virtues with the perceived cruelty and lawlessness of barbarians (Jones 379).

Following the so-called barbarian invasion and the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, the distinction between *Romanitas* and barbarism increasingly became defined by religion. By the seventh century, barbarians were often equated with non-Christians, pagan or heretical groups, while those within the Catholic fold were seen as civilized. Despite this, the Roman perception of barbarians as morally deficient persisted, affecting views on Germanic rulers in post-Roman Europe. An evident example is Orosius' *Seven Books of History against the Pagans* (418), which depicted the Goth as embodying the wild, irrational nature of barbarism in contrast to Roman order and piety (Jones 383-384). During the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the concept of barbarism shifted once more. Northern European scholars reassessed their Germanic heritage, attributing positive traits such as virtue and simplicity to their ancestors (Boletsi 92). Meanwhile, Italian humanists reaffirmed the superiority of *Latinitas* or Latinity, positioning themselves as the legitimate heirs of Roman civilization.

Indeed, according to Martin Heidegger, the Renaissance, or "renascentia romanitatis" was essentially a revival of Roman values, emphasizing *humanitas* and Greek paideia while contrasting with what was perceived as the barbarism of Gothic Scholasticism (Heidegger 244).

In other words, in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the dichotomy between civilization and barbarism was revived and tied to the classical heritage of Rome. Italian humanists embraced Latinity as the pinnacle of human achievement, contrasting it with what they considered the barbarism of the early Middle Ages and Gothic north. Dante Alighieri, for instance, urged the Lombards to reclaim their Latin roots and abandon their 'barbarism' (Jones 401), while Petrarch's vision of Latinity, as expressed in his famous political *canzone* "Italia Mia", juxtaposed the barbaric blood of foreign mercenaries that tainted the Italian countryside with the 'Latin sangue gentile' that embodied virtue and nobility. In doing so, he contrasted the intellectual and moral superiority of Italians – those of Latin blood – with what he described as 'German barbarity'. Petrarch's use of the phrase "sangue gentile" drew from the Latin term *gens*, referring to noble Roman bloodlines, thus establishing Italians as the direct descendants of the Romans and reinforcing their cultural and intellectual heritage (Feinstein 72-73). Similarly, Giangaleazzo Visconti (1351-1402) expressed disdain for Germanic troops, describing them as 'barbarous' as opposed to the Italian peninsula's status as the unique successor of the Romans (Jones 402). This renewed focus on the classical dichotomy of Latinity versus barbarism was also reflected in the language and literary preferences of Renaissance scholars, who attempted to purify Latin from the 'barbarisms' introduced by vernacular languages (Haskell & Ruys). For instance, in his *De linguae Latinae elegantia*, a manual on the proper use of Latin, Lorenzo Valla (c. 1407-1457) lamented the decline of the language while celebrating its historical importance. He observed that Latin had once "educated the peoples in the liberal arts", "taught them excellent laws" and "liberated them from barbarism" (Valla 594). However, for centuries, he noted, people had stopped speaking it correctly, leaving scholars disconnected from the works of the classics. Since the fall of the Roman Empire, both Latin language and culture had been neglected, allowing "mold and rust to tarnish the ancient brilliance of Latinity" ["*fulgorem illum latinitatis situ ac rubigine passi obsolescere*"] (599). Valla emphasized the dismal state of past centuries but contrasted it with the potential of his own time to restore not only the language of Rome but also the arts and sciences, fostering a new period of rebirth.

The sixteenth century and the Reformation marked a significant shift in Europe, dividing the continent between the North and the South. The South, which had once dominated the Mediterranean under Roman control, entered a long period of decline and became relegated

to secondary status, especially Italy and Spain. However, their conditions were different: while Spain had been the most powerful country in Europe, controlling vast territories including Portugal, parts of Italy, the Netherlands and overseas colonies, Italy's influence was mainly cultural and economic, though its fall was no less impactful. Theories of the time attempted to explain the North's progress over the South's decline, often attributing it to the effects of climate on character (Quinones 18-32). The idea of a Greco-Roman or Latin heritage and a North-South divide continued to be activated over the following centuries, for instance, in the *Quérelle des anciens et des modernes* and the Classicism-Romanticism debate. Romanticism introduced an idealistic vocabulary in the reflection, claiming that true meaning of the world lay in abstract, underlying principles rather than in material, concrete realities (Leerssen 109). This idealistic worldview led to viewing worldly phenomena as expressions of a deeper spiritual essence. This essence thus became a moral blueprint that determined how certain groups perceived and positioned themselves in the world. This idea emerged most notably in French Romanticism, which contrasted and classified the cultures and climates of Europe. One of the most influential historians in making ethnicity and Latinity central to modern culture was Augustin Thierry. His theory of the conflict of races as the origin of modern European civilization laid the foundation for many discourses that emphasized the enduring influence of the Latins, even amid the barbaric invasions that followed. Thierry argued that the Latin legacy never completely subsided completely under the subsequent barbaric invasions. His work, particularly *Histoire de la conquête de l'Angleterre par les Normands*, had a profound impact on late-nineteenth-century European nationalism, as Thierry's ideas established the notion that ethnic or cultural conflict was central to European history. His ideas were picked up at the other side of the Atlantic, where it inspired a thinker like Huidobro Valdés (Coletta). However, it should be noted that, according to Thier (630), in France, Henri de Ferron was the sole figure to attempt linking his ideas of Latinity and Anglo-Saxonism with Darwin's biological determinism. Typically, the notion of conflict between these groups served more as a framework for delineating cultural differences.

Furthermore, in *De l'Allemagne* (1813), Germaine de Staël's geography of modern Europe proposed a division of the continent in three main groupings: the Germanic peoples, the Slavic peoples and the Latin peoples, the latter being the French, the Italians, the Spanish and the Portuguese. De Staël argued that nations with Latin roots in their intellectual culture were more deeply civilized than others. While regional differences, such as the strong influences of the Church in Italy or the military resilience of Spanish after long conflicts with the Arabs, needed to be considered, she felt that these Latin-influenced nations shared a

common heritage, which drew them less to abstract thinking than the German nations. In De Staël's framework, the opposition between Northern and Southern Europe, or between Germanism and Latinity, was central to her theory of European history. She argued that Northern Europe's intellectual, moral, and material superiority stemmed from their advanced practice of philosophy, which was significantly influenced by the Protestant religion they embraced (Casillo 11-14). Consequently, De Staël posited that the Reformation – a product of Germanism – played a more crucial role in advancing modernity than the Renaissance's rediscovery of antiquity, or Latinity.

This subdivision was further solidified through early philological studies of Romance languages. In the nineteenth century, the identification of an Indo-European language family led to the study of its different branching and the comparison of its various language families. For instance, in 1821, François Marie Juste Raynouard, in his *Grammaire comparée des langues de l'Europe latine, dans leurs rapports avec la langue des troubadours,* discussed the shared origins of the languages of Latin Europe, including Old French, Spanish, Spanish Patois, Catalan, Portugues, Italian, and, to some extent, the Wallachian or Moldavian language. This classification of language families contributed to the idea of a parental relation between nations of the same branch and a shared cultural and moral identity. Indeed, at this time, following Romanticism's idealism, language was seen as the carrier of a group's deeper essence and Romance language of neo-Latin languages were viewed as vessels of Roman legacy, the shared cultural and moral DNA that shaped the identity of Latin-European nations. This idea also influenced the emergence of pan-movements, which Joep Leerssen has defined as "the nationalism of language families" and as projects "to unite not just the fellow-members of one particular culture or language but indeed whole clusters of families of languages (154). In this context, Pan-Latinism emerged as a response to the perceived dominance of Slavic, Germanic, and Anglo-Saxon peoples in Europe and the Mediterranean (Robert). Advocates of Pan-Latinism promoted federalist and internationalist projects with the goal of achieving peace through European alliances. By the late 1860, the idea of a Latin confederation – a transnational cultural space beyond existing nation-state borders – offered the Occitan and Catalan peoples a potential solution to their frustrations as minority groups within France and Spain (Zantedeschi, "*Cântecul Gintei Latine*" 911). However, the very same ideology was also used in imperialism and ultranationalist projects (Giladi, "Origins and Characteristics of Macro-Nationalism")

Latinity and Pan-Latinism contributed to the development of various literary, political and religious projects in modernity that often extended beyond the borders of the nation-state.

They not only re-interpreted modernity but also attempted to re-establish a sense of identity and meaning in the ever-evolving modern world. In the next section, we do not aim to provide an exhaustive account of Latinity in modernity, its poetics, artistic currents and ideologies. Instead, we focus on selected aspects explored in recent scholarship.

Recent Scholarship on Latinity and Modernity

The idea of Latinity has been crucial in shaping modern literary poetics and political ideologies in Southern Europe and Southern America, yet it has only recently begun to receive adequate scholarly attention. A clear sign of this past academic neglect is Joep Leerssen's treatment of Latinity in his excellent book on *National Thought in Europe* (2006). In the section on pan-movements, he mentions Latinity – or more specifically, its Pan-Latinist ideology – "merely for the sake of completeness", noting that "something calling itself Pan-Latinism was briefly inspired by the success of Pan-Slavism and German nationalism, in the mid-nineteenth century", while underlining its "marginal" role in the intellectual discourse of the time (158). However, as the articles in this issue will make clear, Latinity and pan-Latinism were neither short-lived or irrelevant phenomena. Instead, they were influential and enduring and left a significant mark on the making of literary, cultural and political modernity on both sides of the Atlantic.

One line of research has pointed to the imperialist logic underpinning ideas of Latinity. Just as the Romans viewed themselves as the natural rulers of foreign peoples and engaged in civilizing 'barbarians', the idea of *Romanitas* carried over in the imperialist logic behind the concept of Latinity and/or civilization in modernity. Specifically, research has explored the ideological uses of Latinity within Atlantic history, particularly in relation to Anglo-Saxon imperialism, and the ontology of 'Latin' America. Initially focused on Southern Europe, the concept of Latinity expanded beyond European borders in the 1850s and 1860s. Indeed, Arturo Ardao (1993) has explored the emergence of the term of *raza latina*, linking it to Latin American intellectuals, such as José María Torres Caicedo, but emphasizing its origins primarily among European interlocutors. As Maike Thier (2011) has argued, the notion of Latin America was instrumental in French imperial policy during the Second Empire under the leadership of Napoleon III. At this time, a narrative of French imperial grandeur was created, which contrasted Latinity with Anglo-Saxonism, particularly in debates about the Americas. Michel Chevalier, a key figure in the French *Conseil d'etat*, played a pivotal role in redirecting French imperialism from territorial conquest to global dominance through free trade, aiming to restore France's imperial stature through commercial means. Central to his vision was the

concept of a cultural connection between France and 'Latin America', reinforced by anti-American sentiments which interpreted the United States as a threat to French civilization. Chevalier extended the European idea of Latinity to the New World by drawing parallels between the religious, cultural and linguistic divides of North and South America with those of Northern and Southern Europe. He argued that South America, like Southern Europe, was Latin and Catholic, while North America mirrored Northern Europe as Protestant and Anglo-Saxon. This concept of Latinity was used to justify French intervention in Latin America, as Napoleon III sought to expand French influence in the region and counter U.S. expansionism (Giladi, "The Elaboration of Pan-Latinism" 58).

In this context, the concept of Latin America had European underpinnings and emerged from a broader cultural and political redefinition of imperial boundaries. Initially, as Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo (2017) has pointed out, Latin America represented an anti-imperialist stance, primarily opposing Pan-Americanism. However, it also embodied an imperial logic as it conflated two ideologies from the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: Iberism and Latinity. Both concepts were part of broader geopolitical and commercial strategies designed to address the shifting dynamics of European empire and the rise of modern nation-states. These ideas extended sometimes to North Africa, as seen in Iberian Africanism, which claimed historical ties to Africa to justify Spanish territorial claims, or in French civilizing missions in Algeria and Morocco (41-61). Furthermore, according to Walter Mignolo, 'Latin America' is not an impartial geographical term but rather a creation of European imperial ambition and strategic cultural engineering of Creole Elites. These white Creole elites embraced the notion of Latinity to construct their own ethnic identities and further their national-building goals. The term 'Latin America' soon gained traction among Spanish American intellectuals, who wanted to align themselves with a broader Mediterranean cultural tradition, encompassing French, Italian, and other Romance cultures, rather than Spain alone. However, the term 'Latin America' largely ignored the indigenous, Black and mestizo population, revealing its Eurocentric, Creole origines. The production of these texts was heavily influenced by the social and economic resources of the elites, who aimed to engage readers across nations and languages (Lazo)

Furthermore, Michela Coletta (2018) has pointed to "the question of internal agency" (33). She argued that the concept of a declining Latinity, paradoxically, played a crucial role in the definition of modernity in Spanish America. Despite its associations with decline, Latinity ultimately emerged as a path to modern civilization. Coletta's analysis suggests that the idea of Latin America was central to a complex debate about Spanish America's approach to

modernization, influenced by both material and symbolic impacts of European immigration and the growing influence of the USA. For instance, in her analysis of José Enrique Rodó's *Ariel* (1900), Coletta argues that the author attempted to forge a unique cultural identity for Latin America, which challenged the perceived negative impact of Anglo-Saxon materialism and the process of de-Latinization. Alarmed by the increasing admiration for North American values, Rodó critiqued the notion of decadent Latinity. In doing so, Rodó proposed a theory of regeneration that celebrated Latin civilization as a spiritual and ethereal alternative to North America's materialism. His vision featured the idea of anti-utilitarian "new man" shaped by Hellenic and Christian ideals, offering a counter to the decadent aestheticism of *modernismo* and presenting a renewed direction for Latin American society (Coletta 36 & 119-128).

Other scholars have focused on the uses of Latinity in various nineteenth-century and twentieth-century periodicals, such as *La Renaissance Latine* (Papandreopoulou), *Anthologie Revue d'Italie et de France* (Vinall), *Cronache della civiltà elleno-latina* (Nemegeer, "A Macro-Nationalist Periodical"), *Revue des nations latines* (Giladi, "L'idéologie panlatine"), *Le nouveau siècle* (Mattiato), *Dante*: *Revue de culture latine* (Giladi, "La revue *Dante*"), *Romania: recueil trimestriel consacré à l'étude des langues et littératures romanes* (Zantedeschi, "*Cântecul Gintei Latine*"), *El Eco de la Raza Latina* (Lazo) and *Critica fascista* (Storchi). These publications illustrate how periodicals functioned as transnational spaces for circulating border-crossing ideas, disseminating ideologies, and fostering political alliances or friendships between neighboring countries. Indeed, as scholars in the field of periodical studies have argued (Pykett; Beetham; Jackson; Bezari), periodicals not only reflect society but also actively shape it by constructing opinion and identity. Far from being mere mirrors of their time, they were powerful instruments of change. Furthermore, as periodicals provide a democratic platform for the discussion of ideas across national borders, they underscore the significance of the concept of cultural spaces, which are defined by processes of "interaction and communication" rather than fixed political borders. This concept offers a new way of mapping Europe and the world, emphasizing networks of cultural exchange rather than traditional nation-state boundaries (Ther 214-215).

Latinity was also central to debates on the renewal of national literature and the politics of literature in the wake of the symbolist crisis (Al-Matary; Somigli; Nemegeer, "Umanesimo, Rinascimento e rinascita nazionale"). For instance, Patrick McGuinness has focused on Charles Maurras' (1868-1952) use of Latinity. In his polemical work, Maurras intertwined grand pronouncements on race, nation, language and tradition. He viewed Latinity as a cultural touchstone, particularly in opposition to what he perceived as the encroachment of Nordicism

i.e., a symbolic invasion of French intellectual life by Germanic and Anglo-Saxon influences. Maurras conceptualized a territorial poetics to ground the nation in a classical, Mediterranean tradition. He advocated for a return to the values of Latinity, which he identified with clarity, order, and symmetry in literature, contrasting sharply with the perceived northern *brumes* and stylistic chaos of Symbolism, as well as the cosmopolitan perversion of avant-garde Paris. Maurras' critique extended beyond literature to a broader cultural and political re-territorialization. He argued that French culture, amidst crisis, had always historically rejuvenated itself by returning to its Latin roots, a process he believed was necessary after the cultural dilution caused by Romanticism and the decadence of Symbolism. In his view, the purity of the Latin tradition, particularly as embodied in Provençal literature, offered a revitalizing force for French culture. Maurras was particularly scornful of writers like Huysmans, who celebrated the mixed Franco-German culture of regions like Alsace and Lorraine. For Maurras, the aesthetics and politics of the German 'barbares' were based on irregularity and dissonance, antithetical to the harmony and order he venerated in the Latin tradition. Through analogies, he conflated political order with poetic form, literary authority with social hierarchy and literary 'race' with national genius, creating an ideology where Latinity became the idealized counterpoint to the perceived barbarism of the North (McGuinness 125-157).

New Perspectives on Latinity and Modernity: Contributions to this Special Issue

The articles in this special issue critically explore the diverse uses of Latinity in France, Italy, Spain, and Portugal, with additional focus on the Italian diaspora in Argentina. Collectively, these case studies demonstrate the significance of Latinity as a pivotal concept in the intellectual history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, underscoring its central role in shaping the dynamics of modernity. The opening article explores the dual aspects of Latinity – traditionalism and modernity – within the Occitan cultural movement in the late nineteenth century. In this article, Francesca Zantedeschi analyzes how cultural Occitanism, dedicated to promoting the Occitan language and literature, fostered pan-Latin networks, which were solidified through literary and cultural events such as the Latin celebrations in Avignon (1874), Montpellier (1878), and Forcalquier and Gap (1882). The article traces the origins and evolution of the 'Occitan Latin idea', a concept central to the cultural and intellectual debates about Latinity during the 1870s and 1880s. The notion of Latinity in this context represented a forward-looking, modern ideological aspiration while retaining connections to a shared Latin cultural heritage. Through the efforts of three prominent félibres – Louis-Xavier de Ricard,

Charles de Tourtoulon, and Alphonse Roque-Ferrier – the movement aimed to construct a pan-Latin identity and community that extended beyond regionalism. These writers, associated with the Félibrige, advocated for a dynamic and evolving conception of Latinity, aligning it with political and social progressivism. The article contextualizes these efforts within broader pan-Latin and macro-national movements of the time, which sought to unite people based on a common language and culture. At the same time, it underscores the interplay between cultural initiatives, such as language preservation and literary revival, with broader geopolitical aspirations, including countering the influence of Slavic, Germanic, and Anglo-Saxon powers.

The second article provides an analysis of Spanish and Portuguese intellectual and political discourse on Iberism, focusing on its evolution from the late nineteenth century through the post-war period and its interaction with the concept of Latinity. According to Santiago Pérez Isasi, the nineteenth century witnessed the formation of various transnational projects that reimagined Europe and its geopolitical landscape, including Iberism and Latinity, which were grounded in shared cultural, linguistic, and racial ties. These projects fostered complex public debates and contributed to the development of a broader European identity. Iberism, a political and cultural ideology advocating for greater unity between Spain and Portugal, interacted with Latinity, which emphasized Mediterranean connections with countries like France and Italy, often placing France at the center of this network. The article traces how Iberism emerged in response to nationalist movements and a perceived geopolitical decline in both Spain and Portugal. The concept underwent transformations from purely political to cultural and spiritual forms. These ideas of unity were influenced by broader trends such as pan-Hispanism, Hispano-Americanism, and pan-Latinism, which sought to foster closer ties between Iberia, Latin America, and the wider Latin world. However, these movements were often marked by tensions between aspirations for transnational cooperation and underlying colonial and nationalist ambitions. The relationship between Iberism and Latinity was further complicated by external perspectives that often cast Iberia in an Orientalist light, emphasizing its historical Arab influences, which were resisted by Iberian intellectuals. This resistance culminated in efforts to align Iberian identity with European, and specifically Latin, roots, as reflected in historiographical works that traced the origins of Iberian civilization to Roman times. The article ultimately argues that both Iberism and Latinity were flexible ideological constructs that could be adapted to various political and cultural contexts, serving both national and transnational agendas.

The third article investigates the intersection of Latinity, modernity, and nationalism in Italian magazines from 1914 to 1922, examining how these concepts, which had been central

to cultural discussions since the post-Risorgimento period, were re-elaborated during and after World War I. In this study, Simona Storchi challenges the common assumption that post-war reformulations of Latinity and classicism marked a simple return to tradition, asserting instead that they represented a rethinking of Italy's national identity. This rethinking involved a repositioning of Italy within Mediterranean Europe. The article begins with a discussion of Mario Morasso's 1897 essay, which voiced concerns about the role of intellectuals in post-unification Italy, and stressed the importance of Latinity as a cultural and national ideal. This idea of Latinity was central to Italian intellectual debates throughout the early twentieth century, serving as a response to a perceived decline in Latin influence in the face of northern European dominance. Morasso's anti-German rhetoric, linking Italy with France in defending Latin culture, is highlighted as part of a broader intellectual concern with protecting and revitalizing the Italian nation's cultural heritage. The analysis focuses on how Latinity was mobilized during the First World War and its aftermath, particularly in modernist magazines such as *Lacerba*, *Valori plastici*, and *Rete Mediterranea*. These publications redefined Latinity, blending classical and modernist elements, in an effort to both engage with and critique the present political and social context. The article challenges the view that post-war invocations of Latinity and classicism were simply conservative or reactionary, instead arguing that they sought to negotiate the artist's role in the nation and to redefine Italy's place in Europe by displacing France's cultural primacy. As a cultural and political construct, Latinity underwent multiple re-significations between World War I and the rise of fascism. It came to represent a broad symbolic framework that encompassed ideas of Roman lineage, ethnicity, and Mediterranean identity, while also acting as a response to the crisis of modernity and the alienation of the artist. The notion of Latinity became politically charged, influencing debates about the relationship between art and politics in modernist Italian culture.

The last article of this special issue analyzes the role of Italian publishers and intellectuals in Buenos Aires during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In this study, Marco De Cristofaro demonstrates how these publishers advanced the concept of Latinity to promote collaboration between Italy and Argentina. De Cristofaro contends that Italian associations in Buenos Aires, such as the *Società Italiana di Unione e Benevolenza*, established schools and libraries to disseminate Italian education and culture. These initiatives contributed to the formation of an Italo-Argentine book market and enhanced intellectual exchange between the two nations. Similarly, prominent publishers and intellectuals, including Basilio Cittadini and Piero Barbera, strengthened the Italo-Argentine cultural connection through the promotion of Italian literature in Buenos Aires. Despite a period of fruitful cultural

exchange, the study also highlights several challenges, including the emergence of Argentine nationalism and growing suspicion toward Italian immigrants, who were sometimes held responsible for social unrest. In a 1908 report, British analyst Nowell Lake Watson portrayed Italian immigrants as indispensable to Argentina's labor market but perpetuated negative stereotypes, depicting them as unreliable. In response, intellectuals such as Emilio Zuccarini emphasized the significant contributions of Italians to Argentina's progress, while also critiquing Argentine intellectuals who resisted foreign influence. Ultimately, this study demonstrates that Italian publishers and intellectuals in Buenos Aires not only facilitated cultural exchange but also contributed to a larger discourse on identity, integration, and modernization in Argentina, amidst tensions between nationalism and cosmopolitanism.

In conclusion, the articles in this special issue provide a nuanced exploration of Latinity as a dynamic and multifaceted concept, deeply intertwined with the cultural, political, and intellectual histories of France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and the Italian diaspora in Argentina. Through diverse case studies, this issue demonstrates how Latinity functioned as a critical lens through which modernity was negotiated, often serving both as a means of cultural revival and as a tool for reimagining national and transnational identities. The analysis of Occitan cultural movements, Iberian discourses on unity, Italian modernist debates, and Italo-Argentine debates on migration highlights the adaptability of Latinity, revealing its role in both traditionalist and progressive frameworks. The articles collectively emphasize that Latinity was not merely a nostalgic return to classical ideals but a living, evolving construct that responded to the complexities of modern geopolitical and cultural shifts. It became a site of negotiation for intellectuals, artists, and political thinkers, allowing them to redefine identities and confront the challenges of modernity. Ultimately, this special issue underscores the enduring significance of Latinity as a central concept in shaping intellectual and cultural debates across the Latin world during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, providing new perspectives on its role in both local and global contexts.

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The Occitan Latin Idea Between Tradition and Modernity, 1870s-1880s

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Abstract

This article discusses the dual facets of Latinity – traditionalism and modernity – within the Occitan context in the late nineteenth century. It investigates how cultural Occitanism, a movement dedicated to the promotion of the Occitan language and literature, played a crucial role in fostering pan-Latin networks. These networks were solidified through cultural and literary events, notably the Latin celebrations in Avignon (1874), Montpellier (1878), and Forcalquier and Gap (1882). The article examines the aspirations, shared values, and inherent contradictions that characterized the Occitan Latin idea in the 1870s and 1880s. Beginning with an overview of mid-nineteenth-century efforts to promote the Latin idea, the study places these initiatives within the wider context of modern pan-movements. It traces the origins of the Occitan Latin idea, from Víctor Balaguer's exile in Provence to the Latin-themed events of the era. The focus then shifts to the contributions of three prominent félibres from Languedoc: Louis-Xavier de Ricard, Charles de Tourtoulon, and Alphonse Roque-Ferrier. These félibres championed the Latin idea and worked to build a pan-Latin community against the background of the political and intellectual debates about Latinity at the time. By examining the intersection of cultural Occitanism with these debates, the article underscores the role of literary and cultural initiatives in shaping and advancing Latinity, revealing the close interaction between tradition and modernity in its evolution.

Keywords

Occitanism, Latinity, Modernity, Traditionalism, Pan-Movements

Introduction

In his book on *L'idée latine*, now considered a classic among scholars of the subject, the Occitan philologist and essayist Roger Barthe, an advocate of "integral pan-Latinism", explained that the Latin idea is "an Occitan idea".[1] He considered the Latin idea to be "Occitanism's natural extension and fulfillment". It mattered little that it was "prophesized" by Claude-François Lallemand and promoted at different times and in different ways by D'Annunzio, Castelar, or Poincaré.[2] According to Barthe, "the Latin idea and its essential political content came directly from Balaguer's brief providential exile, from the genial intuition of the Avignon félibres, from the erudite and patriotic science of the Montpellier félibres, in other words, from nascent or renascent Occitanism in its full meaning" (Barthe 8-

[1] By "integral pan-Latinism", Barthe meant a "cultural, political, economic" pan-Latinism (Barthe 171).

[2] Lallemand, a professor at the Faculty of Medicine in Montpellier, pleaded for the establishment of a great confederation comprising Spain, Portugal, Italy, France, and Belgium, with Marseille serving as the headquarter for this Iberian-Latin congress in his book *Le hachych* (1843).

9). This article builds on the research tradition initiated by Roger Barthe. It aims to examine how elements of the Latin idea within the Occitan cultural movement in the latter half of the nineteenth century can be seen as reflecting an "ideological desire of genuinely modern character" (Barthe 21).[3] By exploring the 'different souls' of the Occitan cultural movement, the article seeks to highlight how the Occitan Latin idea represented a forward-looking and modern ideological aspiration.

The Occitan Latin idea was indeed complex, reflecting diverse political, religious, linguistic, and cultural positions within the Occitan cultural movement. In the second half of the nineteenth century, this movement was championed by the Félibrige—a literary association of young Provençal poets founded in 1854 by Frédéric Mistral, Théodore Aubanel, Paul Giera, Anselme Mathieu, Alphonse Tavan, Jean Brunet, and Joseph Roumanille—and the Société pour l'étude des langues romanes (1869; henceforth SLR), a philological association based in Montpellier that focused on the study of Romance languages and literature (Martel, *Les Félibres et leur temps*; Zantedeschi, *Une langue en quête d'une nation*). Debates within these groups centered mainly around language issues, including whether to adopt a specific variety of Occitan or preserve all language varieties,[4] what to name the language, which spelling to use, and the actions needed for its preservation. For example, the growing use of the term 'Provençal' to describe the entire Occitan language continuum caused deep fractures within the Occitan cultural and linguistic revival, as it suggested a devaluation of Occitan varieties outside Provence.

All these elements are crucial for understanding the Occitan Latin idea. They provide insight into the Occitan linguistic and cultural revival movement and illuminate the various meanings of the defense of the Latin idea within it. Building on this foundation, this article examines the aspirations, commonalities, and contradictions that characterized the Occitan Latin idea in the 1870s and 1880s. It begins with an overview of mid-nineteenth-century initiatives aimed at promoting the Latin idea, contextualizing it within the broader flourishing of pan-movements. It then traces the origins of the Occitan Latin idea, from Víctor Balaguer's exile in Provence to the Latin festivities celebrated in 1874, 1878, and 1882. It concludes by discussing the (pan)Latin initiatives spearheaded by three félibres from Languedoc: Louis-Xavier de Ricard, Charles de Tourtoulon, and Alphonse Roque-Ferrier.

[3] For a critical overview of the concept of modernity and its applications, see Kolland.

[4] Occitan is divided into seven branches, including Auvergant, Gascon, Languedocien, Limousin, Provençal, and Vivaro-Alpin. Its name shifted over the centuries, reflecting fluctuating linguistic realities.

The choice to explore the Latin idea through these three writers is based on several reasons. Firstly, it relates to their position – linguistic, methodological, and political/ideological – within the Félibrige. Although all three were initially members of the association, they later distanced themselves for reasons discussed in this paper. Notably, each was a representative of the Félibrige of Languedoc and supported an Occitan language encompassing all dialectal varieties, countering the dominance of Provençal, which had become the model language due to Frédéric Mistral's masterpieces. Furthermore, Tourtoulon and Roque-Ferrier were both members of the SLR, which aimed to give the Occitan language scientific foundations and conceptual tools to adapt to modern times and new economic, political, and social challenges. The SLR's approach to language was the opposite of the 'Mistralian' option, as it viewed the language as dynamic and responsive to the changes in society and time, rather than fixed and unchanging like a 'monument'. Louis-Xavier de Ricard's dissent from the Provençal Félibrige was more political and ideological. While the Félibrige was cautious not to participate in political debates, often associating language preservation with sentimentality and nostalgia for the past within a framework of political, social, and religious conservatism, Ricard supported a republican, federalist, secular (if not openly anti-Catholic) Félibrige. The second reason for choosing these three authors is their response to the Félibrige's perceived inaction. They promoted a Latin idea with strong modern elements, envisioning Latinity not as a nostalgic revival of traditional heritage but as a dynamic and evolving concept integrating political and social advancements with a forward-looking cultural identity. For Ricard, this also included progressive political ideals. Their advocacy for Latin idea sought not only to preserve Occitan linguistic and cultural heritage but also to adapt it to the present and future, ensuring its ongoing vitality and influence.

Latinity in France by the Mid-Nineteenth Century

The Latin idea was not exclusive to the Occitans. The broader concept of Latinity, embodied in the principles of Pan-Latinism, also influenced the foreign policy of the French Second Empire in the 1850s (Lepenies 99-111; see also Benvenuto). This influence was evident in Napoleon III's Euro-Mediterranean ambitions in both Italy and Spain. By the late 1850s, French foreign policy in South America also invoked the concept of 'Latinity' to counter North American ambitions in the region. The notion of the Americas as the central battleground in a global struggle between Latin and Anglo-Saxon 'races' was prominently advanced by the *Revue des Races Latines* (1857–64), founded by Gabriel Hugelmann, an agent of the Ministry of the Interior (Thier). In it, the defense of "Latin races and ideas" was coupled with a advocacy

for Catholicism, which Hugelmann believed was the only force capable of providing the "exclusive protection that humanity requires" (Hugelmann 5).

In Europe, particularly in France, Pan-Latinism often emerged as a response to the perceived dominance of Slavic, Germanic, and Anglo-Saxon peoples in Europe and the Mediterranean. In 1860, Cyprien Robert – an expert in Slavic studies and literature, lecturer at the Collège de France, and editor of the *Revue des deux mondes* – published *Le panlatinisme: Confédération gallo-latine et celto-gauloise*, warning France, "the Romance world and the Gauls" against emerging power blocs like Pan-Slavism, the United States, and China. He proposed a confederation of nations with Romance and Celtic roots, including the French, Belgians, Italians, Spanish, Portuguese, English, Scottish, Irish, Welsh, Cornish, and Greeks, while excluding peoples associated with enemy states, such as the Rhinelanders, Venetians, Tyroleans, Latin-Greeks, Romanians, Moldavians/Wallachians, Transylvanians, Bessarabians, and French Swiss (Robert 73).

Pan-Latinism sometimes employed racial rhetoric to define human interactions and shape European alliances by emphasizing shared racial or cultural traits among Latin peoples. This served as a foundation for forging alliances or fostering unity among them. Advocates like the French journalist and philanthropist Marc-Amédée Gromier believed that a Latin alliance could lead to the United States of Europe and a universal humanitarian federation for world peace. Indeed, the Latin movement aimed to promote peace through a sense of respect for "the balance between races" (Gromier, *Aux Latins* 9). He also proposed a Mediterranean *Zollverein* (Customs Union) to counterbalance German and "Anglo-Saxon" influence and facilitate the establishment of the "United States of Europe" (Gromier, *Alliance latine*).[5] The belief in the existence of a 'Latin race'—or rather, Latin 'races'—was not uncommon, despite being vaguely defined. For instance, Cyprien Robert believed in a "*race gallo-latine*" that was "born of the mixture of the Gaulois, the Iberians, and the Romans" (7). Instead, the Occitan writer and journalist Louis Xavier de Ricard argued that pure races do not exist; instead, there are "composite races, psychological races" that, despite their mixed elements, exhibit a clear and undeniable similarity and conformity. He considered the "Latin Race" to be one such composite: "Italians, Spaniards, French from the North and the South, Belgians, French-

[5] At the end of the nineteenth century, the perceived decline of Latin nations contrasted with the dynamism of Anglo-Saxon countries and Germany. This spurred a reassessment on Latin culture and identity. This revival of the Latin idea was promoted by literary figures and supported by diplomats and politicians who aimed to foster closer ties between France and Italy (Poupault). For a reflection on Pan-Latinism at the turn of the century, see Giladi.

speaking Swiss, Romanians, South Americans, we all have the same blood in our veins; we are driven by the same ideal; our history reveals the same passions and the same spirit. Our languages form a single, perfectly defined family. We are brothers, undeniably brothers" (Ricard, *Autonomie et Confédération* 6).

Beyond the variety of proposals put forward, generally confederative in nature, nineteenth-century Pan-Latinism – and the Latin idea in general – was characterized by the notion that language was its foundational element. As argued by Barthe, in the nineteenth century, language was far from being a mere "subordinate instrument" or "docile servant of culture". Instead, it carried "a deep, mysterious, secret power, and it impose[d] on culture a meaning and a color [...] that permeate[d] the conquests of every mind" (21). This emphasis on a common language extended beyond pan-Latinism to other nineteenth-century pan-movements – or macro-nationalisms, to adopt Leo Snyder's term. As Joep Leerssen (2023) has observed, "it is not for nothing that philologists who more than anyone reflect on variations within languages, and on differences and familiarities between them", were at the forefront of the logic of macro-nationalisms (23). These movements aimed to unite people who shared a common language, culture, or perceived 'ethnic origins' into a federative or confederative bond, driven by the belief that such commonalities could serve as a foundation for broader cultural, political, or economic unity or cooperation beyond the limitations of existing nation-states. Snyder (1976) characterized nineteenth-century macro-nationalisms as extensions of nationalism, seeking to consolidate groups connected by language, traditions, ethnic kinship, and geography. These movements varied widely in origin and character – some were genuinely national in focus, while others promoted supranationalism based on shared ethnic backgrounds, or had religious or continental motivations rooted in common interests. Many, however, were vague and loosely defined in both concept and purpose (248). Ruth Hemstad and Peter Stadius (2023) emphasize that these macro-nationalisms were not always aggressive or expansionist; they often encouraged peaceful and cooperative relationships, fostering solidarity and reconciliation among "brother" or "sibling" nations across state borders (1). Leerssen adds that macro-nationalisms – pan-Latinism included – primarily functioned as "mutual support networks" for cultural communities minoritized within their own state" (27-28). During the nineteenth century, these movements aimed to achieve "de-marginalization" by providing moral and cultural support rather than aiming to overthrow existing states. However, Alexander Maxwell (2022) observes that pan-national movements do not form "a coherent type", as the political movements described by this label vary significantly. Consequently, "pan-

nationalism" is more effectively treated as an "object of study" rather than a unified category of analysis (3).

The Origins of the Occitan Latin Idea

In August 1861, Frédéric Mistral, a Provençal poet and one of the main instigators of the Félibrige, wrote an ode titled *I troubaire catalan*, published in the Félibrige journal *Armana Provençau* in 1862.[6] The poem celebrated the Middle Ages as the zenith of Occitan civilization and communal democracy, recalled the ancient Catalan-Provençal friendship,[7] praised the Troubadours' language, and remembered the terrible Albigensian Crusade (1209-1229). This crusade, led by the Catholic Church to eradicate Cathar heresy in the Languedoc region of southern France, ended with the Treaty of Paris in 1229, bringing Languedoc under the control of the French crown and the Catholic Church. Although Mistral's ode did not challenge the annexation of Languedoc to France or Catalonia to Spain, it called for the revival of the old Roman language as a cultural bond.[8] The ode was sent to the *Jocs Florals* in Barcelona on May 4 of the same year, at the same time as Joseph Roumanille's *Saloudacioun*.[9] Both works, out of competition, were solemnly acclaimed by Víctor Balaguer, a Catalan poet deeply involved

[6] The circumstances that prompted this ode were provided by the presence of the Catalan Damase Calvet in Provence. Sent by his government to France to gather information on the progress of the chemical industries, Calvet attended the Fêtes de la Tarasca, in Tarascon (Provence), on Pentecost Sunday 1861. This enabled him to make contact with the félibres Roumanille, Aubanel, Mistral, Bonaparte-Wyse and others.

[7] During the Middle Ages, Catalans and Occitans shared strong political, economic, and cultural ties, with significant literary exchanges, particularly among Troubadours. This medieval past, recalling earlier independence, and the era when Provençal was a widely influential literary language beyond the strictly "Occitan" region, were pivotal themes in the Occitan Renaissance. These themes justified the literary efforts of the Provençal félibres and their quest to reclaim linguistic prestige. However, as the Provençals pursued their linguistic aspirations within the French political framework, the symbolic significance of the ancient Occitan-Catalan "*germanor*" (brotherhood) gradually diminished, especially as Catalan demands expanded into broader political spheres.

[8] In the second part of the poem, Mistral vigorously asserted his loyalty to the French state to avoid a diplomatic incident. Nevertheless, Robert Lafont observed that two important ideas ran through the poem: linguistic irredentism and "the utopia of shared autonomy, in the softening of borders and the establishment of liberal regimes" (*La revendication occitane* 116).

[9] The format of the Floral Games (*Jocs Florals* in Catalan; *Jeux Floraux* in French) had been revived after the Toulouse model as early as 1859 in Barcelona, where they became a very important manifestation of Catalan literature over the following years. As Josep Domingo explains, they represented "a common space shared by dissimilar people and attitudes as to the civic value of the event"; Victor Balaguer, for example, considered them a "tool for the 'idea of restoration of nationality'" (75).

in the restoration of *Jocs Florals*.[10] From then on, Mistral's ode would be sung whenever Provençals and Catalans met.

Some years later, in 1866, Mistral wrote *La Coumtesso*, which was published in the *Armana Provençau* in 1867. The poem bears the epigraph "Morta diuhen qu'es, mès jo la crech viva" ("They say she is dead, but I think she is alive"), a phrase referring to the Catalan language that he borrowed from a poem by Balaguer, who had fled to Provence after taking part in General Prim's failed conspiracy against Isabel's regime. In this political poem, Mistral expressed his desire for national liberation, criticizing Jacobin centralization and advocating for the oppressed culture. He depicted Provence as the Countess of imperial blood, with France as her "sorrastro" ("step-sister"), who had imprisoned her in a convent to seize her inheritance. Mistral's vision was that those with memory, noble hearts, and love for glory would soon free the Comtesse/Provence (Mistral, "La Coumtesso" 19-23).

The friendship between Mistral and Balaguer is both the most important and the most controversial element in the relationship between Catalans and Provençals. In January 1867, the two men were preparing their departure for Paris. The Provençal writer Marius André recounted the journey of the "two conspirators": "One is the Catalan poet Victor Balaguer, who has come to meet up with the other Spanish liberals, his accomplices; the other is Frédéric Mistral who, having published his great and ardent poem *Calendau*, also wants to take action and work, in concert with Republican opposition politicians, for the downfall of Napoleon III" (André 101). However, none of this happened in Paris. The two men soon returned to Provence, where, in May 1867, the félibre William Bonaparte-Wyse hosted a banquet in their honor at the Château de Font-Ségugne. According to Alphonse Roque-Ferrier, this banquet marked the "beginning of the international félibres" (Jouveau, *Histoire du Félibrige, 1854-1876* 209). The festival lasted three days, during which Provençals and Catalans celebrated together. In his speech, Balaguer praised the brotherhood between these two peoples, who shared the same language and "race" (Camp, 1929 18).

In November 1867, taking advantage of an amnesty, Balaguer returned to Catalonia. On September 18, 1868, a new revolutionary uprising broke out, Queen Isabel was dethroned, and Balaguer was appointed Minister of Prim. By joining the Spanish government, Balaguer committed himself to supporting the Prussian Hohenzollern candidacy for the throne, against

[10] A literary scholar, historian, and liberal politician, Balaguer was undoubtedly a central figure in the Catalan *Renaixença*, both through his ideological and literary contributions and his involvement in the restoration of the Jocs Florals de Barcelona in 1859. For several years, he was a crucial link between Catalanism and Mistral's literary Provençalism. On Balaguer, see Ucelay-Da Cal.

French interests. As Balaguer moved away from militant Catalanism and became more involved in Spanish politics, the number of Catalan félibres decreased. However, his return to Catalonia did not completely end the relationship between Catalonia and Provence. Nor did the estrangement between him and Mistral, which occurred almost a year later. On the contrary, numerous were the 'literary strolls' of Provençal and Catalans on both sides of the Pyrenees. Between 1874 and 1878-1880, Albert de Quintana i Combis, a writer and politician, replaced Victor Balaguer as Mistral's Catalan interlocutor.[11] Quintana's role grew increasingly significant, particularly due to his active promotion of Latinity and pan-Latin ideals. His most notable contribution came during the celebrations in honor of Petrarch, in 1874, where the Catalan writer advocated for the union of the Latin peoples present at the festivities (Roque-Ferrier, *De l'idée latine* 6).

Latin Celebrations from 1874 to 1882

According to Roger Barthe, the earliest celebration of the Latin idea occurred in 1874 during the celebration of the 500th centenary of Petrarch's death in Avignon. Their promoter, Léon de Berluc-Pérussis, a poet, historian, and future félibre, aimed to rekindle the once-strong relationship between France and Italy despite the tensions between them.[12] He believed that the only way to achieve this goal was by focusing on their shared Latin heritage (Barthe 75).[13] The event was attended by major literary societies both from Southern and Northern France, including the Félibrige, the SLR, the Académie des sciences, agriculture, arts et belles-lettres d'Aix, the Société historique de Provence, the Académie du sonnet, the Société archéologique, scientifique et littéraire de Béziers, and the Académie des Jeux floraux de Toulouse. Notable foreign representatives included Costantino Nigra, philologist, poet, and Italian ambassador in Paris, Augusto Conti, an Italian philosopher and academic, representative of the Accademia della Crusca in Florence; and Albert de Quintana y Combis from the Academy of Floral games

[11] According to Empar Balanzà, who analyzed the ambiguous and often conflictual nature of "Occitan-Catalan relations" through the correspondence of its protagonists, Quintana took advantage of the cooling in relations between the two former friends to collaborate with the Provençals on his own (399-400).

[12] During that time, the tensions between France and Italy were fueled by a complex mix of political, territorial, and nationalistic factors. Additionally, the capture of Rome by Italian forces in 1870 and the subsequent incorporation of the Papal States created significant tension with Catholic France, which had historically been a protector of the Papacy. For more information see Bertrand, Frétigné, Giacone.

[13] See also Berjoan; Zantedeschi, "Petrarch 1874".

in Barcelona.[14] Thanks to the presence of Constantino Nigra and Augusto Conti, as the poet Paul Mariéton puts it, the "southern movement" was transformed from "Hispano-Provençal" into Latin (Mariéton 332).

According to Paul Glaize, who chronicled the event for the *Revue des Langues Romanes*, these celebrations aimed to highlight neo-Provençal literature and strengthen the union of Latin nations. Furthermore, the organizers desired to find "in the literary movement of the Midi, a means of associating more closely with the heart and action of France the activity and sympathies of the two neighboring peoples, Italy and Spain, and thus strengthening the union of the Latin nations" (Glaize 279). On the same occasion, Quintana also called for the union of the peoples bordering the Mediterranean and advocated for the resurrection of a united Latin race. This thought inspired his *Cançó llatina*, which he read in Avignon on May 21, 1876, at the first general assembly of the Félibrige. A year before, at the first "Concours philologique et littéraire", organized by the SLR in Montpellier, Quintana had decided to offer a silver cup for the next poetic competition, scheduled for 1878. The prize would be awarded to the best "Latin song" written in one of the neo-Latin languages, such as French, Italian, Romanian, Portuguese, Spanish, and Catalan. The highly anticipated event, known as the "Fêtes Latines", was held in Montpellier from May 22 to May 29, 1878. Its purpose was to celebrate the *Chant du Latin* competition and to "strengthen the bonds of mutual sympathy that common linguistic origins establish between all nations of neo-Latin race or language" ("Chronique 1878" 206). The week-long event drew numerous people from Southern France and abroad. The scientific meetings were inaugurated on May 23 with a philological contest hosted by the SLR. The following day, the Floral Games of the Félibrige were celebrated, with Mistral presiding and delivering a major speech in Provençal. During the solemn session of the *Chant du Latin*, the most outstanding pieces in the competition were read. The event also featured grand musical and literary evenings, a painting exhibition, theatrical performances, games, and popular entertainment, which enhanced and complemented the scientific and literary aspects of the occasion. The highlight of the festivities was the crowning of Vasile Alecsandri, who won the first prize for his work *Cântecul gintei latine* (The Song of the Latin Race). Alecsandri, a Romanian poet, statesman, and patriot, significantly contributed to Romania's literary and political national revival. His coronation was a highly symbolic event, described by Marius

[14] For a comprehensive list of participating associations and academies, both from France and abroad, as well as their delegates and representatives of the press, see *Fête séculaire et intérnationale de Pétrarque* 74-87.

André as "providential", highlighting the importance of literary renaissance in a people's emancipation (174-175).

A few years later, the Latin idea was once again celebrated during the Floral Games of Provence, held in Forcalquier and Gap in 1882. According to Nicolas Berjoan, the event represented "the pinnacle of the Félibrige's Latin propaganda", although its program was "hardly innovative and followed a kind of ritual" (128). The Latin idea was a popular theme in speeches and verses recited at Félibre meetings and was also frequently celebrated in toasts, like the one delivered by Vasile Alecsandri at the 1882 event:

> Representing the vanguard of the Latin race at the gates of the East, I am delighted to be here to express the sympathy of the Romanian people for you and your great work. For a long time, these young people have looked to the West to see the dawn of their resurrection. Today, they are marching forward with their heads held high, driven by the noble ambition of proving to their elders, and especially to foreigners, that good blood cannot lie […]. So, your celebrations, ladies and gentlemen, are not just literary; they are also intended to strengthen the great Latin brotherhood with a view to civilization and to accomplish a providential mission (*Jeux floraux de Provence* 1882, 67-68).

Alecsandri's defense of the Latin idea did not have the same objective as the félibres' activism. He aimed to gain French public support for the Romanian cause by emphasizing the shared 'Latin origins' of Romania and Provence (Zantedeschi, "Vasile Alecsandri"). In a letter to Albert de Quintana y Combis in 1878, he described the Latin movement as "beneficial" for Romania's future (André 176). Despite Romania's recent independence (1877-1878), Alecsandri feared that its destiny could be controlled by powerful neighboring empires, particularly the expanding Russian and Ottoman empires.

'Traditionalist' and 'Progressive' Félibres

In October 1882, the Comités d'organisation des Jeux floraux de Forcalquier et de Gap issued a circular describing the international literary festivals held in those towns the previous May as "one of the most impressive manifestations of the revival of the Latin races" (*Jeux floraux de Provence* X). Similarly, Charles de Gantelmi d'Ille, Member of the Académie des sciences, agriculture, arts et belles-lettres d'Aix, and secretary of the Félibrige des Alpes, celebrated the bourgeoning Latin movement, highlighting its "unprecedented global reach". This movement, he explained, united nations like Romania and Canada with Southern Europe and its American colonies in a profound display of brotherhood and shared heritage. He found it remarkable and astonishing to witness "these expressions of affection exchanged between peoples who,

yesterday, had never known each other and who today are closely united in a sublime federation". In his view, this federation would endure because it was based on mutual sympathy and "racial affinity", because it was "irresistibly drawn together" and "alien to the schemes of politics" (*Jeux floraux de Provence* IX-X).

The enthusiastic claims made by the Comités d'organisation des fêtes and Gantelmi d'Ille, however, tend to overlook the fact that within the Félibrige, the movement supporting the Latin idea was far from homogenous. It was shaken not only by different stances on Occitan linguistic issues but also by divergent ideological and political positions concerning French national politics. For example, in the 1870s, the Félibrige and the Latin idea were notably affected by France's defeat against Prussia. This defeat resulted in France losing Alsace and part of Lorraine and being forced to pay a war indemnity of five billion gold francs. In this political climate, marked by the humiliation of defeat and fears of a monarchical restoration, the Paris Commune broke out in March 1871. The debacle and civil war triggered by the establishment of the Commune led to a profound crisis in French thought (Digeon). The defeat had a significant impact on intellectuals, who questioned France's future and analyze the reasons behind Germany's victory. Against this backdrop of deep moral and social upheaval, and driven by concerns about the stifling of provincial life, advocates of decentralization promoted administrative, economic, and cultural reforms. These reforms aimed to establish a government aligned with the country's real needs, based on broad foundations of administrative decentralization and local autonomy.

Accordingly, the Latin idea advocated by the Provençal Félibrige in the 1870s reflected both the widespread anti-German sentiment in French intellectual circles following the defeat against Prussia and the distrust of centralizing policies pursued by various governments. Advocates of decentralization and federalism saw these policies as the causes of France's moral and material decline, which ultimately led to its defeat. According to Robert Lafont, a prominent scholar of Occitan language and literature, Fréderic Mistral developed his views on governmental strategies and formulated the Latin ideal based on his reflections on the war (*Mistral ou l'illusion* 200). In 1871, Mistral encouraged the French to use the country's disgrace as a catalyst for constitutional change. He criticized the existing Constitution as a tool of enslavement crafted by despots, attributing its failures to have plunged France into a devastating war (Mistral, "Crounico felibrenco" 7-8). Additionally, he advocated for the establishment of a Latin Confederation to unite Italy, Spain, and France in a federal alliance against what he considered the two "eternal enemy" races, the Germans and Russians (8).

During this period, certain members of the Félibrige began advocating for a close alliance between their association and the legitimist party. Philippe Martel explains that while figures like Roumanille and Berluc Pérussis had already adopted these political stances, Mistral viewed this as a strategic move. His motivation stemmed from concerns over the threat of revolution, yet he also saw potential in aligning with the current authorities to advance the Félibrige cause ("Les meules qui broient" 313-14). Furthermore, the Provençal Félibrige found support from the Catholic clergy, who viewed the organization as a defender of Christian and national traditions. Towards the end of the 1870s, accusations of separatism from some Parisian republican and progressive press,[15] brought to light Félibrige's internal conflicts, which were rooted in political and religious differences. These tensions encouraged Mistral to avoid taking clear political positions, leading him to celebrate an abstract and idealized Latinity. This allowed him to envision an ideal future without committing to specific political stances.[16] While Mistral confined himself to a narrow and apolitical Provençalism, the félibres of Languedoc took the lead in promoting pan-Latinism. These félibres were not only interested in preserving Occitan linguistic varieties beyond Provençal, but also aimed to give the Latin idea international resonance.

[15] In an article published in *L'Événement* on October 13, 1878, Jules Claretie praised the left-wing félibres and accused the royalist félibres of separatism. Additionally, Mistral's February 1879 interview with the Austrian daily *Neue Freie Presse* was reported by the republican and anticlerical newspaper *Le XIXe Siècle*. This report highlighted Mistral's claim that he considered himself not as French but as a Latin federalist due to his monarchist and Catholic beliefs (Martel, "Les meules qui broient" 318).

[16] In the meantime, the estrangement between Provençal félibres and Catalans had deepened for several reasons, one of which was the reorganization of the Félibrige in 1876. During this reorganization, Quintana was tasked with appointing the Majoyarux for Catalonia. However, his choices excluded prestigious figures from the Catalan *Renaixença* who opposed the fusion with the Félibrige, such as Rubió y Ors and Pelay Briz. Furthermore, the Provençal dominance within the association, including the use of the term 'lingua d'oc' to refer to both Catalan and Provençal, did not sit well with Catalans. Philippe Martel has observed that Catalan-Occitan *germanor* was largely influenced by the political situations in France and Spain where the two movements were active. The political upheavals in both countries in the early nineteenth century, along with the Spanish Carlist civil war of the 1830s, solidified political and symbolic stereotypes, thus reinforcing the divide between the two regions. Consequently, the linguistic and political demands of the Occitans and Catalans were more affected by their internal political situations than by any joint efforts. The leaders of both movements were preoccupied with their own states' internal affairs, and during joint celebrations, their loyalty to their respective states was never in question (Martel, "Occitans i Catalans").

Louis-Xavier de Ricard and the Founding of *La Lauseto* (1876)

One of the first to take initiative in this regard was Louis-Xavier de Ricard (1843-1911). A resolute republican, liberal, anti-clerical, and ardent federalist (Peyronnet), Ricard was originally from Paris and was sentenced to three months in prison for publishing the *Revue du progrès moral, littéraire, scientifique et artistique* (1863). In 1865, along with Verlaine, Lepelletier and Leconte de Lisle, he founded the weekly *L'Art* (1865-66), which became a hub for the poets who later published the poetry collection, *Parnasse contemporain*. After being compromised by his associations with key figures of the Commune, Ricard fled to Switzerland to escape the ensuing repression and settled in Montpellier in 1873. There, he founded the periodicals *La Commune libre*, *L'Autonomie communale*, and *Montpellier-journal*, and became editor-in-chief of *Le Midi républicain* (1881-82). In Montpellier, he also developed a passion for the Occitan Midi, its linguistic revival, and the Félibrige. He organized several associations, including La Cigale de Paris (1876),[17] and L'Alliance latine – l'Alouette [la Lauseto, 1876]. Ricard later explained that this group was formed "to counterbalance the reactionary Félibrige", which had become Provençalized and papalized in Avignon. It brought together "*free-thinkers*, *republicans*, and *Languedocians*" (quoted in Carbasse 99).

The association La Lauseto was established in Toulouse after Ricard met the poet Auguste Fourès, with the participation of Ricard's wife, Lydie Wilson. The association adopted a federal structure and published both an almanac, *La Lauseto, Armanach dal patrioto lengadoucian*[18] and a magazine, *l'Alliance latine*, which was launched in 1878 but released only two issues. The almanac targeted a popular audience, while the magazine was aimed at a scholarly readership (Carbasse 59 & 100). Ricard and Fourès met in Avignon in 1876, on the day the new Félibrige statutes were voted on, joining the group to ensure that their republican ideas and religious convictions were respected (Jouveau *Histoire du Félibrige, 1876-1914* 42;

[17] La Cigale, société des Méridionaux de Paris, was founded in early 1876 by Louis-Xavier de Ricard, Maurice-Louis Faure, and the painter Eugène Baudoin, and brought together many republicans, ex-communards, and freemasons. It was the first regional association of scholars established in the French capital. The association, which had 200 full members plus correspondents, included men from various southern provinces. While women could join the association, they were not permitted to attend the monthly dinners and could only participate in celebrations organized by La Cigale in the provinces. (Martel, "Les virées estivales"; Thiesse)

[18] The first issue of *La Lauseto* was published in 1877, followed by the second in 1878 and the third and final one in 1879. Publication abruptly ceased in 1880 after the death of Ricard's wife and his trip to Latin America. A single final issue was released in 1885, which was solely edited by Auguste Fourès.

Jourdanne 87-90). The main points of dissension between the Provençal Félibrige and La Lauseto concerned religion and politics. While the Provençal Félibrige was Catholic and legitimist, La Lauseto was grounded in Albigensian and anti-clerical ideologies.[19] In the nineteenth century, Albigensianism played a symbolic role in the Occitan cultural revival, serving as a historical reference for regional identity and resistance against external domination. The memory of the Albigensian Crusade was evoked by the Occitan cultural movement to emphasize themes of cultural autonomy and historical continuity, reinforcing the significance of the medieval past in the movement's linguistic and cultural aspirations (see Martel, *Les cathares et l'Histoire*).

After the *félibrejades* in Apt in 1877, which Ricard described as "nothing but political and Catholic demonstrations", he highlighted that the Félibrige statutes explicitly excluded religion and politics from its activities ("Le Félibrige et la Liberté" 221-234). He emphasized that the Félibrige's mission focused on culture, the advancement of the Occitan language, and love for the Southern land. Ricard dismissed religious and political debates as irrelevant to the association, expressing concern that the dominance of papist and royalist ideologies would hinder the Southern Renaissance and negatively impact the Occitan language. Convinced of the cultural superiority of the Midi, Ricard argued that it "preserved the most vivid consciousness of its own race and particular nationality" (*Le Fédéralisme* VIII). In his first theoretical work, *Le Fédéralisme* (1877), he aimed to provide "the historical definition" of the federative idea and argued that "the Latin peoples, including France, are *ethnically* and *historically* destined for the Federation" (VI).[20] He explained that "the federative union" of the Latin race had already been achieved "in the elevated and truly patriotic minds of the Latin peoples – Spain, Italy, France, Romania, – and that a circumstance, which may be imminent, could easily transform it into a fact" (XVIII). He also believed that Germany's animosity towards France was not directed at "France itself", but rather at the "genius of the Latin races". He highlighted the vitality of the Latin race, noting that while France was in decline, Italy was on the rise. In his view, "the pride and threats of Germany" would accelerate the Latin nations' awareness of their shared heritage and situation "both as peoples and as a race". The urgency of forming a Latin confederation would then become apparent: "Italy, Spain, Portugal and France would recognize the need to unite in an invincible association, preserving their national

[19] Ricard and Fourès were inspired by Napoléon Peyrat, a Protestant pastor, poet, radical, romantic, and anticlerical. His *Histoire des Albigeois* (1870-1872) was a significant milestone in the creation of the Albigensian myth.

[20] In italics in the text.

identities and personalities, to fend off potential conquests and eventually harmonize with the fraternal union of other settled and appeased races" (XIX-XXIII).

In 1879, Ricard reiterated these ideas when he translated the work *Las nacionalidades* by Francisco Pi i Margall. Pi y Margall, a Spanish politician, essayist, and historian, advocated for a federal model of governance, influenced by Proudhon, democratic socialism, and libertarian socialism. In his introduction to the translation, Ricard argued that unification was "an attack on the autonomy of nations", whereas union represented "progress towards peace and universal freedom". He proposed that federation should replace brutal assimilation with a "peaceful and contractual union". Ricard also cited a toast from the inaugural banquet of the Société d'Alliance Latine, where Pi y Margall declared that "humanity will only cease to be a word when the federation has united all races and all peoples" (*Les Nationalités* X-XII). The Latin idea was fundamental to Ricard's federalist thinking. He believed the genius of the Latin peoples opposed a unitary system, as evidenced by the history of Italy, Spain, France, and especially Southern France.[21] In Ricard's view, the federative principle applied equally to the provinces of the same nation as it did to the peoples of the "*Latin race*". There was no contradiction in being simultaneously "*Montpelliérains*, *Languedociens*, *Français*, and *Latins*." These identities, far from conflicting with one another, were "ascensional manifestations of our political and social life […]. That is why we are determinedly Languedocian without ceasing to be French, and good French, while being resolutely Latin" ("Autonomie et Confédération" 6-7).

La Lauseto, published in both Occitan and French, was therefore clearly aligned with the federalist camp. In 1878, the journal took the subtitle of "*Almanach du patriota latin*". Regarding the Latin people, it specified that "they are united by the same intellectual culture, the same civilization, the same language diversified into several dialects, and also by the more or less equal mixture of the same races" ("Dénombrement des peoples latins" 124). By 1879, *La Lauseto* had officially become the publication of the Société de l'Alliance Latine and published a summary of the association's statutes. The purpose of the association, as stated, was the union of the peoples of the Latin race, "in the principles of progress and freedom which constitute the modern idea". Its aim was the "formation of national, regional and local groups, and the development of these groups through periodic publications, literary festivals and

[21] However, he cautioned against conflating "the *Roman* or *Latin* tradition with the *Caesarian* tradition", which epitomized the notion of unity established by the concurrent rise of Catholicism and the Empire (*Le Fédéralisme* 171-174).

meetings of open friendship" ("Résumé des statuts" I). However, *La Lauseto*'s existence was short-lived. The death of his wife, Lydie Wilson, in 1880, deeply affected Ricard. She had contributed greatly to the journal's success, and her passing marked the end of the project, which they had worked on together during the happiest years of their lives. Shortly after her death, Ricard left France and lived a few years in Latin America.

Charles de Tourtoulon: *Revue du monde latin* (1883-1896)

Among the few to welcome the birth of *La Lauseto* with genuine enthusiasm was Baron Charles de Tourtoulon, who dedicated a poem to it, "*La Lauseta*", published in *Lou Parage* in 1877. Tourtoulon (1836-1913), a historian and philologist, was a key figure alongside Alphonse Roque-Ferrier behind the Société pour l'étude des langues romanes in Montpellier. In 1875, he founded Lou Parage in Montpellier, the first *escola* (school) of the Félibrige outside Provence, which laid the foundations for the reform of the association's statutes the following year.

By the end of the 1870s, Tourtoulon played a leading role in organizing the Occitan pan-Latinist vocations, including the 1878 Fêtes latines. Paul Mariéton (1883), who collaborated with him in the *Revue du monde latin*, credited him with being the first to highlight the "links that had always united Spain with the south of France" (Mariéton 299). In an article eloquently titled "*L'idée latine. Charles de Tourtoulon*", Mariéton described Tourtoulon as the "organizer" of the Latin idea, especially from 1875 onwards, while Quintana was its "poet and inspirer" (333). In 1879, together with Maurice-Louis Faure, a French politician and Occitan poet, Tourtoulon established the Félibrige de Paris – where he had settled – and served as its first chairman. While in Paris, Tourtoulon envisioned the creation of the *Revue du monde latin* (1883-1896), a journal planned to be published in five editions: French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, and Romanian. Although Tourtoulon sought the Félibres' assistance to produce an edition in Langue d'oc, his appeal was ignored. The journal's board of directors included diplomats and intellectuals committed to pan-Latinism, such as Albert de Quintana, Léon de Berluc-Pérussis, and its members came from Romania (Vasile Alecsandri and Alexandru Odobescu, secretary of the Legation of the Romanian Academy in Paris), Spain (Francisco Luis de Retes, Chairman of the Spanish Finance Committee Abroad), Portugal (Fernand de Arzevedo, first secretary of the Legation of Portugal in Paris), Brazil (F. Santa Anna Nery, member of the steering committee that established the *Revue*, he provided financial support for it in 1883), and Canada (Hector Fabre, Quebec's first official representative in Paris and Canada's first Commissioner General in Paris) (Barthe 103).

Although he avoided political and religious discussions and refrained from any political affiliation, Tourtoulon used his expertise and extensive knowledge to advance the Latin cause. In the *Revue du monde latin*, he brought the Latin idea to life through historical and literary studies, political and diplomatic bulletins, and thematic articles exploring various Latin countries in Europe and beyond. These articles covered a wide range of topics including history, politics, political economy, science, art, and current events. The journal included a monthly "Bulletin mensuel politique et diplomatique", in which Tourtoulon summarized and explained major international issues. In the first "Bulletin", he specified that the journal was not founded "to sing the praises of the Latin nations, but to make them known as they are, with their qualities and their faults". Taking as his pretext Italy's membership of the Triple Alliance (1882), Tourtoulon identified "vanity" as the "dominant defect of the Latins, the scourge of their internal and external policy" (117).

In the same "Bulletin", Tourtoulon also stated that "strictly speaking, there is no such thing as a *Latin* race". However, the term Latin was used to refer to a "group of people who share ethnic, historical, linguistic, social, and sometimes physiological and anthropological characteristics"; this group has been referred to as a "race" (118). The subject was addressed again by Émile Egger in a letter he sent to Tourtoulon, which was published in the *Revue du monde latin* in 1884. In his letter, the French Hellenist, philologist, and historian of philology explored why the Latin peoples lacked a word that encapsulated their unity, unlike Germanism, Slavism, and Hellenism. Egger believed that each of these three major groups was simpler in composition than the Latin peoples. He argued that there had been no single Latin people for over two thousand years, which is why the word "*latinisme*" did not exist:

> You are correct that there is no longer a *Latin race*. Instead, there is a large family of peoples united by common religious ideas, literary traditions, political tendencies, and education. When I refer to education, I mean not only the formal education received in schools, but also the education that our destinies have imparted to us over the centuries. You can identify a Latin individual by these characteristics, but it is nearly impossible to identify them by their genealogy or civil status (140-141).

Like Tourtoulon, Egger also believed that the essence of the Latin "national genius" resided in a blend of traditions reflected in morals, laws, religion, and, above all, language and literature (143).

In the fourth "Bulletin" of 1883, commenting on some recent events,[22] Tourtoulon observed that the word "Latin" was becoming common in everyday language following its adoption in political discourse. He attributed this trend to a "natural evolution of the human mind", which was leading to a new understanding of the concept of nationality (519). This view was connected to the belief that only a union of the Latin peoples could counterbalance the growing power of the Germanic tribes. As already explained, this idea reflected widespread anxieties following France's defeat in 1870, driven by a broader fear of Germanic dominance. Mistral himself echoed this sentiment in a letter to the French writer Jules Boissière in 1885, where he emphasized that before achieving the vision of a "Latin confederation and the revival of the provinces in a free and natural fraternity", it was essential to demonstrate loyalty and devotion to "wounded France, champion of Latin civilization" (Barthe 140).

In November 1885, Tourtoulon resigned as editor of *Revue du Monde Latin*. He and Paul Mariéton, who had been the primary financial beneficiaries of the magazine, were gradually sidelined by the Brazilian stakeholders. The magazine's focus gradually shifted to becoming "a mercantile enterprise designed to send emigrants to Brazil" (quoted in Barthe 104). Tourtoulon explained his reasons in a letter to Mistral on January 31, 1886. He told him that, despite its success, the journal had "lost its way". After more than two years of effort to create a publication capable of introducing pan-Latinist ideas into the diplomatic and political world, Tourtoulon had to abandon the "rudder to the Brazilians": "They are the masters [...]. Their takeover was a declaration of war on the *secondary fractions of the great Latin family and on the Roman world, which is only a small part of the Latin community*" (Barthe 104).[23] In the years that followed, Tourtoulon's activities became increasingly infrequent. In 1892, he resigned as a Majoral of the Félibrige, frustrated with the association's lack of action on political and social issues (Azema 12).

The Latin Idea in the Writings of Alphonse Roque-Ferrier (1844-1907)

The year 1892 also marked Alphonse Roque-Ferrier's departure from the Félibrige. Roque-Ferrier initially explored the Latin idea in his work *De l'idée latine dans quelques poésies en*

[22] The alleged improvement in relations between Spain and Germany following the visit of Prince Frederick William of Prussia to Spain, and the friendly meeting in Paris between the President of the French Republic and Marshal Serrano, who was the newly elected representative of the King of Spain, Alfonso XII, in Paris.

[23] In November 1885, after Tourtoulon left the *Revue*, it was led by the Brazilian, Count de Barral, who remained in charge until 1893. F. Nery was the editor-in-chief of the magazine from November 1885 to May 1888 (Ferreira Dos Santos 82).

espagnol, en langue d'oc et en catalan (1877). He believed that what he described as "God's truce between the sons of the same race" would one day establish a long-lasting alliance of Latin nations (8). These nations, while internally independent, would unite to face the struggles and perils threatening southern Europe. The idea, as he explained, was never clearly formulated. It existed "at times as an obscure and ill-defined germ, at other times as a conqueror's conception, for a time realized by force" (*De l'idée latine* 8), as was the case with the Roman domination, Charlemagne's empire, or Charles V's rule. According to Roquer-Ferrier, these were the main political foundations of an idea that tended to "play a dominant role in both the Catalan and Provençal revivals" (*De l'idée latine* 8). In 1887, Roque-Ferrier founded the periodical *Occitania* (1887-1889) to promote and spread the ideas important to Félibrige and to the Maintenance of Languedoc in particular.[24] He explained that the main concern of the Languedocians was not new, as it involved "the literary grouping of Latin countries, constituted into distinct Maintenances, and under the authority of a grand master of the Félibrige elected in turn from among the scholars of the major Latin languages currently spoken in Europe, the Americas, and Oceania" (Roque-Ferrier, "Occitania" 1). To create a political confederation of Latin nations, the Languedocians cultivated relationships "with Catalonia and the countries of the former crown of Aragon", as well as with "Romania, Macedonia and the countries of the Romanian East" (1-2). Their duty was to expand Félibrige externally in order to unite and gather, despite the diversity of their languages, "the small peoples that history, sympathies or the necessities of politics have associated or may associate in the future with the destiny of the Latin peoples" (3).[25]

Roque-Ferrier was determined to make Languedoc "the spearhead of renewal" through his project for a world-wide Félibrige. Despite his efforts, Roque-Ferrier faced significant challenges. His doctrinal intransigence and "linguistic and orthographic fundamentalism" led endless quarrels and his eventual dismissal from the secretariat of the Maintenance of Languedoc (Petit 105). In 1890, he founded *Le Félibrige Latin, revue mensuelle des œuvres et*

[24] The "Maintenances" were a kind of administrative divisions corresponding to the major linguistic varieties of the *langue d'oc*. The Maintenance of Languedoc was created in 1876, when the official articles of the Félibrige were published.

[25] As Jean-Marie Petit observed, such a project aimed not only to challenge the power of Avignon but also to delay the recommended political solution, leaving it deliberately vague. This right-wing apoliticism proved to be a persistent obstacle, and "his doctrine of cultural interlatinism never ceased to be ambiguous". Petit added that in his "'mundialist' Félibrige, he associated certain non-Latin peoples: Brittany, the Basque Country, Albania, Greece... which could be interpreted as both 'Caesarism' and a call for emancipation" (Petit 105).

des faits qui intéressent le Félibrige et ses diverses maintenances. This new venture caused new conflicts within the association and led to his definitive resignation in 1891. That same year, Roque-Ferrier established a new association called the Félibrige Latin, which gathered some of his friends, marginalized individuals, devoted supporters of the Latin idea, and "those from Romania and Catalonia who felt abandoned by Avignon" (Petit 105-106).

Conclusion

Louis-Xavier de Ricard emerges as the figure who best embodied the view of Latinity as a progressive force, one that not only sought to safeguard language and culture but also actively engaged with the political and social currents of modernity. For Ricard, Latinity was an ideal to contribute to the evolving political and social landscape of his time. This interpretation highlights the complexity of what Roger Barthe defined as the "Occitan Latin idea" (1962). For Ricard, Tourtoulon, and Roque-Ferrier, the Latin idea, rooted in the Félibrige's aspiration for international recognition of the Occitan language and culture, was more than just a vehicle for promoting their cause or avoiding political engagement. Instead, these Languedoc félibres saw the Latin idea as fundamentally tied to the creation of an inclusive Occitan language and culture that embraced all dialectal varieties. Crucially, they envisioned a confederative union among all Latin peoples or 'races,' aimed at forming an alliance capable of resisting the advance of Slavic and Germanic 'races' in Europe. This vision of Latinity differed from that of the félibres around Mistral, who focused primarily on the preservation of the Occitan language and culture. In contrast, Ricard and his colleagues sought to align this preservation with contemporary progress in politics and society, positioning Latinity as a dynamic and modern force in their era.

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Iberism and the Latin World: Political and Cultural Potentialities and Resistances in Portugal and Spain (1870–1930)

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Abstract

This article analyzes Spanish and Portuguese intellectual and political discourse on Iberism between the fin de siècle and the post-war period, focusing on its multifaceted interactions with the concept of Latinity. The nineteenth century saw the development of different conceptualizations of Europe and the world, including utopian and/or imperialistic conglomerates of nations united by language, culture or race. This study examines Iberism and Latinity as two transnational projects that sparked public debate and influenced the shaping of the idea of Europe. The interactions between the two projects were complex and shifted over time, marked by moments of mutual reinforcement, contradiction and conflict. The intricate relations between Iberism and Latinity affected Spain and Portugal's relation to other geopolitical blocks: Latin America, with which they maintained a link that fluctuated between brotherhood and (neo-)colonial nostalgia; and the Anglo-American and Germanic blocs, each maintaining their own imperialistic aspirations.

Keywords

Iberism, Latinity, Latin-America, nationalism, decadence, renaissance, neo-colonialism

From Nationalism to Iberism

The 'long nineteenth century', as proposed by Eric J. Hobsbawm and other historians, spanned the period from the French Revolution to World War I and was a time of radical change in the political landscape and the conceptual definition of European borders. Once solid, even centuries-old empires, such as the Austro-Hungarian or the Ottoman Empires, dissolved into a constellation of smaller entities, which led to a radical reconfiguration of geographical and political borders. The very idea of the multinational, multiethnic empire was substituted by new, powerful notions such as the nation or nation-state. Indeed, it could be argued that the emergence and expansion of nationalism was one of the key ideological and intellectual features of this long nineteenth century and continues to influence the way in which we segment the world today. As Joep Leerssen states, nationalism was built on foundations laid in previous centuries: "Herder's belief in the individuality of nations, Rousseau's belief in the sovereignty of the nation, a general discourse of national peculiarities and 'characters'" (125-6). Romanticism enhanced these ideas and gave them greater coherence, transforming them into a powerful ideology that swept across the continent in the century that followed.

This was not the only spatial or geographical reconceptualization of European political and conceptual maps in this period. As Shane Weller has shown, the idea of Europe has ancient origins, which can be traced back to Hippocrates, Homer and Aristotle (16-18). Nevertheless,

the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw the development of a new understanding of the definition and history of Europe itself, with its outer limits and inner centers and peripheries (Dainotto). From the centers of power at the time, the peoples of Europe were divided into groups of nations linked by race, character and history. For instance, Madame de Stäel suggested in *De l'Allemagne* (1813) the following classification of nations based on their racial origins:

> The origin of the principal nations of Europe may be traced to three great distinct races, – the Latin, the German and the Slavonic. The Italians, the French, the Spaniards, and the Portuguese, have derived their civilization and their language from Rome; the Germans, the Swiss, the English, the Swedes, the Danes, and the Hollanders, are Teutonic peoples; the Poles and Russians occupy the first rank among the Slavonic. Those nations whose intellectual culture is of Latin origin were the earliest civilized. (21)

This taxonomy of European peoples and races also had an effect on the Iberian space, which, in the Romantic taxonomy of nations, was included in several overlapping but not synonymous categories: 'Southern', 'Mediterranean', 'Catholic', 'Romantic' and 'Latin'. In fact, the 'Iberian space' or 'Iberia' was viewed from the distance of Northern and Central Europe as a unit or continuum, in which Spain sometimes functioned metonymically for both Iberian nations. As such, the literatures of both countries were included in one of the founding works of modern literary history: *De la littérature du Midi de l'Europe* (1813) by Jean Charles Leonard Simonde de Sismondi.

Iberia (or Spain and Portugal) was, then, included in the Romantic idea of a Latin, Mediterranean, and Southern European space; paradoxically, however, this Romantic worldview simultaneously denied Iberia's European status, at least partially, by defining it – once again from the outside and from afar – as an Oriental, and more specifically Asian space. In Sismondi's words: "Whilst its character is essentially chivalric, we find its ornaments and its language borrowed from the Asiatics. Thus, Spain, the most western country of Europe, presents us with the flowery language and vivid imagination of the East" (445). This characterization, which is apparent in a wide range of texts, from travel writing to literary history, Gothic fiction and political essays, had obvious orientalist undertones (Domínguez): it was based on the premise that the longstanding Arab presence in the Peninsula influenced not only its urbanism and artistic heritage, but also the character of its inhabitants (tendency to fantasy, excessive passion, high concept of honor), marking them as different from the other European nations to this day. The German historian Friedrich Bouterwek made this explicit in his influential history of Spanish literature:

> During these five centuries of almost uninterrupted warfare between the race of Moorish Arabs and the Christians of ancient European descent, both parties, notwithstanding that their reciprocal hostility was influenced by fanaticism, had mutually approximated in mind and manners. […] Thus arose the spirit of Spanish knighthood, which was, in reality, only a particular form of the general chivalrous spirit then prevailing in most of the countries in Europe, but which, under that form, impressed […] on the old European Spaniard an oriental […] character. (1-2)

This Oriental influence was denied by Spanish and Portuguese intellectuals, who spent part of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries building a national narrative that was largely defined in opposition to the idea of Arab presence and identity. In his notes to the translation of Sismondi's history of Spanish literature, Amador de los Ríos reacted as follows: "It is also not true what the author states a few lines above, when he says that Spanish literature essentially differs from the rest of Europe, and that it can be said that the latter are European, while the former is Oriental" (de los Ríos, "Notas del traductor a la leccion primera" 29).[26] This resistance against a possible external, and specifically Oriental, influence on Spanish character and culture culminated in Ramón Menéndez Pidal's (1918) theory of the centrality of Castile in Spanish national identity. According to Menéndez Pidal, it was this Northern Christian kingdom, with its vitality and its progressive expansion, that gave Spanish culture its defining characteristics.

The reaction against Orientalist characterization did not necessarily link Spain's national identity to its Latin past. Indeed, some of the founding myths of both nations, like Viriato and Numancia, were constructed as symbols of resistance against the Roman invader. For instance, Spanish and Portuguese literary histories usually began with the birth of their Romance languages (after the dissolution of the Western Roman Empire), and, with a few exceptions such as Francisco Freire de Carvalho's *Primeiro Ensaio sobre Historia Litteraria de Portugal* (1845) in Portugal, and Amador de los Ríos *Historia Crítica de la Literatura Española* (1861-5) in Spain, they omitted almost any mention of earlier or later literatures in languages other than the 'national' tongue, including Latin, Arabic and Hebrew.

While the Romantic movement stated that the Iberian space was part of a Mediterranean, Catholic, or Latin South, awareness of a common Romance or Latin heritage was not necessarily part of the Spanish or Portuguese national identity, which was far more closely linked to the pre- and post-Roman peoples (Iberians, Lusitans, Visigoths, etc.). Other identities within the Iberian Peninsula also defined themselves in opposition to the Romance

[26] All translations are mine, unless otherwise indicated. "Tampoco es exacto lo que asienta el autor pocas líneas más arriba cuando dice que la literatura española difiere esencialmente de las demás de Europa, y que puede decirse que éstas son europeas mientras que aquella es oriental".

continuum. This is the case, for example, of Galicia's identitarian connection with the Celtic world (Bello Vázquez, Medeiros) and the Basque identification as a non-Indo-European people, with a purely autochthonous heritage (Juaristi).

Whereas the two countries were seen from the outside as a continuum or a single entity, by the mid-nineteenth century, nationalistic discourses presented them from the inside as radically separate. This situation changed particularly after 1870, for two different but interconnected reasons. On the one hand, the second half of the century saw the expansion of what Hobsbawm called "the threshold principle" (30): the idea that nations should possess a certain size and critical mass to survive amidst international power struggles. During this period, "transnational political affinities were particularly prominent in movements seeking to connect peoples across formal state or imperial boundaries" (Younis 486). This led to the emergence of political unification movements in Germany and Italy and transnational or international alliances. Iberism, that is, the idea of political unification and/or cultural proximity between Spain and Portugal is one example of this trend. According to Maria Conceição Meireles (26): "the Iberian ideal was accepted as a form of Messianism that would not only solve the most pressing problems of the country, but also fulfil the humanitarian and philosophical aspirations of the most nonconformist people".[27]

Following Sardica (24-6) and Matos ("Conceitos do Iberismo" 170), we can identify several different meanings of Iberism: a) a purely economic Iberism, which advocated for the eradication of internal customs and the creation of an Iberian *Zollverein* such as that proposed by Sinibaldo de Mas in *La Iberia* in 1851; b) a strictly political Iberism (commonly known as Iberism *tout court*), which promoted the integration of Spain and Portugal into a common political unit, be it a monarchy or a republic, a centralized state or a federation; c) a cultural or 'spiritual' Iberism that called for greater proximity between Spain and Portugal, taking the close historical and cultural ties between the two countries as its starting point. It is important to stress that Iberism was largely confined to the cultural elites in the two Iberian countries and that, by around 1870, its strictly political meaning was considered dead and finished (Rocamora 112). However, as I will argue in this paper, it survived as a phantasmatic political and cultural hypothesis that continued to stimulate Portuguese nationalism in the early twentieth century.

The second half of the nineteenth century also saw the rise of the idea of cultural, historical, political or civilizational decline in different parts of Europe, especially the Iberian

[27] "o ideal ibérico assumiu-se como um messianismo que não só resolveria os problemas candentes do país, como responderia às aspirações humanitárias e filosóficas dos mais inconformados".

Peninsula. This sense of decay was partly based on historical and political facts: both Spain and Portugal (separately or under a single dynasty, during the rule of the Habsburg family from 1580 to 1640) had been worldwide imperial powers that occupied a central position in global power relations. By the nineteenth century, and, in the Spanish case in particular, after most American colonies had gained independence (with the exception of Cuba and Puerto Rico), it was evident that both countries had been relegated to a secondary or peripheral position in the European and global spheres. Portuguese intellectual Almeida Garrett, for instance, reflected on this new geopolitical context in his *Portugal na balança da Europa* (1830), and Antero de Quental addressed the same topic forty years later in his *Causas da decadência dos povos peninsulares* (1870). In the same year, the British Ultimatum put an end to Portugal's desire to build a horizontal continuum that linked its colonies in Angola and Mozambique, as represented in the so-called 'pink map'. This desire clashed with the British hopes of building a vertical colonial strip that would run from Egypt to South Africa. Due to the different positions in the matrix of European political power, Portugal had to concede, which was felt as a national humiliation.

This sense of decline prompted intellectuals in both countries to look for symbolic and intellectual references to awaken or breathe new life into the nation. It is no coincidence that the period from 1870 to 1930 period saw the emergence of several 'Renaissance' movements, including the Catalan *Renaixença*, Galician *Rexurdimiento*, Basque *Pizkundea*, Portuguese *Renascença* and Spanish *Regeneracionismo* (Pérez Isasi). In fact, the idea of 'rebirth' or Renaissance was transversal across Europe and across the world (Schildgen, Zhou and Gilman). From the North to the South, there were numerous projects ranging from conservative, nostalgic and nationalistic projects, such as Teixeira de Pascoaes's 'Saudosismo', to progressive and transnational initiatives, such as the anti-imperialism proposed by *Cronache della civiltà elleno-latina* in the early twentieth century (Nemegeer).

Both national and transnational projects served as symbolic or ideological references, which helped make sense of each nation's position in the world in conceptual, if not strictly political, terms. One such reference was Europe, which represented a utopian but problematic way of framing Iberian identity. Instead, in this paper, I analyze how Iberism and Iberian nationalisms interacted with the concept of Latinity in different and complex ways. Tenorio-Trillo argues that "[e]ither culturally or racially, *iberismo* was always a reaction to Mediterranean *latinité*, which advanced common commercial and cultural interests among France, Spain, Italy and Mediterranean Africa" (56). Although 'always' might be an exaggeration, as the evolution I trace in this article indicates, there was an undeniable tension

between the construction of alliances between Spain, Portugal and their mutual (ex-)colonies and their incorporation into an idea of *latinité*, with a Mediterranean rather than an Atlantic dimension, in which France would be the 'center' of power and prestige. Indeed, I argue that throughout the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, both the idea of Iberism and the idea of Latinity became flexible ideological constructs that could be adapted and appropriated by different ideological trends.

Iberism and (Pan-)Latinity: Intersections and Distances

The interconnections between Iberism and Latinism (or pan-Latinism) are multiple and complex. While they sometimes act in unison, they also emerged as opposing alternatives among the myriad of geocultural and geopolitical combinations that sought to explain and organize the world in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: (pan-)Hispanism, Hispano-Americanism or Ibero-Americanism (see Matos, "Transnational Identities"; Meireles). As Matos explains, these concepts had different or even opposing potentialities: while they were used to promote closer transnational collaboration and understanding, they also served as Trojan horses for renewed imperial and colonial discourses that were full of nostalgia for the old Empire, especially in the Spanish case. In other words, "[t]hese were utopian but also nationalist concepts that provided a foundation for attempts to construct a Greater Spain and a Greater Portugal" ("Transnational Identities" 76). In fact, it could be argued that the tension between nationalist and colonial tendencies and the appeal of a pan-Ibero-American connection, which was often developed and designed on the American continent rather than in Europe, underpinned at least part of the political discourse in both countries during this era.

However, the concept of Latinity and its application in the Iberian Peninsula cannot not be understood without contextualizing it in a broader, global debate that identified a clear divide between two races that were competing for cultural and political dominance: the Anglo-Saxon race and the Iberian, Ibero-American or, in broader terms, Latin race (Litvak). This divide mimicked the Romantic taxonomies of European nations, albeit in less cultural and more political and military terms. The debated origins of the concept of a Latin race and Latin America will not be discussed here, whether they were coined in France by French conservatives or had autochthonous American precedents (see Ardao). It is, however, useful to highlight that "in Europe, the idea of Latin America was a peculiar adaptation of two late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century trends: on one hand, *iberismo*; on the other, *latinité*, understood at different times either as regionalism in France (South versus North) or as

méditerranéité" (Tenorio-Trillo 42). In other words, it is impossible to understand the creation of a Latin bloc in America, as opposed to an Anglo-Saxon or German counterpart, without considering its relationship with a united Iberian bloc.

As I have shown so far, the idea of Latinity was closely intertwined with Iberism, a political and cultural ideology advocating for the closer integration of Spain and Portugal. Latinity also interacted with concepts such as pan-Hispanism, Hispano-Americanism and pan-Lusitanism allowing Spain and Portugal to connect with their former colonies in the Americas. Multiple examples of these conceptual intersections can be found in mid-nineteenth-century journals and newspapers focusing on relations between Spain and Spanish America in connection with the appearance of a liberal bourgeoisie interested in increasing cultural and commercial ties between both sides of the Atlantic (López Ocón Cabrera 139). One of the most important publications was the journal *La América*, which was founded by the progressist writer and journalist Eduardo Asquerino and then directed by his brother, Eusebio Asquerino. The journal was published in Madrid between 1857 and 1886 and disseminated ideas of what could be described as either (pan)-Hispanism or Hispano-Americanism, depending on the level of neocolonialism ascribed. For instance, in 1857, the journal reprinted a set of articles by the Dominican author Francisco Muñoz del Monte, titled "España y las repúblicas hispanoamericanas", previously published in *Revista española de Ambos Mundos*. In these articles, Hispanism was connected with Latinity and, more specifically, with a conservative, Catholic version of Latinity that closely aligned with Menéndez Pelayo's vision (cf. infra):

> … the predominance of the Catholic element, the vivacity of imagination, the ease of enthusiasm […] more enthusiastic, more sedentary, more content with their rich natural heritage. […] The Latin nations adopt a policy of conservation and internal development. […] Arts, sciences, industry, commerce, religion, inventions, everything is cultivated on their soil: they communicate them, they do not impose them".[28] (Muñoz del Monte, quoted in Irisarri 174)

Although many of the authors who worked with *La América* were of Hispano-American origin themselves, the journal also hosted contributions by Spanish intellectuals, such as Emilio Castelar, Rafael Maria de Labra, Antonio Flores and Ventura Ruiz Aguilera (Irisarri 176). Their texts conveyed a similar desire for proximity between Spain and the American nations, although their views were tainted, either conscious or unconsciously, by a veiled imperialistic

[28] "… el predominio del elemento católico, la vivacidad de la imaginación, la facilidad del entusiasmo […] más entusiasta, más sedentaria, más contenta con el rico patrimonio que le ha otorgado la naturaleza. […] Las naciones latinas adoptan la política de conservación y desarrollo interior. […] Artes, ciencias, política, industria, comercio, culto, invenciones, todo lo cultivan en su suelo: lo comunican, no lo imponen".

paternalism. As such, Castelar, like Muñoz del Monte, linked Hispano-American nations to their Latin legacy and the positive attributes conferred upon them by Spanish colonization but lamented their decision to become independent, which he viewed as the source of all the continent's problems.

While Latinity played a key role in the construction of an Ibero-American identity, the Latin substrate of Iberia (or, in the Roman denomination, Hispania) was also relevant to the construction of nineteenth-century Iberism, at least to some degree. This is apparent in the historiographic and ideological proposal presented in Joaquim Pedro de Oliveira Martin's *História da civlização ibérica* (1880), a central publication in the founding of historical Iberism. In it, Oliveira Martins traced the origins of Iberian identity to the Roman conquest and the constitution of the Roman municipalities, while Spanish and Portuguese nationalities were formed many centuries later. In this way, he established a link between Iberism and a "sort of pan-Latinism projectable into the world" (Sardica 59):

> The Roman occupation took Spain out of Africa and brought it into Europe,[29] and out of a semi-barbaric, almost nomadic people, similar to its brothers on the other side of the Southern coastal frontier, created a nation in the European sense of the word, that is, a group of men brought together by a system of fixed, overarching institutions and united not only by moral thought but also by civil, political, military and intellectual bonds.[30] (Oliveira Martins 48)

On the other side of the border, just one year later, in 1881, a very young Menéndez Pelayo, a fierce Catholic conservative with Iberist inclinations who would become one of the most renowned philologists of his time, echoed Oliveira Martin's idea in his famous "Brindis del Retiro", a toast he made at the Retiro Park in Madrid at the closing dinner commemorating the tricentenary of Calderón de la Barca:

> I raise a toast to the Spanish nation, the amazon of the Latin race, which it defended as the staunchest shield and bulwark against Germanic barbarism and against the spirit of disaggregation and heresy that separated the Northern races from us. I toast to the Spanish municipality, the glorious son of the Roman municipality and the expression of true, legitimate and sacred Spanish freedom, which Calderón

[29] "Espanha" in this quotation should be understood in the Latin sense as *Hispania*, i.e., a territory encompassing modern Spain and Portugal. This ambiguity is apparent in other texts and authors, making it difficult to differentiate Iberism from pan-Hispanism.

[30] "a ocupação romana arrancou a Espanha, da África para a Europa, fez de um povo semibárbaro e quase nómada, como seu irmão das costas fronteiras pelo Sul, uma nação, no sentido europeu da palavra - isto é, uma reunião de homens congregados por um sistema de instituições fixas e gerais, e unidos, não só por um pensamento moral, mas também por laços de ordem civil, política, militar, intellectual"

> sublimated to the heights of art in his *El alcalde de Zalamea*, and which Alejandro Herculano immortalized in history.[31] (Pelayo quoted in Sánchez 44)

The reference to the Portuguese author Herculano could be considered merely circumstantial and diplomatic, given the presence of a delegation of Portuguese intellectuals at the dinner. However, Pelayo explored the idea of a common Iberian culture, rooted in a shared Latin heritage, in greater depth in the closing lines of the toast:

> Yes, I repeat, Spanish, since that is what Camões called the Portuguese, and he insisted that we are all Spaniards, and that all of us who inhabit the Iberian Peninsula should be proud to call ourselves Spaniards. And I raise a toast, in short, to all the professors here present, representatives of the various Latin nations that, like rivers, have flowed here to mix in the great ocean of our Roman people.[32] (Pelayo quoted in Sánchez 45)

This call for Iberism could easily be seen as a Trojan horse for a more or less overt form of pan-Hispanism, given Menéndez Pelayo's views on Spanish history and culture and his traditionalist and nationalistic streak.

Be it in the Iberian sphere or in broader Ibero-America, the need to forge cultural and political alliances against the Anglo-Saxon and Germanic 'races' came to be viewed as increasingly urgent among Spanish and Portuguese intellectuals following the British Ultimatum of 1870 and the Spanish-American War of 1898. This war was triggered by the explosion of the USS Maine in Havana, which led to the American intervention in Cuba and, in turn, to what was to become known as the '1898 Disaster' ('Desastre del 98'), which led to the loss of Spain's last American and Asian colonies: Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines. This is exemplified by Sebastião de Magalhães Lima, a Brazilian-born Portuguese writer and intellectual who was deeply affected by the British Ultimatum, to the extent that he carried out a "patriotic peregrination" across Europe, coining the slogan "either in federation with Spain,

[31] "Brindo por la nación española, amazona de la raza latina, de la cual fue escudo y valladar firmísimo contra la barbarie germánica y el espíritu de disgregación y de herejía, que separó de nosotros a las razas septentrionales. Brindo por el municipio español, hijo glorioso del municipio romano y expresión de la verdadera y legítima y sacrosanta libertad española, que Calderón sublimó hasta las alturas del arte en El alcalde de Zalamea, y que Alejandro Herculano ha inmortalizado en la historia." The toast at El Retiro was improvised. However, the press reproduced it word for word the next day. I cite the speech as presented in Gabriel Sánchez's work, which also compiles some of the reactions to the toast in the following days.

[32] "Sí: española, lo repito, que españoles llamó siempre a los portugueses Camoens, afirmó que españoles somos, y que de españoles nos debemos preciar todos los que habitamos la Península Ibérica. Y brindo, en suma, por todos los catedráticos aquí presentes, representantes de las diversas naciones latinas que, como arroyos, han venido a mezclarse en el gran Océano de nuestra gente romana."

or enslaved by England" (Meireles 31).[33] Magalhães Lima's political proposal, which he delineated in *La Fédération Ibérique* (1893) and other works, was an Iberian federation based on municipalities. This federation would expand to encompass African and American Iberian territories, most notably Brazil, and would form the foundation for a "Latin confederation" capable of counterbalancing the Anglo-Saxon powers. It is interesting to note, that Magalhães Lima modified his thinking during World War I, advocating for a "Western Union" that would include England and keep Ancient Rome as its "common mother", serving to oppose "Germanic barbarism" (Meireles 33).

In Spain, the 'Disaster of 1898' gave name and unity to a generation of writers and intellectuals who reflected on the causes of and possible solutions to Spain's decline, just as the Portuguese 'Generation of 1870' had done a few decades earlier. As in the case of Magalhães Lima, Spanish intellectuals sought to incorporate Spain into broader geocultural or geopolitical frameworks (Iberia, Europe, or Latinity) in order to overcome the country's decline. Miguel de Unamuno, for instance, expressed an interest in Iberism, partly for personal reasons (he became Rector of the University of Salamanca, from where he traveled frequently to Portugal with his family), but also as one possible way to invigorate and renew the Spanish nation. He did not, however, show a similar interest in the idea of Latinity, despite having close connections with the Spanish-American intellectual *milieu*; he advocated instead for a concept of "Hispanidad" that encompassed both the Iberian space, with all its linguistic and cultural diversity, and the American Spanish-speaking territories (Callero 32).

Rafael Altamira was another Spanish intellectual who was marked by the events of 1898 and by the *Regeneracionist* movement. Alongside Leopoldo Alas 'Clarín', Altamira was one of the divulgators of José Enrique Rodó's essay *Ariel* (1900) in Spain and participated actively in the debates surrounding the relationship between Spain and the Americas at the turn of the century (Valero Juan). Indeed, in his work *España en América* (Spain in America), which he wrote after traveling through Hispano-America between 1909 and 1910, Altamira devoted one chapter to "El problema latino" (The Latin problem) and sought to debunk the supposed superiority of the Anglo-Saxon and Germanic worlds over the Latin world. Even so, in the chapters on Spain and Latin America, he underscored the need for transatlantic dialogue between Spain and "the nations with which we share not only a language, but also the very substance and foundation of our Latin spirit" (Altamira 133).[34] Once again, although Altamira

[33] "ou federado com Espanha ou escravos da Inglaterra"

[34] "aquellas naciones a las cuales no sólo nos une la lengua, sino el fondo substancial de nuestro espíritu latino."

was very careful to phrase his proposal in terms of an intellectual and cultural fraternity, any idea originating in the metropolis about *latinidad*, which could be translated in most cases as *hispanidad,* would be met with suspicion and understood as a kind of "quiet imperialism",[35] in the words of Cuban essayist Fernando Ortiz (quoted in Valero "América en la mirada", 118). It is also worth noting that, despite Altamira's clear focus on the Spanish-speaking countries of the Americas, he also included Portugal and Brazil in his texts. His use of the term "Ibero-America" is particularly noticeable in his speech at the Hispano-American conference in Madrid in 1900 (Altamira 150). This conference aimed to serve as "a great forum to discuss all the problems that preoccupied all sectors involved in Hispano-Americanism, with an interested in drawing a line of action to make these relations possible and strengthening the ties of unity across the Hispano-American world" (García Montón 285).[36]

The early twentieth century continued to be ripe with contradictions regarding the potential and dangers of Iberism and Latinity and their mutual interactions, both in Europe and in America. During that time, the Portuguese author António Sardinha exemplified the complex connections between Iberism and (pan-)Latinism and European and transatlantic dimensions. He was one of the founders of *Integralismo Lusitano*, a traditionalist, ultranationalist movement that would play a central role in the founding of Estado Novo. Sardinha's conservative thinking positioned him as a strong opponent of an Iberist agenda, which he deemed antipatriotic, liberal and even masonic, as he stated in his work *A Questão Ibérica* (1916). However, a few years later, and at least partially due to his experience in exile (Relvas 260), he took a different approach to Iberian relations, advocating for a "peninsular alliance",[37] which was the title of his 1925 book on the subject. In it, without abandoning his religious and conservative Portuguese nationalism, but expanding it to a Peninsular sphere, Sardinha defended the need for "Hispanic unity", which was, in his view, very different from nineteenth-century political Iberism:

> Hispanic unity does not reside, and never will, in violent terms of incorporation or conquest. As an outcome of a spontaneous convergence of intelligence and aspirations, Hispanic unity requires, on the contrary, that both peoples remain free in their internal governance, despite being militarily and diplomatically allied for

[35] "imperialismo manso"

[36] "un gran foro donde se discutieron todos los problemas que preocupaban a los sectores involucrados en el movimiento hispanoamericanista, los cuales tenían interés en trazar una línea de acción que hiciera viables las relaciones, y fortaleciera los lazos de unión en el mundo hispanoamericano"

[37] "aliança peninsular"

> their common defense, since, upon reflection, they share a common heritage.[38] (Sardinha, *A Aliança Peninsular* 67)

This spiritual and political union of the Iberian peoples had a clear counterrevolutionary and conservative purpose, and was intended to "save Europe from itself" (Desvignes 79) and to place Spain and Portugal, once again, as its leaders and heart, in close connection with their American colonies: "Once both nationalisms are united […] under the supernationalism of one big spiritual and political alliance that serves as the framework for the bluish mirror of the Atlantic […] the [Iberian] Peninsula will be not only Europe's head, but its savior" (Sardinha, *A Aliança Peninsular* 344).[39] While Sardinha saw the Peninsula's common past and its relation to its Latin neighbors as key components of Hispanic identity, he also placed emphasis on the religious sphere and criticized what he considered to be an incorrect understanding of the term "Latinidade":

> It is easily inferred from here that Christianity is inherent in the soul of the Hispanic peoples, as a kind of racial stratification. The idea usually associated with the term 'Latinity' is thus wrong. 'Latinity', in its components, is nothing more than the sum of the religious and moral influence of Christianity, combined with the maximum germination of the virtues native to the Hispanic peoples.[40] (Sardinha, *A Aliança Peninsular* 252)

However, Sardinha's words also suggest that the concept of Latinity, especially as inherited from its French origins, was not consensually or peacefully accepted by Iberian intellectuals. Indeed, in the works of many of Sardinha's peers, the idea of Latinity was not rephrased or adopted, but radically rejected. This was a common position among Spanish intellectuals, who were undoubtedly wary of France's centrality in this spatial and political configuration. In fact, as Matos explains, many Spanish intellectuals, as Blanca de Los Ríos or Juan Cebrián, ran a campaign against the concept of Latinity, with slogans such as *Latinos, no. Iberos, sí* (Matos, "Transnational Identities" 86).

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[38] "A unidade-hispânica não reside, nem nunca residirá, em termos violentos de incorporação ou de conquista. Mais um facto de espontâneo acordo de inteligências e aspirações, a unidade-hispânica exige, pelo contrário, que os dois povos se mantenham livres no seu governo interno, embora ligados militar e diplomaticamente para a defesa comum, porque comum, pensando bem, é o património que a ambos pertence."

[39] "Unidos depois os dois nacionalismos […] no supernacionalismo duma grande aliança espiritual e política que sirva de moldura ao espelho azulino do Atlântico […] a Península será na Europa, não só a sua cabeça, mas a sua salvadora."

[40] "Infere-se daqui limpidamente como o Cristianismo é na alma das gentes hispânicas alguma coisa do próprio, como que uma estratificação racial. Erra-se, portanto, na ideia que se costuma atribuir vulgarmente à designação "Latinidade". A "Latinidade", nos seus componentes, é unicamente a soma do influxo religioso e moral do Cristianismo, ligada à máxima germinação das virtudes nativas dos povos hispánicos"

This resistance toward the concept of Latinity was also very present in Guillermo de Torre's article "Madrid, meridiano intelectual de Hispanoamérica", published in *La Gaceta literaria* on 15 April 1927. This article caused a great stir on both sides of the Atlantic and represented an ideological stance that was quite different from that of Menéndez Pidal or Blanca de los Ríos (see Rosetti). During the interwar period, *La Gaceta literaria* became one of the most influential journals in Spain. It was edited by Ernesto Giménez Caballero, a well-known writer who was associated with the avant-garde movement and with the so-called Generation of 1927 and who later became one of the most influential fascist ideologists and writers in Spain. After the Civil War and during the Francoist regime, he became a prominent diplomat in several Hispano-American countries. Guillermo de Torre's article had a twofold purpose: to dismantle the idea of Latinity and its application to Latin America, as proposed and promoted in previous decades; and to reinstate Madrid as the indisputable center of the Spanish-speaking world on both sides of the Atlantic. Guillermo de Torre's article focused almost exclusively on negating any validity of the concept of 'Latin America', which he considered to serve French and Italian attempts to gain control over the Hispano-American world and relegate Spain to a secondary position, a suspicion identified among other defenders of different ideas of *hispanidad*:

> Let us eliminate from our vocabulary, once and for all, those spurious terms like 'Latin America' and 'Latin-Americanism'. Granting them validity among us would entail acting as unwitting accomplices to the shady annexionist maneuvers undertaken by France and Italy in relation to America, under the guise of Latinism. We would accept this Latinism – of which, in good theory, we are indubitably participants – if this alleged ethnic link also included, as it should, Spain. But it should be noted that in the intellectual Latinism practiced by our European neighbors, Spain and its most authentic exponents are always marginalized or occupy a very vague or secondary role. Intellectual Latinism is as great a political risk as the Saxon influence. Enough, then, of this ambiguous, exclusivist Latinism! Enough of passively tolerating this undermining of our prestige, this continuous deviation of Hispano-American intellectual interests towards France![41] (de Torre 1)

[4141] "Eliminemos, pues, de una vez para siempre, en nuestro vocabulario, los espúreos (sic) términos de «América Latina» y de «latinoamericanismo». Darlos validez entre nosotros equivaldría a hacernos cómplices inconscientes de las turbias maniobras anexionistas que Francia e Italia vienen realizando respecto a América, so capa de latinismo. Estaríamos, en último caso, conformes con ese latinismo –del que en buena teoría somos indubitables copartícipes– si este aparente lazo étnico abarcase también, como es debido, a España. Pero obsérvese que en el latinismo intelectual que practican nuestras vecinas europeas, España y sus más auténticos exponentes, quedan siempre al margen o haciendo un papel muy borroso y secundario. El latinismo intelectual entraña no menores peligros que la influencia sajona en el plano político. ¡Basta ya, por tanto, de ese latinismo ambiguo y exclusivista! ¡Basta ya de tolerar pasivamente esa merma de nuestro prestigio, esa desviación constante de los intereses intelectuales hispanoamericanos hacia Francia!"

While this first objective could be situated in the ongoing Hispano-American debates surrounding the opposition between the Latin and Saxon races and France's centrality in the concept of Latinity, the second – to establish Madrid as the indisputable center of the Spanish-speaking world – was met with resistance from Latin American authors. Guillermo de Torre's rather paternalistic affirmation that his proposal "entailed no political or intellectual hegemony of any kind", or that Hispano-American authors would find "a warm welcome, and even authentic attention" (de Torre 1) in Madrid, which they would not find in Paris, mattered little.[42] The article was read as a belated attempt to salvage and reinvigorate an old Spanish cultural imperialism. Indeed, the debate and the responses to the article had the opposite effect to the one intended: they helped to strengthen the Hispano-American intellectual sphere, in contrast with and independently of its old metropolis.

Conclusions

The intellectual debates on Iberism and Latinity focused on three ideological axes: firstly, the contraposition of Latin vs. Anglo-Saxon (and/or Germanic, depending on the version and period) races; secondly, the intrapeninsular Iberist impetus, which was met with nationalistic resistance, especially in Portugal; and finally, the complex relations between Spain and Portugal and their American ex-colonies, which encompassed ideas of mutual understanding and fraternity as well as more or less covert attempts at political or cultural neo-imperialism. The use of the concept of Latinity in debates about Iberism gave rise to a plethora of cultural and political positions, from pan-Hispanism and pan-Lusitanism to Ibero-Americanism and Latin-Americanism. These ideologies were also intended as potential political alliances and as symbolic, even utopian, solutions to the problems of what we might now refer to as the Global South.

In this context, the idea of Latinity, just like that of Iberism, appeared as an ever-present potentiality: an intellectual and ideological concept that in many cases remained silently in the background but could be activated under certain circumstances, either to reinforce a certain transnational reconfiguration of Peninsular, European and transatlantic relations or to provoke the opposite effect, that is, to reinforce nationalistic or imperialistic traits: a defensive move against a perceived intrusion by a foreign entity, be it Spain (in the case of Portuguese resistance against Iberism), France (in the case of anti-Latinity discourse) or the Anglo-Saxon and Germanic world (as in the construction of a Latin-American identity).

[42] "no implica hegemonía política o intelectual de ninguna clase", "no sólo una cordial acogida, sino […] una atención auténtica"

The idea of Latin America, with its controversies and setbacks, became an established term and referent for twentieth-century political discourse. Iberism, on the other hand, declined as a possibility and even as an ideology, especially during the long winter of Iberian dictatorships, becoming a sort of phantasm that very rarely emerged from the shadows after 1930, as it did in certain works by Natália Correia or José Saramago in the late twentieth century. Nevertheless, both Iberism and Latinity continue to serve as possible references for cultural and ideological discourse, as frameworks of identification that are available, albeit largely passive. A recent publication by Gabriel Magalhães, for instance, provides a new interpretation of Latinity as a unifying center of Iberian transhistorical identity. According to Gabriel Magalhães, "[…] the great wound that [the inhabitants of the Iberian Peninsula] carry within, the mother of all our sores, a wound that is still open, is the Roman one" (40).[43] In other words, the Roman memory persists in the intellectual and political thought of the Iberian Peninsula as either a utopian horizon or a collective trauma.

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[43] "la gran herida que [los habitantes de la Península Ibérica] llevamos dentro, la madre de todas nuestras llagas, herida que aún está abierta, es la romana"

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Modernity, *Latinità* and the Nation in Italian Modernist Magazines (1914-1922)

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Abstract
This article explores the intersection between Latinity, modernity and nationalism in Italian magazines between 1914 and 1922. It argues that these notions, which had been at the center of cultural debates since the post-Risorgimento years and were re-elaborated during the First Word War and in the immediate post-war period challenge and complicate the common assumption that reformulations of Latinity and classicism should be interpreted primarily as a return to tradition, which sanctioned a separation of the spheres of art and politics that had been conflated by the pre-war avant-garde movements. This study contends that the intersection between classicism, modernity and nationalism in Italian modernist magazines resulted in a rethinking of the notion of Latinity. This rethinking, both artistic and political, encompassed reformulated ideas of Mediterranean Europe and a repositioning of Italy within it. In this sense, the politicization of classicism embedded art in the historical identity of the nation and would be instrumental in the formation of the ideological basis of the relationship between art and the fascist regime.

Keywords
Latinity, Modernity, Classicism, Modernism, Modern Italy

Introduction: Modernity, Latinity and the Nation

In an article titled "Ai nati dopo il 70", published in the literary periodical *Il Marzocco* in February 1897, writer and critic Mario Morasso, born in 1871, expressed a generational concern about the role of Italian intellectuals after the Risorgimento. Addressing the writers of his generation, he identified a current reaction against cosmopolitan *fin de siècle* literary trends, such as symbolism, decadentism and mysticism. He interpreted this reaction as a general opposition to northern European culture, to "the northern hordes that, through literature, are today about to oppress the Latin world with a worse slavery than the barbarians on the Roman soil, the Austrian soldiers on the planes of Lombardy or the German armies when they invaded the French capital" (3).[44] Morasso declared how such a reaction drew from the "pure, eternal and solemn sources of national art, the simplicity, strength and soul of the homeland" (3). He stressed the specific position of the French and the Italians born after 1870, a crucial year that saw both the annexation of Rome to the newly unified Italian nation and the defeat of France in the Franco-Prussian war. He noted how the Italians were conceived "in an explosion of joy, a cheerful renewal of national conscience" and remarked how they felt it was their duty to "give

[44] All translations from Italian are by the author.

their homeland a sense of self" and to "invigorate the national spirit, reconstruct morally the race into an ethnic unity that would gradually reach if not primacy in Europe, certainly one of the highest positions" (3). He declared that his generation felt the need to nurture "the admirable seeds of Latinity" and stated:

> We, more than the French youth, are inflamed by the great mystery of the millenary race to protect, the immeasurable value of Latin heroes to celebrate, the superhuman beauty of our land to glorify; our birth, happened after 1870, separates us from those who were born before us more clearly than the French. Not just because the ideal of the achieved Roman unity is much more active than revenge, but because of the enormous significance that Rome, our shield and hope, imparted on our actions (3).

Morasso's article was pervaded by an anti-German sentiment that linked Italy and France in the quest to protect 'Latin' culture, drawing a parallel between the fifth-century invasion of Rome and the present threat of a German cultural invasion of Europe. It highlighted 1870 as a watershed that fundamentally differentiated France from Italy: for France, it marked defeat, whereas for Italy, it symbolized birth and the renewal of a unified national conscience, revived by a sense of perpetuating the Roman legacy. Morasso voiced a pervasive concern among Italian intellectuals. As Luca Somigli has noted, following Alberto Mario Banti, before unification, in the absence of a shared political identity or common language, the elite, who recognized itself in a cultural tradition stretching back to Dante and even to classical culture, had performed "the crucial task of creating a mythology, a symbology, a historical reconstruction of the Italian nation that had exceptional communicative power" (Somigli, "In the Shadow of Byzantium" 913; see Banti 30). After unification, this role diminished, and intellectuals became subaltern to politicians, who were now the legitimate representatives of the unified nation. The symbolism of Rome and the appropriation of the Latin heritage, especially over France, were activated to rethink the role to be assigned to the new generation of intellectuals in the post-unification decades: amid increasing political and social marginalization and the looming threat of the commodification of culture brought about by industrial society (Somigli, "In the Shadow"; Adamson, *Embattled Avant-Gardes*), the call was for intellectuals born after the unification to assume a role of social and cultural leadership in the definition and protection of the identity and values of the new nation. As Somigli observes, Morasso's call for constructing a national character for Italians, both cultural and "ethnic", distinct from that of the French, although related to it via the common heritage of "Latinity", brought back into the foreground the unfinished project of the Risorgimento, the formation of a shared national identity ("In the Shadow" 915). In this context, the conquest of Rome was

seen as a key event that guaranteed a symbolic foundation for a unified Italian cultural identity. The associated cultural and political idea of Latinity was central to this mythography. It became a foundational concept that was mobilized and redefined throughout the early twentieth century, culminating in the myth of *romanità* which became central to the symbolic universe of Fascism.

This article examines articulations of the idea of Latinity in Italian modernist magazines in the years between 1914 and 1922, focusing on *Lacerba* (Florence, 1913-15), *La Raccolta* (Bologna, 1918-19), *Valori plastici* (Rome, 1918-1922) and *Rete Mediterranea* (Florence, 1920). It explores how the interconnections between ideas of Latinity, modernity and the nation, which had characterized cultural debates since the post-Risorgimento years, were re-elaborated during and after the First World War. In doing so, the paper challenges the common assumption that the reformulation of concepts like *latinità* and *classicità*, part of the post-war so-called *rappel à l'ordre*, represented a mere return to tradition that sanctioned a separation between art and politics, which had previously been conflated by pre-war avant-garde movements (Somigli and Moroni). Instead, it argues that the convergence between classicism, modernity and nationalism in Italian modernist debates resulted in a rethinking of the concept of *latinità*, which involved an artistic and political repositioning of Italy at the center of Mediterranean Europe and aimed to displace France's artistic and cultural primacy**.** Therefore, redefinitions and negotiations of ideas of Latinity as well as its aesthetic propagations, such as classicism, *classicità* and Mediterraneanness, should not be viewed merely – or not always – as a nostalgic "return", a haven of tranquility, or an idealizing lens through which the present as some scholars have suggested, particularly in relation to the post-war *rappel à l'ordre* (Cowling and Mundy). Instead, they articulated the relationship between the artist, modernity and politics, where such identity markers were used to reconfigure the artist's role within an idea of nation as "a vital effective attachment in contrast to the impersonality of both marketplace and state institutions", as Walter Adamson puts it (*Embattled Avant-Gardes* 343).

As both a political and cultural construct, Latinity underwent several resignifications between the First World War and the rise of Fascism. These resignifications generated a semantic and symbolic constellation encompassing ideas of Roman lineage and ethnicity, as well as history, language, geography, art and culture. These ideas were variously contested and appropriated to delineate a transnational, or 'macro-national' community (see Nemegeer, "A Macro-Nationalist Periodical"), which transcended national boundaries and was unified by a shared 'Latin' heritage. At the same time, they aimed to capture the essence of Italian national

character. The goal was to define and protect the identity of the new-born nation and to safeguard the role of the artist in its definition.

As expressed in Morasso's article at the end of the nineteenth century and persisting through the war and the immediate post-war years, the mobilization of the idea of Latinity in Italy was often associated with notions of national and cultural rebirth, renewal and palingenesis. These notions drew on modernist ideas about historical cyclicity, which, as Roger Griffin observes, looked to a "mythicized past as the source of the inspiration needed to inaugurate a new, revitalized, nomic society" amidst a perception of modernity as an "all-consuming decadence" (178). The idea of Latinity also fed into discussions on the relationship between art and the nation. As David Ferris has argued, "the nation stands as the medium in which the seeds of the aesthetic will be both discovered and cultivated as a sign of that nation's historical development. […] [A]rt, according to this understanding, is always the art of a nation, the interpretation of art becomes the interpretation of the social and political history identified with a nation" (27). In this context, the notion of Latinity came to symbolize the transhistorical power to perpetually mobilize and recreate the relation between history, nation and the aesthetic field. Therefore, references to Latinity in modernist artistic debates were always politically charged, making Latinity an important concept in negotiating the relationship between art and politics in Italian modernist culture.

The idea of "Latin Renaissance" became prominent in fin de siècle Italian culture. As Shirley Vinall notes, while some writers saw it as a reassertion of classical values in literature, the aspirations expressed in France and Italy around the turn of the century had diverse and complex causes. These included a perceived decline in 'Latin' power compared to the advance of 'Anglo-Saxon' or 'Germanic' states, influenced by events such as the Franco-Prussian war, colonial rivalries, and the 1898 war between Spain and the United States. The rhetoric of a resurgence of Latinity drew on various ideas, including proposals for a peaceful federation between France, Italy and Spain, which had circulated since the 1840s and gained momentum in the second half of the century. Italy, in particular, envisaged a leading role for itself as a newly unified country, with the "Third Rome" as its capital (Vinall 38). At the turn of the century the idea of a Latin Renaissance, supported by intense cultural exchanges between Italy and France, was promoted by magazines such as *Anthologie-Revue de France et d'Italie* (1897-1900), *La Renaissance Latine* (1902-1905) and *Cronache della civiltà elleno-latina* (1902-1907) (see Somigli, "The Mirror of Modernity"; Nemegeer, "A Macro-Nationalist Periodical"). It is worth highlighting the significance of the periodical press in early twentieth-century Italy. As the country rapidly evolved and faced the challenges of modernity, periodicals played a key

role in Italian public, cultural and political life (Bru 439). Following the demise of the aristocratic circles constituted by the courts and the salons, magazines emerges as new tools of communication and as alternative spaces of cultural production and distribution, promoting a non-academic, militant and occasionally oppositional culture, based on current affairs and concerned with eccentric and non-canonical areas of knowledge. They tended to use an accessible and often polemical style and addressed an educated and curious - although not erudite – readership. They were usually created as a collective effort by groups of intellectuals often formed through personal relations rather than fixed cultural programs, which favored a flexibility of collaborations across the arts (Langella 3-7). Magazines, as Sascha Bru observes, "came to function as laboratories for new ideas, in culture and politics, as well as in art and literature" (441).

As part of the resurgent pan-Latinism that emerged after the end of the Crispi era, which had been characterized by expansionism, colonialism and pro-German alignment, the above-mentioned periodicals defended the culture of Latin Europe, perceived as marginalized compared to the northern European centers of modernity (Nemegeer, "A Macro-Nationalist Periodical" 136-139). Importantly, as noted both by Nemegeer and Somigli, the idea of 'Renaissance' was used as a trope of regeneration to address concerns about a perceived decline of modernity. Nemegeer notes how it was deployed "to confront the present and past, and to delineate paths for the future" and served both as a historical interpretative tool and as a framing concept for the analysis of the dialectics of crisis and renewal that characterized modernist culture. Therefore, it involved a double confrontation with history, which implied a protest against the present (the position of Italy and the neglected values of Latinity in the modern world) and established a past whose elements were to be recovered, in a dynamic of "innovation in renovation" ("A Macro-Nationalist Periodical" 142). Somigli highlights the call for a return to tradition founded on values of order and directedness and a positive answer to the condition of alienation of the artist in modernity that had characterized the decadent-symbolist poetics. The recovery of authentic, autochthonous "Latin" cultural values accompanied the rejection of the literature of the Germanic countries and the influence of Romanticism and its symbolist offshoot (Somigli, "The Mirror of Modernity" 340).

The undisputed champion of *latinità* in early twentieth-century Italy, as Claudio Fogu notes, was poet and playwright Gabriele D'Annunzio, who spent the years between 1910 and 1915 in Paris, wrote several works in French, and mixed with prominent ideologists of the French right-wing, such as Maurice Barrès and Charles Maurras. As Fogu notes, while D'Annunzio shared a parallel political evolution toward radical nationalism with Maurras and

Barrès, his Latinism, rather than being a close filiation of its French counterparts, stemmed from the post-Risorgimento paradigm of "making Italians" and was steeped in Mediterranean racial discourse (Fogu 131-32). Similarly, Nemegeer has argued that D'Annunzio's cult of the Renaissance and the Roman past was functional to an affirmation of Italian identity in the post-Risorgimento context. D'Annunzio depicted the humanistic intellectual as specifically Italian, charged with a civic value that was functional to national development, within a secular idea of the nation that glorified the Graeco-Roman and Renaissance traditions ("Umanesimo, Rinascimento e rinascita nazionale" 33). As Filippo Caburlotto observes (2010), D'Annunzio's ideas were rooted in a vision of the Mediterranean as the heart of Latinity, symbolized by the sister nations of Italy and France, and by the mythological figures that shaped their literary traditions.

The idea of the Mediterranean had also gained prominence in the reimagining of classical themes within pictorial Modernism. According to Elizabeth Cowling and Jennifer Mundy, it had metamorphosed into the myth of Arcadia, "an earthly paradise protected from the sordid materialism of the modern industrialised world, free from strife and tension, pagan not Christian, innocent not fallen, a place where dreamed-of harmony is still attainable" (12). The idea of Latinity - or *latinità* - has therefore a specific place in Italian modernist culture, as a concept that underwent several cultural and political renegotiations and was used mythopoetically and symbolically not only to construct and provide an identity core to the "imagined community" of the newly unified Italian nation, but also, as an art-political concept, to address the crisis in the relationship between the artist and modernity (Anderson; Storchi, "Artists at war").

Lacerba and the First World War: Latin Civilization *versus* German Barbarity

Despite its formal alliance with Austria and Germany under the Triple Alliance, signed in 1882, Italy declared neutrality when the First World War broke out in August 1914. Austria did not consult Italy before declaring war on Serbia, thus breaching the terms of the treaty. Interventionist circles started campaigning against neutrality, though there was disagreement about which side Italy should support. Those in favor of joining the Entente embraced an instrumental notion of Latinity, which, drawing on earlier macro-nationalist sentiments, envisaged the 'sister countries', Italy and France, fighting together to defend 'Latin' civilization against a 'barbaric' invasion from northern Europe. In this context, the notion of *latinità* was used as a cultural-political construction against the idea of 'Germanness', framed within a north-south, civilization-culture, classicism-romanticism dichotomy that would persist into the

post-war years and permeate early 1920s nationalist discourses. The Florentine avant-garde magazine *Lacerba*, founded by Giovanni Papini and Ardengo Soffici and published between 1913 and 1915, was particularly vocal in supporting intervention and in promoting the idea of the war as a conflict of civilizations. When the war broke out, *Lacerba* declared its intention to turn from a cultural into a political magazine, as it saw the war not only as a "war of guns and ships", but also one "of culture and civilization" (*Lacerba* 241). The magazine expressed its position and how it intended to contribute to the interventionist effort, stating:

> It is a question of safeguarding everything that is most Italian in the world, even if not all grown on our land […] Perhaps this is the most decisive time in European history since the end of the Roman Empire. […] We feel that this is what all the intelligent Italian youth think, as well as most people. We would like to channel these aspirations and these energies for the necessary redemption of Italy (*Lacerba* 241).

In an article titled "Il dovere dell'Italia", Papini argued for Italy's intervention in the war and exhorted the nation to consider which side to join, now that it had unshackled itself from the Triple Alliance. He suggested that Italy needed to weigh not only national objectives and the likelihood of victory, but also, as he put it, "our popular and race instinct" and "the type of civilization to which we belong or want to belong" ("Il dovere dell'Italia" 242). Papini defined the war as an "enormous war of races" and asked: "what is our race? Are we closer to the Prussians and the Austrians than to the French and the English, who are, by blood, language and culture, half Latin?" ("Il dovere dell'Italia" 243). Framing the war as a clash of civilizations, Italy was associated with France on the basis of their shared *latinità*, a concept charged simultaneously with transnational and national characteristics and straddling the boundaries between politics and culture, which conferred artists an active role in their redefinition. In February 1915, Soffici responded to an open letter by journalist Arnaldo Cantù, published in the pro-German periodical *Italia Nostra*, which had adopted a neutralist stance on intervention (Caglioti 57):

> I know very well that the artist has the right, and I could say the duty, not to concern himself with the homeland, except to enrich it with artworks: however, it needs to be considered that in an abject and enslaved country one does not live or work well. There are times – and this is one of them – when trying to save one's country from despicable, foolish and dangerous actions means protecting the country's and one's own spirit at the same time. I have said more than once that, for me, the current war is centered on a clash of civilizations. It is a question of saving a superior civilization from infiltration

> by a false civilization. A German domination in Europe would corrupt French and Italian culture ("Breve risposta a un tedescante" 44).

The artist justified his involvement in politics by viewing himself as the guardian of a civilization he felt it was his duty to both define and protect. These considerations formed the basis for a culture war waged along the lines of race and civilization, where the notion of Latinity was not specifically defined, but rather deployed as a contrast to German civilization, against which *Lacerba* launched relentless attacks:

> German civilization is mechanical and abstract […] German culture is not culture, but information, erudition, classification. It sways between the most useless vagueness and the most small-minded materialism. German thought is not thought, but formulas and formalism. German science can apply and execute but cannot create. It produces manuals and supplies industry but does not invent anything. German art does not exist outside music. […] Heaviness, rigidity, formalism and mechanicalness are the prominent characters of German life and civilization ("Il dovere dell'Italia" 243; see Adamson, *Avant-Garde Florence* 194-95).

Soffici too intervened in the debate on the contrast between Latin and German civilization, stating that "Italy forms with France the core of a civilization which is threatened to be replaced by militaristic and disciplinary brutalization" ("Intorno alla gran bestia" 246). He declared that if Germany wanted to repeat the example of ancient Rome in its expansionist plans in Europe, it ought to be remembered that "Rome was civilization against barbarity. Prussia is barbarity against civilization":

> If there was ever a perfect barbarity in the world, that is the German one. Lack of spirit, of generosity, of mental openness, of lightness, of intelligence, of intellectual and spiritual elegance. Blind obtusity, violence, coarseness, primeval rigidity, have never manifested themselves in a people in a more exasperating way than between the Rhein and the Baltic Sea. […] The peoples that Rome conquered gladly subjugated themselves, because being conquered by Rome meant being conquered by light, intelligence, beauty and greatness – by freedom, ultimately. A race like the German one still suffers from not having been conquered by the Caesars. It still represents primitive materialism, and matter never conquers nor dominates spirit ("Intorno alla gran bestia" 245-46).

Papini, on his part, reiterated his allegiance to France in an article titled "Ciò che dobbiamo alla Francia", published on 1 September 1914. He traced the reciprocal lines of influence between Italy and France, which had shaped a 'Latin' civilization over the centuries, and acknowledged the debt his generation owed to French culture since the second half of the

nineteenth century: he celebrated Verlaine, Rimbaud, Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Zola, Maupassant, the Goncourt brothers and Guillaume Apollinaire for their literary and poetic innovations. Among the French painters, he praised Courbet, Manet, Monet, Degas, Renoir and Cézanne for modernizing art in Europe. He appreciated the influence of French thought on European culture, from Montaigne and Descartes to, more recently, Bergson, Anatole France and Remy de Gourmont. He concluded by reiterating his loyalty to France, hailing it as a "great country" with "magnificent" civilization, and declared that "as artists, thinkers, poets, as Italians and civilized men, we feel that we are with France, against its and our enemies" ("Ciò che dobbiamo alla Francia" 249-52). In the issue of 20 September 1914, Futurist writer Luciano Folgore also advocated for joining the war on the side of France, "because of shared interests and sensibility, a kinship of nerves, brains, instinct, between us and the French" (271).

In November 1914, Papini presented Austria as the "anti-Italy", the archenemy against which Italy needed to define itself. He argued that cultivating hatred towards Austria was "indispensable" for the nation's material and spiritual life ("L'Antitalia" 289-90). In the same issue, Soffici launched yet another vitriolic attack on Germany's "barbarity", describing the German people as characterized by "imbecility" and a "mechanical mentality". He criticized the Germans for their lack of elasticity, their primitive and oversimplified sense of rights and duty, their blind adherence to authority and their unintelligent sense of courage, as well as their one-sided seriousness, lack of irony, propension to over-erudition, glorification of discipline, lack of psychological insight and subtlety, absence of elegance, and rigid religious sense ("Sulla barbarie tedesca" 291-92). The last issue of *Lacerba* was published in May 1915, when Italy joined the war alongside Britain and France. Papini's opening article, titled "Abbiamo vinto!", claimed the magazine's key role in Italy's "awakening" and explained the decision to cease publication. Papini stated the impossibility of going back to being a periodical devoted to "pure art" after its engagement in politics ("Abbiamo vinto!" 162).

Italy's entry into the war led to an active promotion of pan-Latinism in some intellectual circles. One such example was The *Revue des Nations Latines*, edited by Julien Luchaire and Guglielmo Ferrero and published in Paris and Florence between 1916 and 1919. This periodical aimed to resist "Germanism" and pledged to "help science, art, philosophy, literature, to purify themselves of the Germanic currents that denature and corrupt them" (Ferrero and Luchaire 1-4. See also Giladi; Pacini 14-20). However, pan-Latinism as an ideological construction proved to be fragile. The convergence of French and Italian interests weakened after the war, especially after the Paris peace conference of 1919. The Italian delegation's failure to secure the full implementation of the Treaty of London (1915) and to gain control over Dalmatia and the

Italian-speaking port of Fiume led to a growing sentiment of a 'mutilated victory' and an increasing Francophobia, which shook the 'Latin' alliance between the two countries (Giladi 55-56).

The "Return to Order": Artistic *italianità* and the Politics of Classicism

Despite pan-Latinist tendencies, the war years saw an intensification of nationalism in Italian artistic debates. Latinism gave way to reformulations of classicism that were concerned with freeing Italian art from the influence of Paris and establishing its primacy in Europe. As Cowling and Munday note, while Italian artists maintained close contact with France, their overriding concern was with Italian tradition. Artists like Giorgio de Chirico and Carlo Carrà, for instance, turned their attention to the art of the Quattrocento as the root of the "Italian" principle in art (15). Carrà, who had been a leading figure in the futurist movement,[45] grew increasingly uncomfortable with futurist aesthetics during the war. He expressed his detachment from Futurism in three seminal essays, published in the Florentine periodical *La Voce* in 1916: "Parlata su Giotto", "Paolo Uccello costruttore" and "Le parentesi dell'io". In these essays, he attributed spiritual and pictorial qualities to those early masters, with whom he felt a personal affinity, borne from his sense of living in a "primordial" age that positioned Italy at the center of a renewal in art (see Storchi, "Artists at War" and "Metaphysical Writing and the 'Return to Order'"). In a self-presentation for a personal exhibition catalog at the Chini Gallery in Milan in December 1917, Carrà emphasized his commitment to the national cause and to advancing modern art, declaring that he was working to give his country "a really new art, both in its form and substance" ("Autopresentazione" 84). He aligned himself with an Italian artistic descent described as a "great race of builders" ("Autopresentazione" 83), using lineage to propose art as one of the key expressions of national identity, and he claimed to have revived the "plastic virtues" of the Italian "race" by recreating the artistic values expressed by the Italian primitives (Giotto, Masaccio, Paolo Uccello).

The post-war 'return to order', which involved the arts around Europe, saw Italian modernist magazines promoting ideas of classicism that were less connected to Graeco-Roman antiquity and more focused on rediscovering the Italian roots of European art. The reclaiming of early Renaissance painting as the origin of artistic 'Italianness' was at the core of post-avant-garde debates in Italy. These debates were driven by a quest for the 'Italian principle', i.e., the defining characteristic of Italian art that determined its primacy in Europe over the centuries.

[45] In 1910, he had been one of the signatories of the *Manifesto dei pittori futuristi* and *La pittura futurista*.

In response to French claims to the notion of the classical, such as Guillaume Apollinaire's affirmation in his 1917 essay "L'Esprit Nouveau et les Poètes" that the "classical spirit" was the expression *par excellence* of the French nation (388), Italian artists mobilized the principle of artistic "*italianismo*". This reaction deliberately distanced itself from transnational concepts such as Latinity and it attempted to reframe and appropriate ideas of classicism. It refuted the perception of Italy's subordinate position with regards to France by highlighting instead the great Italian artistic tradition and its historical influence. In 1919, the Milanese magazine *Il Primato artistico italiano* – founded by Guido Podrecca to celebrate the arts, of which Italy "was always queen" (3) – still framed its cultural program around the Rome-Germanic Europe dichotomy, stating that "the eagles of the legionaries did not spread brute force throughout the world, but trade, arts, letters, law. Mediterranean Rome was the light of Nordic barbarism" ("Roma e i barbari" 28). However, the post-war debate was mostly concerned with emancipating Italy from France and reclaiming classical heritage, thus nationalizing the concept of Latinity, transforming it from a shared transnational identity into a nationally rooted ethnicity and cultural tradition. In 1918, poet and art critic Raffaello Franchi wrote in the Bolognese periodical *La Raccolta*,

> Never like in the past few years have we affirmed the uncorrupted Latinity of our race and the major and unsurmountable difficulties that separate us from the French, who are compromised by their already formed civilization. In our country, culture, not in the sense of knowledge of texts, but in the primordial sense of race, language, maturity, is established like nowhere else (99-100).

La Raccolta, edited by the young writer Giuseppe Raimondi, was published between 1918 and 1919 as a forum for post-avant-garde debates and was instrumental in fostering the post-war debate on classicism, drawing on the principles already outlined by such artists as Carlo Carrà during the war years, particularly the 'constructive' principle which was seen as profoundly rooted in Italian artistic identity. The magazine hosted three pieces of fictional prose by Carrà, titled "Il ritorno di Tobia" and "Tobia futurista" (the latter in two parts). In the two instalments of "Tobia futurista", published in April and June 1918, Carrà explained the artistic journey of the protagonist Tobia as part of a cultural mission to emancipate Italy from foreign influences and revive its artistic primacy and civilizing role in Europe. The quest for "Italianness" justified Tobia's participation in the Futurist movement and pervaded his stylistic evolution, ultimately leading to the rejection of avant-garde internationalism and Parisian influence:

> Imagine that one evening, after facing the shouting audience in an Italian theatre, and having a punch-up in the square to defend the advent of a new

> art that would be adequate to the European milieu, Tobia wrote the following words: If, after so many defeats, I start looking at the character and quality of our time, I believe that amongst all the countries, the Italians, with their natural skepticism, are the most civilized, and therefore the most aware of what is going on in the world. The scoundrels rolling down from the Alps are warned: they will no longer find academic recognition and applause in our country. ("Tobia futurista" 25-26).

In the second part of "Tobia futurista", Carrà reiterated the distinctiveness of the Italian artistic tradition, characterized by the so-called "senso costruttivo", which he had already referred to in relation to artists like Giotto, Masaccio and Paolo Uccello ("Autopresentazione") and which the character of Tobia had been pursuing in his art, despite being accused of going to Paris to find "models, as tailors do with clothes" ("Tobia futurista" 62). In opposition to this accusation, Tobia rejected any artistic cosmopolitanism to focus on developing a national art.

Carrà continued his pursuit of the Italian principle in art in Mario Broglio's influential art magazine *Valori plastici*, published in Rome between 1918 and 1922. In an article titled "L'italianismo artistico", he reiterated the idea of an Italian principle in art, which he believed was embedded in the nation's artistic tradition. His aim was to retrieve and nurture this principle to restore the primacy of Italian art in Europe ("L'italianismo artistico" 1-5). In a series of four articles titled *Rinnovamento della pittura in Italia*, published between December 1919 and June 1920, Carrà presented the element of *classicità* as particularly congenial to Italian art, almost as if it were intrinsic to the Italian climate and the essence of the Italian people. The recovery of a classical mindset was meant to represent the retrieval of a national artistic identity which had been lost in the pursuit of a modernity that came from Northern Europe and was alien to the Italian spirit ("Il rinnovamento della pittura in Italia. III"). Carrà further explored the Italian classicist tradition in a three-part essay on the Italian neoclassical sculptor Antonio Canova (1757-1822), published in *Valori plastici* between 1920 and 1921. Carrà assessed Canova's work in the context of its time, affirming that neoclassicism determined the end of the Baroque and that neoclassicist artists reminded their contemporaries that art is "discipline, serenity and composure" ("Canova e il neoclassicismo. Introduzione" 95). He also stated that his study of Canova was meant to have a "civic significance", as it represented an "evaluation that the current generation made of the whole spiritual life of the nation" (95). Carrà focused on the sculptor's biography, presenting him as an example of "civic austerity" and "Italianness" for refusing to serve any public duties under Napoleon ("Canova e il neoclassicismo. III" 32). Classicism was interpreted as a politically charged artistic idiom that could be mobilized in definitions of national identity and as a way of reading national history, emphasizing the

indissoluble link between art criticism and historical knowledge. The close relation between history, art and nation was maintained in a reading of art as the interpretation of the nation's social and political history (Ferris 27).

Between 1921 and 1922, *Valori plastici* published a debate on the renewed interest in the art of the seventeenth century, caused by the *Mostra della pittura italiana del Sei e Settecento* held at Palazzo Pitti in Florence in the spring of 1922. Using as a starting point an article by Giorgio de Chirico, titled "La mania del Seicento", the magazine invited critical responses on the art of the Seicento, which would be published in the following issue (De Chirico, "La mania del Seicento 60). In his article, de Chirico criticized seventeenth-century art as the "least Italian" in the history of painting and the beginning of modern art's decadence, due to its facile realism, its lack of spirituality and its obsession with technical tricks such as *chiaroscuro.* He also observed that Seicento art was "easily understood", more accessible than earlier art, and "closer to the taste, the intelligence, the sensibility and the artistic education of the majority of our contemporaries" (60). Seicento art was more commercial, imitable and infused with a bourgeois taste imported from Northern Europe that resonated better with an early twentieth-century audience. The implication was that the art of the seventeenth century heralded a commodified relationship between art and the public, feeding into a Renaissance-Baroque dichotomy that presented the difference between the two forms of art as a contrast between "spiritual" and "material" (Mazzocca 853; Fossati 247-50). In opposition to Seicento art, de Chirico identified a so-called "Italian spirit", determined by the peninsula's "geographical configuration, climate, history, physical and metaphysical aspect" and defined it as "a classical, airy and adventurous Italian nature", which was found in the art of the Quattrocento:

> The fifteenth century offers us this spectacle, the most beautiful that we have been able to enjoy in the history of our art, of a clear and solid painting in which figures and things appear as if washed and purified and shining with an internal light […] The works of this century offer themselves to us with the clarity of Roman buildings, stones and landscapes, washed by a nocturnal storm and appearing the following day against or under a pure October afternoon sky (62).

In response to de Chirico's article, detractors of seventeenth-century art defended the "Italianness" of earlier centuries, particularly the Quattrocento. Thus, Carrà invited young artists to follow Giotto, Piero della Francesca and Simone Martini, who represented the "origins of our Italian and Mediterranean painting" ("Il Seicento e la critica italiana" 80). Writer Emilio Cecchi identified in Seicento art the end of the "serene discipline" that had characterized Italian

art over the three preceding centuries (88). Art critic and patron Margherita Sarfatti declared that Romanticism in all its forms, including the Seicento as a form of Romanticism *ante-litteram*, were not suited to Italy's current "historical climate": Italy was at its best when it turned to "a classical sense in life and art" (95). Writer Massimo Bontempelli went further, drawing connections not only between Romanticism and the Seicento, which he believed to be the Italian version of Romanticism, but also between those two periods and the twentieth-century avant-gardes. He stated that:

> just as decadentism and then the various French and German avant-gardisms were the last expression of the romantic period, so our decadentism (D'Annunzio) and our avant-garde (Futurism) are [...] the extreme vibration of the vast movement that began with the seventeenth century; a dissolutive and dispersive movement, the ultimate result of which is the nullity, incomprehension and artistic infertility of today (Bontempelli 94).

The Seicento, Romanticism and the avant-gardes were brought together conceptually, not so much on formal grounds, but rather as representing an art that had broken the organic connection with the public established in previous epochs. According to Bontempelli, a true reconnection with national tradition would require rethinking that relationship (see Mazzotta 894-96 and Storchi, *Massimo Bontempelli* 79-120).

The most ideologically connoted contribution to the debate came from Curt Suckert, who identified the seventeenth century as a time of "decomposition of the Latin world" due to the influence of a Northern European culture marked by Reformation values. As Suckert argued, the seventeenth century was "the product of the decomposition of the traditional classical forms, a deformation, almost a corruption of the ancient and specific plastic sense typical of the Mediterranean race" (83-84). He attributed this to the disruption caused by the metaphysical concerns of northern philosophers and the political and religious upheavals of the preceding century. The seventeenth century was equated with the Baroque, considered at the same time as a rupture of the Classicist-Renaissance equilibrium and a universal category of intellectual and moral decadence (Mazzotta 880).

Rete Mediterranea and the Nationalization of Latinity

The periodical *Rete Mediterranea*, entirely written and edited by Ardengo Soffici, was published by Vallecchi on a quarterly basis between March and December 1920. The magazine was conceived and published immediately after *La Vraie Italie*, edited by Papini and Soffici and published in 1919, with the aim of making Italy better known abroad, improving its relations with the post-war victorious nations and fostering greater cooperation between Italy

and France, thereby accomplishing both a cultural and a political mission (Somigli, "Past-Loving Florence" 486; see also De Carlis 16 and Adamson, *Avant-Garde Florence* 236). Despite its short life and the disagreements between Papini and Soffici, *La Vraie Italie*, Somigli argues, had been crucial, as it was representative of the crisis of the relationship between art and politics that had marked pre-war avant-garde culture (such as, for instance, *Lacerba*). Despite its nationalist program, it missed "the faith in the power of art to renew and transform lived experience by giving shape to modernity and its radical innovations in science, technology and social and economic relations" (Somigli, "Past-Loving Florence" 489-90). *Rete Mediterranea* attempted to reconfigure the relationship between art and life that had characterized the pre-war avant-garde movements and that seemed to have been lost in the post-war context. In the magazine, Soffici reclaimed a political role for art, rethinking the pre-war avant-garde experience and reshaping Italian Modernism's artistic and political trajectory in the post-war years. As Walter Adamson has observed, the world of 1918 was profoundly different from that of the pre-war avant-garde. The cultural avant-garde had largely collapsed in the war and the sense of political crisis in Italy created the expectation of an impending system change in politics, with Socialism looming larger than in the pre-war years due to the Bolshevik revolution ("Soffici and the Religion of Art" 60). After the war, Tuscan avant-gardists, including Soffici, distanced themselves from pre-war modernism not on the question of the latter's project of spiritual renewal, but on their assessment of the aesthetic and political means needed to fulfil it (Adamson, *Embattled Avant-Gardes* 252). According to Adamson, Soffici's model evolved into a mass movement incorporating the modernist spiritual revolution into a populist aesthetic politics, favoring nationalism over internationalism, rejecting experimentalism and celebrating heritage through a restoration of aesthetic values associated with the great moments of the Italian past ("Soffici and the Religion of Art" 60; see also Storchi, "Ardengo Soffici's *Rete Mediterranea*" 323). Within this framework, the magazine's embrace of classicism under the Mediterranean banner indicated a shift in discourses of engagement and a reformulation of aesthetic politics, in which classical references assumed a political value. In this sense, the periodical's title, *Rete Mediterranea*, was programmatic, as Soffici stated:

> I have chosen the title *Rete Mediterranea* to signify my intention to create a center of connection of all the sensitive points of the Mediterranean civilization, which I believe is superior to all. As I am a believer in Italianness, my love and my faith extend like a web to everything that is radiant in the thought and art of the kindred nations around the glorious Mediterranean basin and that is connected to Italy by ascendance or descendance. As for the program, it can be summarized as follows: defense

> and illustration of the Mediterranean culture, with the affirmation, at the same time, of a personal energy in its full development ("Dichiarazione preliminare" 19-20).

The notion of *mediterraneità*, expressed both by the title and content of the periodical, alluded to a faceted interpretation of the Mediterranean myth and was employed by Soffici to reiterate the artistic and cultural links that united Mediterranean Europe, with particular reference to France and Italy. While it drew on the opposition between the Northern and Southern European cultures that had dominated cultural discourse during the war, Soffici expanded the focus from a narrow axis between Italy and France to the broader Mediterranean area to reposition Italy as the cultural center of gravity of Southern Europe, thereby claiming Italy's primacy over (Adamson, *Avant-Garde Florence* 192-95). The notion of the Mediterranean recalled the legacy of Graeco-Roman classical civilization and reclaimed Italy's central role in the development of Western culture. Therefore, it served as a concept with both artistic and political resonance, a "site of imaginary production", as Fogu has put it, "in so far as it inhabits the liminal state between reality and imagination" (4). Located between the tradition of classical antiquity and the rootedness, primitivism and autochthonous authenticity of local tradition, the adoption of the Mediterranean captured a number of tensions, including, according to Berry Bergdoll, "the capacity of the local […] to sustain both discourses of transcendent timelessness and of nationalist specificity, of both rootedness and regionalism" (xv-xvi). The idea of *mediterraneità* lent itself both to nationalist and transnationalist agendas. As Crispin Sartwell notes regarding the classical and the baroque, it provided a "vocabulary" within which artistic and political discourses inscribed themselves, allowing them to conflate (201).

Soffici's articles in *Rete Mediterranea* often focused on the relationship between classicism and national culture. He attempted to reassess the French artistic legacy and reinforce the historical primacy of the Italian tradition, underscoring Italy's privileged position as the leader of the artistic renewal in post-war Europe. For instance, he presented sculptor Medardo Rosso's work as an example of "genuine Italianness" and defined it as "classical", using the term to describe a work as "perfect and definitive", regardless of the style, and connected instead with ideas of national character ("I disegni di Medardo Rosso" 35-41). Similarly, in reviewing Carlo Carrà's volume *Pittura metafisica* (1919), he highlighted the classicism intrinsic in Carrà's search for the object's essence and permanent quality, observing that contemporary art was now looking for "truth and substance". Italy was destined to lead in this quest, as it could be guided by the "greatest amongst our fathers" ("Pittura metafisica" 78).

The September issue of *Rete Mediterranea* featured an article on Guillaume Apollinaire, who had fought in the war and died of Spanish flu in 1918, becoming an international emblem of the artist-soldier. Apollinaire had been close to Soffici and had supported and promoted the Italian avant-garde while also championing classicism and Latinity (Adamson, *Embattled Avant-Gardes* 110-42). In his article, Soffici described Apollinaire's classicism as embodying "harmonious principles and intellectual hierarchies [...] order and perfection, and an apollonian clarity of ideas and forms". It incorporated such characteristics as discipline, a cult of reason, a sense of measure, both in his artistic and critical activities. Soffici overlooked some of Apollinaire's most overt nationalist rhetoric, such as that expressed in the essay "L'Esprit nouveau et les Poètes" (see Adamson, *Embattled Avant-Gardes* 138), and somewhat neutralized it by defining the poet as "a true fellow Italian" (Apollinaire was born in Italy), who had declared that Italy was the "mother of civilization" and who was imbued with "the spirit of [the Italian] race" ("Ricordi di vita artistica e letterararia" 220-22**)**.

In the September and December issues of *Rete Mediterranea*, Soffici published a two-part review of contemporary French art from Manet to Derain, stating that "after the death of Cézanne, Degas and Renoir […] the artistic primacy that France has held since the eighteenth century can be considered finished" ("Bilancio dell'arte francese contemporanea" 261). He criticized most French artists, including Manet, Monet, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Seurat, Matisse, Picasso and Derain, for being mediocre, unoriginal or too preoccupied with technique. In contrast, he praised only three artists, Renoir, Cézanne and Degas, whom Soffici inscribed in the great Italian tradition. In particular, Cézanne's art was associated with the "tragic and sensual realism" of artists like Masaccio, Michelangelo, Raffaello, Tiziano, Tintoretto, the Carraccis, and Caravaggio, while Michelangelo, Raffaello and Caravaggio were also evoked with reference to Degas' style and technique. Degas was connected with the Italian tradition through the "classical" quality of his art, i.e., its orderly and harmonious character that made it timeless ("Bilancio dell'arte francese contemporanea" 261-72 and 364-71). Driven by nationalist concerns, Soffici's overarching argument was that even the most successful French artists were indebted to the Italian tradition. He challenged France's predominance in contemporary art, with few exceptions, and he contended that only the classical tradition, defined by the Italian artistic pantheon, held legitimate primacy. Thus, Soffici not only reclaimed the historical value of the great Italian tradition, but he also established its ongoing relevance and influence on contemporary art (Storchi, "Ardengo Soffici's *Rete mediterranea*").

Conclusion

In an article titled "Spirito ed estetica del fascismo", published in *Lo spettatore italiano* in May 1924, Ardengo Soffici demonstrated how decades of redefinition, appropriation and politicization of the idea of *latinità* had fed into the ideology of the fascist regime. In his effort to develop a program of "real intellectual, moral and aesthetic consolidation" for the new regime, he framed Fascism as a "movement of Italian historical palingenesis". He thus invoked an art that reflected the "healthy spirit that has always inspired and directed the traditional genius of our nation", asserting that culture, literature, and art aligned with Fascism's historical aim could only be "modern" and "realist", "that is, interpreting, following and somewhat molding the forms and the spirit of our Nation. Therefore, the spiritual movement that is in our vows could be defined as classical" ("Spirito ed estetica del fascismo" 6-7). Soffici went on to define classicism, not as reaction or retrieval of exhausted forms and ideas, but as the awareness that true poetry and art can only be the expression of the 'new man', who fully engages with his society. He further defined classicism as the respect of a political and moral order and principles that unite all members of the same national community. According to Soffici, classical artists had always been present in the Italian tradition, from Dante to Machiavelli, Parini, Foscolo, Leopardi, Manzoni, Carducci, Giotto, Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, and Canova, that is, artists imbued with the spirit of their time and closely involved in their country's life.

The 'classical' artist, therefore, was defined in relation to their civic commitment, which would necessarily translate into formal order. Classicism, removed from its strict association with Graeco-Roman antiquity, was reformulated in nationalistic terms and envisaged the complete interpenetration of aesthetic and politics. This reformulation drew on post-avant-garde debates on Latinity, *classicità* and the nation and focused on the ideological value of the classical, which went beyond its strict definition. Soffici's early 1920s definition of classicism demonstrated how artistic and cultural debates on the relationship between modernity, Latinity and the nation had resulted in an increasing nationalization of the idea of *latinità*. The concept evolved from a transnational, macro-nationalist idea at the turn of the century and during the war, to a more narrowly defined concept that culminated in the identification of Latinity with *Romanità* during Fascism (see Storchi, "Latinità, modernità e fascismo"). Latinity and *classicità* were used as identity-defining categories, in the quest for a national artistic essence, capable of creating an ideal link between tradition and modernity and claiming a social role for artists that countered the increasingly pressing relationship between art and market (see Cangiano 228-29). In this sense, the idea of *classicità*, charged with the identity connotations

of Latinity and Mediterraneanness, rooted art in the nation's historical identity, laying the ideological groundwork for the relationship between art and politics and consolidating the artist's position within the newly formed fascist regime.

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The Latinity of the Sister Nations at the Dawn of Modern Publishing: Editorial Initiatives and Intellectual Exchange between Italy and Argentina (1870-1910)

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Abstract

This paper explores the role of Italian publishers and intellectuals in Buenos Aires during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It examines how their activities relied on the concept of Latinity to strengthen collaboration between Italy and Argentina. By examining key publishing initiatives, it highlights the close ties between the two countries, forged through Italian immigration and a shared commitment to national development. The paper begins by analyzing the birth of an Italo-Argentine book market and the vital role of Italian associations in fostering bilateral cultural exchanges. It then discusses the influence of Italian publishers and intellectuals like Basilio Cittadini, Giovan Battista Cuneo, and Piero Barbera, whose works sought to promote Italy and Argentine's transnational identity as sister nations and advocated for international solidarity. The paper concludes by reflecting on the publishing efforts during the Centenary of Argentina's Independence, which contributed to shaping a transnational and transcultural Italo-Argentine community. This community laid the foundation for enduring cultural connections and dialogue, despite the challenges posed by rising nationalism and political changes in both countries.

Keywords

Publishing, Italo-Argentine community, Intellectual exchange, Transcultural exchange, Transnational Institutions

Introduction

On 21 September 1895, *La Nación*, Argentina's most widely-read daily newspaper, founded in 1870 by the Italian-oriented former president Bartolomé Mitre, published a long article on the Italian community in Buenos Aires. The day before, the city had awakened to the "repeated bursting of bombs and rockets" (Korn and de la Torre 41) commemorating the taking of Rome in 1870, which the Italian community regarded as its national event.[46] The celebrations offered a pretext to reflect on the role of the Italian community in Argentina. *La Nación* highlighted that "no nation of our [Latin] race has been able to bind Italians to its land better than the Argentine Republic" (68). The article argued that not only the profound bond with the Italo-Argentine community but also a deeper affinity of intentions linked the two countries. Indeed, *La Nación* concluded:

> Hundreds of thousands [of Italians] are involved in agriculture or industry in this country: they are committed not only out of interest but also out of affection; they get along with us, and they even assimilate the customs of the *gauchos* and, for all that, they prove to be a factor of great importance for our rapid progress (Korn and de La Torre 68).

[46] Translations from Italian and Spanish are my own, unless otherwise indicated.

According to *La Nacíon*, the relationship between Argentina and Italy followed two paths. On the one hand, Italian workers contributed to Argentina's agriculture and industry. On the other hand, the relationship was based on cultural and emotional similarities that linked Italians to *gauchos*, the herdsmen of the Pampas plains. Historically, *gauchos* played a significant role in the rural economies of these regions, particularly in cattle ranching. After the publication of José Hernández's *Martín Fierro* (1872), *gauchos* had become symbolic of Argentine identity. *La Nación* used the connection between Italians and *gauchos* to emphasize the significant role Italians played in modern Argentina. To fully understand the importance of this connection, it is useful to trace the early phases of Italian immigration to Argentina.

In 1853, after the ouster of dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas and the proclamation of the Constitution, Argentina faced the challenge of populating its vast territories. The liberal leaders – known as the Generation of 1837, including individuals such as Bartolomé Mitre, Juan Bautista Alberdi, and Domingo Faustino Sarmiento – believed that the best way to populate these uninhabited areas was by attracting European immigrants. They argued that Europeans carried the essential values needed to build a modern nation aligned with Western civilization (Delaney 91). Domingo Sarmiento, a leading advocate of immigration, championed this vision in his influential 1845 work *Civilización y barbarie. Vida de Juan Facundo Quiroga*. The book's success solidified Sarmiento's belief that the right kind of European immigrants could help Argentina overcome the cultural legacies of its colonial past and create a new Argentine culture. This vision became a reality in 1876 with the passage of the Avellaneda Immigration Law, which explicitly promoted immigration by establishing a system to receive newcomers, providing them with housing, job assistance, and financial support to ease their transition. Through this policy, Argentina's leaders sought to shape the country's future by welcoming those who could contribute to its growth and modernization. By the end of the century, the modest flow of immigrants turned into a steady stream and then a flood. With Europe's growing "demand for grains, beef, and wool", Argentina emerged as "one of the world's fastest-growing economies" (Delaney 96). The nation's population grew exponentially, from 1.737.076 people in 1869 to 3.954.911 in 1895, and reached 7.885.237 by 1914, of which 2.357.952 were foreigners. Italian migration played a decisive role in this process, accounting for 12.5% of Argentina's population in 1895 and 19.2% of the total immigrant population by 1914 (Le Bihan 5).

The mass immigration to Argentina did not receive unanimous support from the country's leaders in the last decades of the nineteenth century. While liberal intellectuals continued to advocate for European immigration to build an Argentine identity, differing views

began to emerge within the ruling class. One of the main concerns was the "nature of the immigrants" (Delaney 95). The hope that European immigrants would bring skilled labor, foster rapid economic growth, and contribute to modernization was not fully realized. Most of the immigrants came from Spain and Italy, and many were uneducated, forming the foundation of an urban working class that often provoked "more disdain than admiration from native Argentines" (Delaney 95). Furthermore, many of these immigrants brought socialist and anarchist ideologies, leading elites to blame them for labor unrest. By the 1890s, prominent Argentine criminologists, like Cornelio Moyano Gacitúa and Miguel Lancelotti, were calling on the government to restrict the entry of immigrants they deemed undesirable, citing concerns about social unrest, crime, disease, and delinquency (Zimmermann 36).

The Argentine government found itself in a complex situation. On the one hand, immigrants were essential to the country's economic and social progress. On the other hand, managing such large and diverse migratory flows presented significant challenges. Finally, there was a pressing need to forge a collective identity that both the native population and immigrants could embrace. In response, the government intensified efforts to naturalize immigrants during the 1890s, viewing this as a solution to the dual challenges of integrating newcomers and building a cohesive Argentine identity. (Delaney 97). At the same time, the spread of a pro-Spanish sentiment – particularly through the promotion of the Spanish language at the expense of other immigrant languages – and the celebration of the *gaucho* became central to a process of 'Argentinization', which aimed to define the foundational elements of Argentine nationality, such as language, literature, and the education of future generations. Ultranationalist intellectuals like Ricardo Rojas, Manuel Galvez, and Leopoldo Lugones played a crucial role in this process. In their attempt to define the characteristics of Argentine nationality, ultranationalist intellectuals were inevitably compelled to consider the impact of the large migration wave on the nation's identity. This debate intensified in the lead-up to Argentina's Centenary in 1910 and escalated into xenophobia in the years that followed (Patat, *Vida nueva* 34). It should be noted that immigrants from the Anglo-Saxon world were held in higher regard, while Italians increasingly became associated with rising crime. Furthermore, the growing influence of "Hispanism, a movement defined by its sympathy toward Spain and the belief that Spain and its former colonies formed a single spiritual and ethnic community" (Delaney 101) further undermined the Italians' standing in Argentine society.

In this context, Italo-Argentine intellectuals aimed to maintain a moral connection to their homeland while fostering a productive relationship with their new host country. They advocated for universal solidarity in areas like labor, economics, and politics. As I argue in this

article, the concepts of ‘Latinity’ and ‘Sister nations’ were crucial to shaping their vision of solidarity and the fraternal bond between Argentina and Italy. While significant attention has been paid to the development of the Italian press in Argentina at the turn of the century (Carnicci; Bertagna; Sergi, *Patria di carta*), less focus has been placed on the cultural roles of publishers. This paper aims to investigate the relations between publishers, editors and writers, and Argentine intellectuals, who promoted the shared Latin identity of the ‘Sister Nations’. My analysis specifically explores the aspects of Latin heritage that Italo-Argentine intellectuals relied on to bridge the gap between their homeland and Argentina. Furthermore, I examine which aspects of modernity these intellectuals embraced to promote transnational cooperation between Italy and Argentina, despite the negative views on modernization held by influential figures like Rojas and Gálvez.

In the first section, I discuss the initiatives of Italian associations based in Buenos Aires and the development of an Italo-Argentine book market. Early contacts between these associations in Buenos Aires and the local government, dating back to the years before the migratory wave, laid the material foundations for a dialogue between the two countries. This collaboration resulted in the establishment of important institutions, including schools and libraries, such as the elementary schools and library of the Società Italiana di Unione e Benevolenza. In the second part of the article, I examine the intensifying editorial relations between Italy and Argentina during the mass migration period, focusing on the volumes printed for the Centenary of Argentine Independence in 1910 by Luigi Bacci and Lorenzo Faleni. Despite political efforts in Argentina to reduce Italian cultural influence, these publishing initiatives fostered collaboration in response to the rising ultranationalism, promoted by advocates of ‘Argentinization’.

Immigrant Publishers in the Argentine Book Market (1867-1899)

The first Italian association in Buenos Aires, the Società Italiana di Unione e Benevolenza, was founded on 18 July 1858, with a focus on mutual aid, welfare, and education. One of its major initiatives was the opening of primary schools in 1867 (Giuliani-Balestrino 747). On that occasion, honorary member Giovanni Ramorino, a professor of natural sciences at the University of Buenos Aires, articulated his vision of modernity by highlighting the essential milestones in the advancement of civilization. He argued that education and the dissemination of knowledge could ensure universal progress (7). He further expanded on this idea, arguing that the newly founded Italian schools would benefit not only the Italian community but also the host nation, advocating for knowledge to be a shared resource that enriched the entire

community (8). While Ramorino promoted the superiority of the Italian language and literature to foster patriotism, he also desired to fully integrate Italian schools into Argentine society. Moreover, Ramorino recognized that education alone was insufficient to improve living conditions and he announced the foundation of a free, publicly accessible library that would house books in Italian (10). This library would acquire both ancient and modern books through exchange with publishers in Italy, facilitating the study of the Italian language and history and reinforcing the connection between the Italian diaspora and its homeland. His liberal ideals, influenced by the Risorgimento, determined the library's initial collection, which by 1872 included works from liberal-Catholic and democratic authors of the Italian unification process (Pellico, Cantù, Tommaseo) and classic works (Dante, Ovid). It also contained technical, professional, and scientific books (Cantone, Lessona, Mantegazza), school textbooks (Troya, Scavia, Parato), and children's literature (Lafontaine, Muzzi, Cantù) (Serrao 52).

In 1867, Ramorino concluded his speech with a call for unity and solidarity, which he deemed essential for the growth of the Italian community in the Rioplatense region. He emphasized that this community could not rely on support from either the homeland or local resources, urging them to embrace the resources of modern transnational civilization, i.e., education and the border-crossing dissemination of culture and science (13-14). The impact of a new educational system on the book market is clear in the expansion of Italian publishing houses in Argentina. Alongside Treves' hegemonic position, publishers that heavily invested in classics and educational books, such as Zanichelli, Le Monnier, and Barbera, were highly prominent in the Argentine market. Acting as cultural mediators, these professional editors played a significant role in strengthening ties between Italy and Argentina. As I will discuss in what follows, they participated in the intellectual networks of their time and were crucial in opening new avenues for international dialogue and exchange.

Recent studies situate the birth of modern publishing in the second half of the nineteenth century (Chartier and Martin; Turi; Tranfaglia and Vittoria). During this period, the book market entered a new era, distinctly different from the "ancient typographical regime" (Chartier and Martin 776-87). The main concerns revolved around new production technologies that allowed for increased print runs and a greater focus on promotional and distribution strategies. European publishers of the period, representing the liberal vision of the ascending bourgeois class, aimed to reach a wider network of bookshops while distinguishing themselves in an increasingly crowded market. A significant aspect of the development of a modern consciousness was the debate about the publisher's social function. The dawn of the modern publishing era was characterized not only by the rapid development of new technologies in

production, distribution, and promotion but also by public statements in which publishers defined the importance of their profession. These issues appeared even more pressing when expanding into distant markets like Argentina.

The first Italian publishers who ventured into the South American Republic in the mid-1870s encountered very different circumstances. Focusing on Buenos Aires, where the Italian community was most concentrated, the impact of Italian migration appears significant. In 1869, Buenos Aires had a population of around 187.000, of which 41.000 were Italians. By 1895, the city's population had grown to over 663.000, with more than 180.000 Italians. By 1914, Buenos Aires had reached a population of around 1.5 million, with over 312.000 Italians (Korn and de la Torre 45). Despite this significant presence, publishers could not rely solely on this community, as most Italians in the country lacked the financial means to buy books and the literacy to read them. This was highlighted by Florentine publisher Piero Barbera (1854-1921) after his trip to Argentina in 1899. Besides, Italy did not join the Montevideo Convention on copyright concerning Argentina (1889) until 1900 (Donati 648), which made enforcing laws on book trade difficult in the earlier years. Barbera highlighted many contradictions within the phenomenon of Italian emigration to Argentina. While the Italo-Argentine community thrived in the food and wine industries, the cultural sector received little attention. He attributed this to a lack of investment by the Italian government, particularly in the book industry. He believed that the growth of international trade could eventually reshape Italy's image abroad. From his pedagogical and moral perspective, Barbera saw the modern book industry as essential to spreading scientific and cultural ideas that would advance human civilization. To improve the book market in Argentina, Barbera suggested a manyfold action: investing in the education of Italians in Buenos Aires, promoting initiatives to provide free access to publications, encouraging the development of public libraries with easily accessible collections, and preparing Italian publishers to meet the demands of international markets. Barbera emphasized the importance of recognizing and nurturing the expanding global market and underscored the necessity of a sophisticated system for production, distribution, and promotion.

For a Universal Solidarity: Latinity in Italian Newspapers in Argentina

At the end of the century, some of Barbera's ideas had already been put into action. One of the most prominent Italian personalities in the publishing field, the journalist and editor Basilio Cittadini had founded in 1876 the well-known newspaper *La Patria Italiana* with a specific intention: to strengthen the Italo-Argentine community in the Rioplatense region and shaping "an Italian conscience" (Bertagna 28). To this end, he promoted events to commemorate key dates in the Italy's patriotic calendar (Bertagna 28), with financial support from the Italian

Consulate (Franzina 184). He also started a series of 'battles' with Argentine newspapers, defending Italians and denouncing the "discrimination, abuse, and violence" they faced (Bertagna 29). Moreover, Cittadini appealed to the Italian community in the Río de la Plata to ensure that Argentina, "while preserving its autonomy, sovereignty, and splendid institutions" would acquire "a political, moral, and social character that reflects a hint of vague Italian identity" (Bertagna 32). His vision extended beyond simply maintaining a patriotic connection with Italy, as he celebrated the Argentine nation and advocated for the integration of Italians in the nation's moral and cultural fabric. He called for the emergence of an "Italy of Argentina" which would be "politically freed from all ties with the homeland" yet still connected to it through an original bond (Bertagna 32). In essence, he emphasized the importance of maintaining ties with Italy, while also recognizing that the Italo-Argentine colony had developed its own distinct identity, deeply rooted in its new home.

Alongside internationally renowned figures like Basilio Cittadini and Giovan Battista Cuneo,[47] several other writers, journalists, and editors established a constant exchange with prominent Argentine intellectuals such as Bartolomé Mitre, president of the Argentine Republic from 1862 to 1868 and translator of Dante's *Divine Comedy*; Nicolás Avellaneda, president from 1874 to 1880; the brothers Héctor and Mariano Varela, founders of the important newspaper *La Tribuna*; and Domingo Sarmiento, Avellaneda's predecessor as President and a crucial personality in the relationship between Italy and Argentina (Bellini 161-166). These Argentine intellectuals supported the cause of Italian independence, offered financial support to Italian communities affected by the floods of the early 1880s, and defended the rights of Italian labor organizations in Buenos Aires.

A notable case of this solidarity came from Mariano Varela. In March 1859, when a committee was formed in Buenos Aires at Cuneo's initiative to support Garibaldi in the war against Austria, Varela actively participated in the fundraising efforts. On this occasion, Varela highlighted the fraternal union between Argentina and Italy, aligning the Italian cause with that

[47] Giovan Battista Cuneo (1809-1875) was a central figure in the Italo-Argentine community. He founded the newspaper *L'Italiano* in 1841, which served as a platform for advancing republican ideals and addressing complex political issues in South America. A member of Mazzini's *Giovine Italia*, Cuneo participated in the insurrections between 1833 and 1834 in Italy before fleeing to South America. While he described *L'Italiano* as focused on Italian affaires and non-political in relation to Argentine matters (Bertagna 20-21), he was nonetheless deeply engaged with local issues, particularly during the early 1870s when tensions with Brazil threatened commerce and communication. Cuneo voiced his concerns about the potential war in 1872, emphasizing the importance of maintaining international relations for progress. His universalist outlook, influenced by his interactions with Garibaldi in the 1830s, determined his belief that communication with foreign countries was vital for the advancement of society (Cuneo 1).

of Argentina (Parisi 91-97). Varela's discourse created a specific dichotomy between different European nations, asserting that "there are nations who have the sad privilege of oppressing the earth with their armies, or pressing with their squadrons the backs of the seas" (Parisi 94). In contrast, he added, "there are other nations that have the privilege of arousing universal sympathy, whether they ascend the Capitol with the crown of the triumphant, or draw the sword of the combatant, or stand crucified on Calvary" (Parisi 94-95). He placed Italy in the latter group, calling it the "cradle of heroism, home of liberty, unquenchable flame of science and the arts" and above all, "common mother of the generous Latin races, who, scattered across the face of the earth, feel united by a common bond, share the same passions, burn with the same love, and march united in the conquest of liberty" (Parisi 95). Hence, Varela's discourse contrasted non-Latin nations, marked by oppression and violence, with the Latin races, characterized by generosity, heroism, and a passion for freedom. He emphasized the superiority of the Latin races, rooted in their Italian heritage, in science and the arts, which united them not only in political causes but also in shared ideals. This sense of Latin universalism found expression in the fraternal bond between Argentines and Italians, as well as in Italy's ability to spread its art and science across the globe. Valera's speech became a significant reference point for the Italian community in Buenos Aires, symbolizing the relations of brotherhood between Italy and Argentina. For instance, fifty years later, in 1907, Giuseppe Parisi, a prominent member of the Italian community, included the speech in its entirety in his seminal book *Storia degli italiani nell'Argentina*.

However, with a few notable exceptions like *La Tribuna,* Spanish-language newspapers often criticized the Italian community, focusing on incidents during cultural anniversaries and the perceived risks posed by Italian schools. Italians were frequently ranked among the least appreciated immigrant communities, with Anglo-Saxon and French communities viewed more favorably (Bertagna 30). By the early 1880s, the Italian community in Buenos Aires faced a dual representation. On the one hand, Argentine politicians perpetuated stereotypes and criticisms, often rooted in literary narratives. In 1881, the liberal politician Domingo Sarmiento, once a strong supporter of immigration, participated in the First Italian Pedagogical Congress, where he emphasized the dangers of teaching Italian and portrayed Italian immigrants through exaggerated caricatures and mocking allusions (Donghi de Halperín 468). The rhetorical use of physical characteristics conflated moral corruption with physical ugliness, fueling the spread of stereotypes, as seen in Eugenio Cambaceres's 1887 novel *El Sangre*. In the novel, Cambaceres linked criminal behavior and greed, attributed to Italian immigrants, with the caricatured facial features of the protagonist's father, the Neapolitan Esteban Piazza.

Three years later, in 1890, Julián Martel, associated Italians' behavior with their physical features in his novel *La Bolsa*, underlining the greed of the Italian protagonist. These representations, aligned with the work of Argentine criminologists like Cornelio Moyano Gacitúa and Miguel Lancelotti, echoed biological research on Latin races, reinforcing "popular belief in the intrinsic 'criminal tendencies' of Latin immigrants" (Zimmermann 33).

In this context, the Italian community sought to gain recognition from local authorities by organizing initiatives that highlighted its contributions to Argentina's economic growth. In response to narratives portraying Italians, as representatives of the Latin race, as lacking a strong work ethic, the community held its first major event, the First Italian Workers' Industrial Art Exhibition on 20 March 1881. The event received the support of President Julio Roca, who not only provided the venues but also attended the opening ceremony. The initiative's significance was confirmed by the responses of two widely-read newspapers, *La Prensa* and *La Nación*. In an article, published on January 1881, *La Prensa* contrasted Italian scientists and engineers like Paolo Mantegazza and Giovanni Pelleschi, who accurately described Argentina through careful observation, with other Europeans who spoke about the country with no real knowledge (Sergi, *Historia de los italianos en la Argentina* 412). The newspaper emphasized that the exhibition made Italy's contributions to Argentina's progress and civilization even clearer, reinforcing the bond between the two nations. Similarly, *La Nación* noted that beyond a shared goal of advancing civilization, a sense of familiarity allowed Argentines to appreciate Italian achievements (Sergi, *Historia de los italianos en la Argentina* 412).

During this period, Italo-Argentine intellectuals worked to resolve the ambiguous narrative surrounding Italian immigrants by fostering solidarity through both intellectual initiatives and material actions, such as during the 1882 Verona flood. This disaster strengthened collaboration between Italian and Argentine intellectuals in Buenos Aires. This collaboration culminated in the publication of the bilingual Spanish-Italian volume *Charitas* in 1882. Edited by Attilio Boraschi and Carlo Fortunato Scotti,[48] the volume featured contributions from prominent Argentine figures, such as Bartolomé Mitre and Nicolás Avellaneda. The concept of Latinity played a topical role in the book. For instance, liberal intellectual Nicolás Avellaneda expanded on the idea of 'Charitas', linking the Latin language and heritage with a sense of universalism. In his brief essay, "Una idea, mejor que cien frases", co-written with Domingo Sarmiento and Bartolomé Mitre, Avellaneda explained his

[48] Boraschi was a physician and president of the *Bonaerense* Committee of the Dante Alighieri Society (1896-1900), while Scotti was a writer and journalist, who was among the members of the Unione Operai Italiani and Società Italiana di Unione e Benevolenza.

interpretation of 'Charitas' as an ideal rooted in Cicero and connected to universal cooperation and support among humankind. Citing Cicero's expression "caritas generis humani" (*De Finibus*, 5, 65), he argued that nothing was more important than cooperation, affection, and human solidarity. He identified Italy as the birthplace of the language and the Italians, descendants of the Romans, as the people who spread the idea of *Caritas* across the world, rhetorically asking: "Are not the conquerors, the pilgrims, the strangers, the barbarians the bloody thread and iron fabric of Roman history?" (7). By emphasizing the Roman Empire's legacy and Italy's role in spreading noble sentiments, Avellaneda reinforced his vision of universality rooted in Latinity and the celebration of Italy. He concluded by asserting that Italy, as the mother of the Latin people, deserved their aid in times of need.

The volume *Charitas* aimed to propose a specific political narrative that framed the relationship between Argentina and Italy as one of the most successful examples of universal cooperation within the Latin world. The same idea was expressed in a text, included in the book, by Paolo Mantegazza (1831-1910), a physiologist and revolutionary, and friend of Bartolomé Mitre:

> Whenever I think of the Argentine Republic, among my dearest memories, the noble figure of Bartolomeo Mitre comes to mind. In Mitre, I see one of the most splendid champions of that Latin race, which gives the human family the most polymorphous men. He was a passionate poet and profound historian, he was a great general and acute politician, a man of thought and a man of action, one of the very few who, like Caesar, can say: I wrote the history of my country with pen and sword (Mantegazza, "Un autografo di Mantegazza" 8).

The Italian professor's interest in Darwin's theories led him to South America between 1854 and 1858 and again in 1861 and 1863, where he met eminent Argentine personalities such as Juan María Gutierrez, an opponent of dictator Rosas and rector of the University of Buenos Aires from 1861 to 1874, and governor Martín Miguel de Güemes (Micelli and Grossutti 760-761). Mantegazza detailed his views on South American civilization in his 1867 book *Rio de la Plata e Tenerife: viaggi e avventure di un giovane medico italiano nei paesi dell'America Latina*. In this volume, he attempted to define the physical and social landscape of South American populations, often employing a comparative approach that contrasted South American customs, climate, and natural environments with those of Europe. For Mantegazza, the connection with Argentina extended beyond commercial or economic ties to include deep emotional bonds, which he considered essential for future progress. From this emotional connection, he envisioned a brotherhood between the two closely linked nations, advocating for a broader sense of universality that would ultimately encompass all of humanity:

> May the portraits of human nature inspire compassion for the Indian, who is indeed our relative, and love for the Creole, who is our brother. Travel descriptions often please many because they satisfy one of the deepest needs of the human mind: the desire to move, see, and explore new horizons and ideas. Additionally, these descriptions fulfill another profound longing of the heart: to know and love people who, under different skies and in distant lands, are born and die as we do, sharing the same suffering and hope. May my book, modest and sincere as it is, meet these two needs of both mind and heart (Mantegazza, *Rio de la Plata e Tenerife* 12).

Mantegazza hoped that the material and emotional connection within the Latin world, from Argentina and Brazil to Italy, would foster a sense of universal cooperation, primarily grounded in the pursuit of knowledge, an idea he also reiterated in his 1882 article in *Charitas*. In the same volume, Bartolomé Mitre expanded on Avellaneda's idea of universal *Caritas* by drawing a parallel between the moral and physical worlds. He argued that just as universal attraction governs the physical universe, charity maintains a moral balance among humanity. He used this analogy to frame his vision of migration, suggesting that charity was the supreme principle connecting all human 'races'. He argued that charity was essential to migration, as it enables people to both offer and receive welcome, fostering solidarity and social justice among different civilizations. Mitre sought to inspire a sense of universal solidarity while reinforcing Italy's role as a leading Latin nation in spreading these values, not only through exploration but also through the movement of people across borders (Avellaneda and Mitre 7).

The idea of Latin or universal solidarity was also promoted by another influential Italian newspaper in Buenos Aires: *L'Operaio Italiano*, which printed in 1882 a bilingual volume titled *Plata-Po*. The contributors to this volume were once again distinguished Italian and Argentine intellectuals, like Cittadini, Boraschi, Sarmiento, Mitre, and Avellaneda. One of the contributors was president Julio Roca, who used Latinity to justify his imperialistic aims at the expense of the indigenous populations. In his brief introduction to the volume, Roca invoked the Roman Empire as a symbol of Latin power, emphasizing the word 'Imperio', which Avellaneda, in the volume *Charitas*, had identified as one of the universal terms disseminated by the Latin language. Roca argued that the Roman Empire had been reborn in modern Italy, suggesting that Italy's progress demonstrated Latinity's destiny to lead humanity toward progress, while also asserting the supposed superiority of Latinity (Roca 4). In doing so, he aimed to forge a symbolic connection between Argentina and Italy, emphasizing their shared Latin heritage. Roca translated this vision into an expansionist policy, advocating for the subjugation or elimination of indigenous populations. However, other Argentine politicians interpreted the link between Italy and Argentina differently. While Roca promoted imperialism, Avellaneda, in his contribution to *Plata-Po*, offered a contrasting perspective. He

acknowledged the leadership role of Latin peoples but emphasized a vision of pacifism and universal cooperation. He cited a Virgilian verse, "Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento", reminding the Latins to govern with peace, help the oppressed, and subdue arrogance rather than dominate other populations (Avellaneda and Sarmiento 4). Furthermore, Mitre stressed that collaboration between Argentines and Italians should be founded not on imperialistic ambitions, but on a shared commitment to productive labor and mutual support, which could also benefit the indigenous population (Mitre 4).

This intense period of collaboration between Italian and Argentine intellectuals in Buenos Aires, which countered the narrative that relegated Latin immigrants to the margins of society, is further epitomized by the bilingual volume titled *Partenope,* published just a few months after *Charitas* and *Plata-Po* in 1883. Introduced by Basilio Cittadini and edited by journalists Luigi Spinelli and Salvatore Curzio, *Partenope* was animated by a strong anticlerical sentiment. In the volume, Cittadini advocated for the proclamation of 20 September as Italian National Day, commemorating the Taking of Rome (3). This vision was supported by Mitre in his text "Pro Ischia", which exemplified the fraternal affinity between the two countries through the figure of Garibaldi (3). Mitre's ties to Garibaldi helped shape his universalist outlook, which distinguished him from President Roca's vision of Latinity. Garibaldi's commitment to supporting oppressed peoples in the name of "humanitarian socialism" (Radicchi 56) influenced Mitre's view on the fraternal bond between Italy and Argentina. His article narrated the legend of Empedocles at Mount Etna, referenced to Pliny's death at Vesuvius, and culminated with Garibaldi's entry into Naples to fulfill his "liberator dream" (Mitre 3). In Mitre's portrayal, Garibaldi, wrapped in an 'American poncho', envisioned ancient and modern poets gathered at Vesuvius, linking contemporary liberation heroes to great Latin thinkers. This imagery not only connected Italy and Argentina but also framed their relationship as one of freedom and solidarity, in contrast to Roca's vision of domination.

His call resonated with other Argentine authors, confirming public recognition of Italy's contribution to Argentina's foundation and development – through commerce, education, and culture – and positioning Italy, Argentina, and the Latin world at the forefront of modern civilization. Jacobo Varela, brother of Héctor and Mariano, founders of *La Tribuna*, created a specific differentiation between short-term political concerns held by South American nationalists and the necessity for long-term, universal cooperation in his article "Las dos Americas". The latter, grounded in education, was essential to advance civilization (Varela 14). Drawing on sociological studies, he argued that the principal advantage of modernity was its

ability to provide education to the majority of society (Varela 14). He concluded by asserting that the "Latin race" should embrace the idea that progress was achievable only if each generation possessed greater potential for advancement than the previous one.

In short, these initiatives were crucial for the Italian community in Buenos Aires, providing platforms for fruitful exchange with the Argentine cultural field and fostering a foundation for transnational cooperation. However, the narrative of Latin solidarity was often challenged by stereotypes and prejudices against Italians within Argentine society. The duality of representation faced by the Italian community – a simultaneous embrace and critique – highlighted the complexities of the debate on identity in Argentina. Despite this, through cultural events and intellectual engagement, the Italo-Argentine community attempted to reshape popular perception, using the concept of Latinity to assert their rightful place within Argentina's socio-political fabric.

The Argentina Centennial in 1910: International Cooperation and the Book Market

The publishing initiatives discussed in the previous section played a crucial role in expanding exchanges between Italy and Argentina and fostering an Italo-Argentine identity rooted in Latinity in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Yet, the first significant opportunity to assess the state of relations between the two countries emerged during the Centenary of the Argentine Republic's Independence in 1910. This period was marked by conflicting attitudes, particularly from the local government, which resisted the integration of Italians into the Rio de la Plata region. Local politicians, driven by nationalism, pursued a process of 'Argentinization' in sectors where immigrant influence was growing, notably employment and education. In the debates surrounding Italian immigration, Argentine intellectuals and politicians assumed different positions vis-à-vis Latinity. In the lead-up to the Centenary, stereotypes about Latin immigrants, especially Italians, became increasingly prevalent. British analyst Nowell Lake Watson's 1908 report *The Argentine as a Market* sheds light on these stereotypes. Drawing on his observations during a tour of Argentina in 1906-7, Watson acknowledged the "predominating position held by the Latin races, and especially the Italians" (31) in Argentina's labor market, particularly regarding revenue generation. However, he portrayed these workers negatively, describing them as "lethargic" and "often untrustworthy," and requiring "constant surveillance" (22). While he recognized the advantages of Latin workers, such as low labor costs and adaptability to Argentina's tropical climate, he also asserted that they required consistent oversight, unlike Anglo-Saxons (14). This portrayal reinforced existing stereotypes and further entrenched the perceived divide between Anglo-

Saxon and Latin workers in Argentina.

In the same period, Emilio Zuccarini, a prominent member of the Italian community in Buenos Aires, addressed the attitudes toward Latin workers. In 1910, he published *Il lavoro degli italiani nella Repubblica Argentina*. In the chapter titled "Responso Nazionalista", Zuccarini observed that Argentine intellectuals had been attempting for years to remove foreign influences from the nation's social structure (462). He noted that after an initial phase of prosperity, a period of political crisis brought uncertainty about the future, prompting some Argentine intellectuals to protest against the 'invasion' of foreign elements. At the same time, according to Zuccarini, the Italian community appealed to its sense of 'Italianness' in response to the South American authorities' concern about immigration.

Zuccarini identified two distinct attitudes toward immigration among Argentine intellectuals: one group, including figures like Manuel Belgrano, Bernardino Rivadavia, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, and Bartolomé Mitre, supported immigration and believed it brought prosperity to Argentina. The other group, including Ricardo Rojas, Horacio Quiroga, Juan Bautista Bustos, José Félix Aldao, Juan Manuel de Rosas, and Ricardo López Jordán, was more skeptical. Zuccarini provocatively suggested that the latter group might have preferred Argentina's vast lands to remain empty. He also discussed Ricardo Rojas's defense of Spanish heritage, but argued that the pro-immigration group ultimately prevailed, destroying what he called the "so-called Spanish civilization" (466). Zuccarini's analysis served his own position, as not all intellectuals of the first group consistently supported the Italian community.[49] Zuccarini highlighted the importance of immigration, as it had brought a cosmopolitan component in Argentina's progress. He emphasized that the Italian contribution was particularly significant in opposing Spanish power and aiding the country's rebirth following independence. The writer concluded that both the Argentine intellectuals' defense of Spanish origins and the Italian community's appeal to Italianness were inadequate, as social evolution required integrating diverse, complementary elements (462-463).

Zuccarini ultimately proposed a third path that focused on international cooperation and that fashioned the Italo-Argentine community as the strongest embodiment of the Latin world. He emphasized the significant contributions of Italians to Argentina's labor market, portraying the Italian community as a powerful driving force in the country's economic development. He

[49] For instance, in 1886, Sarmiento expressed frustration with the growing influence of Italian schools run by the Società Italiana di Unione e Benevolenza. These schools promoted the Italian language, prompting reaction from Sarmiento, who believed in the crucial role of the Spanish language in the education and formation of Argentina's future citizens (Di Tullio 42).

concluded by envisioning a future in which the strong ties between Italians and Argentines would unite two noble streams of Latin blood into a single entity capable of standing against any other race (Zuccarini 158). However, Zuccarini's argument glossed over key historical events, such as the 1902 Residency Law, implemented by Miguel Cané, which marked a shift in Argentina's immigration policy toward stricter control. In contrast to Watson's negative portrayal of Latin immigrants (Zimmermann 33), Zuccarini reaffirmed the central role of Italians in Argentina's labor market, positioning them as the cornerstone in the development of a unique transoceanic Latin identity rooted in labor. His stance reflected a form of "diasporic nationalism", which is often "an integrated' or "primarily cultural or low-political feature of pan-nationalism" (Hemstad and Stadius 6).

During the debate on the work ethic of Latin workers and Italian immigrants, nationalism also influenced the education sector. Prominent nationalists, such as Ricardo Rojas, Manuel Gálvez, and Leopoldo Lugones, despite their differing ideologies, were united in their commitment to a national identity grounded in the Spanish language and heritage. They emphasized the importance of education in strengthening national traditions, viewing it as a defense against perceived threats posed by a cosmopolitan society and large-scale immigration (Di Tullio 123-133). Rojas, author of the influential volume *La Restauración Nacionalista* (1907) underlined the importance of primary schools as a political tool to teach the national language and traditions (142). He advocated for a "patriotic education" and proclaimed himself its guardian (Di Tullio 126). In response to nationalism, Italian intellectuals adopted a dual approach: they continued to emphasize Italy's contribution to Argentina's development, while reinforcing the idea of a fraternal bond between the two nations based on their shared Latin heritage. Both points were highlighted by Giuseppe Parisi's *Storia degli italiani in Argentina* (1907). Parisi attempted to showcase the significance of the Italian community in Argentina, arguing that before Italian immigration, Argentina was plagued by barbarism and despotism. He praised the "noble" contributions of "the Italian arm, heart, and genius" (Parisi XIV). In doing so, he aimed to build a collaborative bridge between the nations through their shared Latinity.

By the early twentieth century, nationalist ideology had become deeply embedded in the government's agenda, as evidenced by the influence of Ricardo Rojas on the Ministry of Justice and Public Education. The nationalist faction in the Argentine Parliament gained even more influence in the following years, leading to an atmosphere of agitation marked by five proclamations of a state of siege between 1902 and 1910, ongoing labor protests, and several anarchist attacks in Buenos Aires (Rotondo 39). In response to this unrest, the government

implemented the 1910 Social Defense Law, which prohibited anarchist associations and authorized the deportation of activists (Prislei 492). Rojas' influence also impacted the discourse on Latinity, as he believed in the necessity of forging a distinct Argentine race. While he acknowledged that Argentina's population had developed through "centuries-long contact between Europeans and conquered indigenous peoples" (Delaney 103), he theorized the presence of "invisible telluric forces emanating from the soil that, over time, would transform the diverse peoples living within Argentina into a 'homogeneous race, and thus a nationality'" (Delaney 103). According to this vision, cooperation was unnecessary; rather other groups would be absorbed into the "still evolving Argentine race" (Delaney 103).

In stark contrast to the prevailing nationalist views, the works published for the centenary celebrations of Argentina's independence by Luigi Bacci, *L'Italia all'esposizione argentina del 1910*, and Lorenzo Faleni, *Primo Centenario dell'Indipendenza della Repubblica Argentina: Compendio storico illustrato*, adopted a different viewpoint. These books featured contributions from Argentine and Italian intellectuals based in Buenos Aires, and Italian scholars residing in Italy. As Quinault observes "Centenary commemorations were ephemeral affairs, yet some of them had a lasting importance" (323). This was true for the Centenary of Argentine Independence. The spectacular celebrations, which involved an extensive urban renewal program to showcase Argentine modernity to European nations (Basile 1077-86) and required a significant economic investment and commercial involvement, were followed by important publications that stimulated historical research. Bacci and Faleni's books were part of this process. In their volumes, both editors focused on Latinity as a compelling symbol of universal cooperation in politics, labor, and the arts. In the preface to Bacci's volume, Enrico Ferri outlined the project, asserting that Italy, Europe as a whole, and Argentina, could greatly benefit from their collaboration "because Argentina is a Latin country of recent birth and is a civilization in the making" (Ferri XII). Ferri drew a comparison between what he described as two distinct phases in the history of Latinity: on one side, the ancient Latin civilization, which consisted of Mediterranean peoples who cultivated early wisdom and shared it with the world; on the other, the emerging and dynamic civilizations of South America, poised to rejuvenate and propel the Latin race toward a new era of flourishing:

> If old Europe, and especially the people of ancient Mediterranean civilizations, have much to learn from the example of the youthful vigor of American populations, they conversely should not close their eyes to the wise and secular light that radiates from our classical civilizations (Ferri XII).

Ferri used the book as a means to unite intellectuals on both sides of the Atlantic, rallying them

around the idea of a still-evolving Latin race that could draw strength from its ancient roots while being revitalized by newly emerging cultures.

The idea of a Latin race enduring through the centuries, drawing strength from both ancient and emerging civilizations, was echoed by Angelo De Gubernatis in his contribution to Bacci's volume, included in the chapter "Un pensiero per la Repubblica Argentina". De Gubernatis noted that while Italian emigration played a key role in shaping Argentina's diverse population, which remained "principally and essentially Latin", it did not impose the moral values of the homeland. Instead, it "permeate[d] the population, giving greater substance to the new modern life" (De Gubernatis XLVII). De Gubernatis argued that transnational exchange was the only path to creating a human civilization. For instance, through his journal *Cronache della civiltà elleno-latina* (1902-1907), he advocated for "a form of macro-nationalism rooted in the solidarity among Europe's Latin nations" (Nemegeer 135). In Bacci's book, De Gubernatis supported the view of Argentina as a continuation of Italy across the ocean. He suggested that the leading Latin nation in South America's progress could now be seen as fundamentally Italian. Both Ferri and De Gubernatis distinguished migration from colonization, arguing that migration could foster the creation of a truly transnational society.

Another text included in the chapter "Un pensiero per la Repubblica Argentina" was a speech delivered at the House of Deputies by Giuseppe Sanarelli, doctor and deputy of the Constitutional Left group, in honor of Bartolomé Mitre on 30 January 1906. Sanarelli underscored Mitre's deep bond with Italy and his commitment to defending ideals and protecting the oppressed worldwide (Sanarelli XVI). He described Mitre as the Argentine intellectual who regarded Dante as the greatest poet of "our race" (XLV), an expression that suggested a shared Latin cultural kinship between Argentines and Italians. Sanarelli defined Latin people with a few key traits: their exceptional artistic achievements, their generosity in sharing cultural and scientific advancements with the world, and their recognition of Italy as the motherland of the entire Latin world.

Returning to the different phases of Latinity's history, another influential intellectual, the engineer Luigi Luiggi underlined the energy of Argentina, a young nation that, paradoxically, achieved unification and independence before Italy. Luiggi established a dialogue between the new nations of the Latin world and "the greatness of the Latin people of ancient Rome" (Luiggi XLVIII) to forge a deeper union between sister nations. The theme of a definitive encounter between two stages in the evolution of Latinity frequently recurred throughout the volume. For instance, Italian writer and professor Guglielmo Ferrero emphasized the significant role Argentina could play in advancing Latin civilization, echoing

a central idea shared by other contributors: the union of the ancient and modern Latin races would bring prosperity not only to the Latin world but to all of humankind. Journalist Ercole Rivalta reinforced this vision, asserting that the primary mission of Latin civilization was to spread and preserve the Latin soul and genius to lead humanity toward progress and prosperity. To achieve this, he argued, the ancient Mediterranean civilization must entrust "the new branches of the archaic oak tree with the tastiest fruits that feed on the tree's secret virtues" (Ferrero XLIII). Only from the encounter between the wise past and the vigor of young civilizations can a prosperous future for the Latin world and humanity emerge.

Gennaro Mondaini, Director of the Regio Istituto Superiore di Studi Commerciali, Coloniali e Attuariali in Rome, concluded this chapter with a definitive comparison between Latin and Germanic races. Mondaini argued that Argentina would prove how Latin people could achieve great success in the new countries. These achievements would reestablish the balance between Latin and Germanic people, as they would challenge two misconceptions: first, that only Germanic people could colonize; and second, that emigration is a *tabula rasa*, which erases the previous footprints left on a land; rather it was needed to be an integration fostered through cooperation and exchange between the host country and the newcomers. Despite the colonialist undertones in these judgements, two important aspects stand out in this chapter: first, the union between Italy and Argentina was considered the most successful encounter between Latin races, which made it a model to guide humanity toward progress; second, emigration was viewed by some marginal voices of the Italian and Argentine cultural field as the best way to establish collaboration. This clashed with the vision of Argentine nationalists like Rojas, who believed that immigrants should be fully absorbed into a new, 'virgin' Argentine race. Bacci's volume developed a political discourse through several *topoi*: the mutual contributions to nation-building, the idea of migration as a vehicle for universal solidarity, and the importance of Latinity in addressing modern challenges in education and cultural dissemination.

A few months later in Buenos Aires, Lorenzo Faleni's *Primo Centenario della Repubblica Argentina* continued Bacci's efforts, although his book was written from a different perspective. Bacci's volume, driven by sentiments of international cooperation, subtly conveyed an Italian nationalist agenda by emphasizing Italy's social, cultural, and economic value to an international audience. Indeed, it heavily focused on Italian literary, artistic, and musical achievements, while Argentine history, despite being highly regarded in the book's programmatic statements, received relatively little attention. Instead, Faleni's volume took a starkly different approach. In his preface, he emphasized Argentina's flourishing arts, industry,

and commerce, underscoring the fraternal bond between the two "Great Nations" and describing their union as a shared journey toward modernity (5). He dedicated over 150 densely written pages to Argentine history and highlighted the nation's rapid progress. Whereas Bacci celebrated Italy's broader achievements, Faleni concentrated on emigrant Italy, detailing the lives and contributions of Italian immigrants who had become integral to the Rioplatense region.

Faleni's historical narrative recalled that during the Revolución de Mayo of 1810, the foreign presence to be fought was Spanish. Over time, however, Europeans came to be seen as brothers, with Italians, in particular, playing a crucial role in shaping Argentina's identity (Faleni 10-11). Faleni praised Argentina's freedom, courage, and remarkable progress, asserting that the nation "marches at the head of South American civilization and marches with rapid steps on the path that will undoubtedly lead it to a future of glory and greatness" (155). It was only within the context of the great progress of the Argentine Republic that Italian immigration could take place. The second part of his book celebrated Italian immigrant entrepreneurs and notable personalities who had become proudly Italo-Argentine. One contradiction in Faleni's book was that it was written in Italian. Faleni justified this choice by explaining that his book aimed to provide Italians in Italy with a comprehensive account of the sister nation, which the fragmented tales of returning emigrants could not fully convey (159). Ultimately, Faleni underlined that a solid bond with South America could only be achieved through the efforts of the Italo-Argentine community. Unlike Bacci's approach, Faleni contended that meaningful cross-Atlantic dialogue would be impossible without an accurate understanding of Argentina and a clear recognition of the Italian community's significance in the Rioplatense region.

Conclusion

The discourse on Latinity in Argentina was marked by significant ambiguity. Prominent Argentine and Italian intellectuals like Basilio Cittadini, Nicolás Avellaneda, Mariano Varela, Luigi Bacci, and Enrico Ferri, advocated for a dialogue between Latinity and modernity, which they believed would benefit Italy, Argentina, and humanity. They promoted a synthesis of national traditions and transnational cooperation, emphasizing that immigrant communities should maintain ties with their homeland while contributing to the development of their new country. They also believed that immigrant communities had a mission to strengthen bonds between Latin nations (Prislei 479). As I have shown, migration was often compared to colonization, with some, like Giuseppe Sanarelli, influenced by Darwinian studies, arguing that

both processes aimed at similar goals, such as moral development and civilizing propaganda. Others, including Enrico Ferri, Gennaro Mondaini, and Lorenzo Faleni, emphasized a key distinction: unlike colonization, migration involved deeper integration into the social and cultural fabric of the host society.

In the decades following the Centenary, both Italy and Argentina took political and cultural directions that sharply diverged from the intentions promoted in the publications examined in this paper. As the excitement from the celebrations faded, new political stances emerged, symbolized by the legislative action of the *Ley de defensa social*. The significance of an *Argentinization* process began to permeate all social and cultural areas in the South American Republic. This shift was particularly evident in the literary debate surrounding the *gauchesco* poem *Martín Fierro* and the subsequent adoption of Ricardo Rojas' theories in education and literature. Rojas further articulated his vision of liberal and progressive nationalism in his monumental *Historia de la Literatura Argentina*, printed in four volumes between 1917 and 1922. Meanwhile, across the Atlantic, the rise of nationalism in Italy eventually led to the rise of Fascism, which was resisted the idea of emigrants losing their cultural ties to their homeland (Patat, *Un destino sudamericano* 20). Mussolini viewed Italians abroad as strategic assets for advancing fascist foreign policy. To strengthen their connection to Italy and align them with the fascist state, the regime engaged overseas Italian communities through diplomatic channels and party organizations, including the *fasci all'estero* and, later, local branches of the leisure organization Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro, which Italian consuls were tasked with promoting (Goebel 237).

In conclusion, being influenced by different forms of nationalism, members of the Italo-Argentine community, though marginal, actively promoted transnational collaboration. Italo-Argentine intellectuals, while recognizing their ties to their homeland, also asserted their autonomy from Italy. This autonomy stemmed from the recognition they had achieved in Argentina and their desire to further expand their influence, not only abroad but also in Italy. This ambition was reflected in their involvement in both local matters and political issues across the ocean. Publications produced by the Italo-Argentine community addressed both nations and, in some cases, aimed to reach a global audience. These publications primarily sought to highlight the modern character of the Italo-Argentine community and the remarkable achievements they had accomplished with limited resources, far from their homeland. It is important to emphasize that this community regarded itself as the most successful embodiment of Latinity, preserving elements of the Italian tradition while attempting to integrate into Argentine society and contribute in significant ways to the development of both nations. From

their unique position — paradoxically divided by, but also unified through, two national identities — Italo-Argentine intellectuals mediated the concept of Latinity as a foundation for collaboration between the two countries, with themselves serving as the central link.

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