

ON ANCIENT HISTORY AND ENLIGHTENMENT: TWO SPANISH HISTORIES OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

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I. THE GENERAL FRAMEWORK

It seems clear that the function of second-rank authors is minimum for those who understand historiography's fundamental task to be, first and foremost, about pioneers and original thinkers¹. From this point of view, the objective of the present study would be to demonstrate, precisely, the existence of features of originality deriving, from a competitive pattern in the different national historiographical works.

However, for those of us who do not search for the origins of our art either in the history of historiography or in the history of science, things are different. The purpose of this study is to reflect on and raise questions about the role history (and ancient history in particular) has played in a historiography which may be slightly marginal but which is nonetheless of great interest because of the multiplicity of forms which were adopted by European eighteenth-century historiography and, indeed, also because of its importance for the study of the history of Spanish culture itself.

If we were to summarise the characteristics of the relations between Enlightenment and historiography in Spain, we would have to observe, in the first place, the official character - backed by the established power structure - of Spanish Enlightenment, particularly during the reigns of Fernando VI and Carlos

This is related to the weakness of the commercial and manufacturing sectors and of the corresponding social groups. Even the limited changes proposed by the Monarchy were opposed by the establishment. It is from this perspective that we must understand the fact that popular education and economic advancement - rather than ambitious political projects, as in the case of French Enlightenment or ideologico-political ones, as in the case of the British - were considered to be the essential objective. On the other hand, the need (which the Monarchy well understood and supported) for changes in the educational system that would permit the creation of new elites and the generation of new scientific and technological development, was fiercely opposed by the previous educational and religious sectors. Therefore, the universities were prevented from developing more dynamically. The Spanish universities never had a very high priority even if compared with the experience of the German Enlightenment, where, as in Spain, royal patronage played a key role. None of the works discussed here were written

¹ See E. Fueter, *Historia de la historiografía moderna* (Buenos Aires, 1953), I, 7.

in or for a University² In fact, the key to the development of historiography are either individuals or institutions such as the Royal Academies³. It is also clear, in this context, that we are dealing with neither an anti-religious nor even an anti-Catholic Enlightenment⁴. As a matter of fact, the authors of these two works were members of the clergy as was also the case of such outstanding figures as Feijoo or Flórez. From all this, it is also possible to deduce the national character of these studies and analyses, although not so much from the readings involved (they were well-read in the most recent European literature and the correspondence is, on certain occasions, fluid and intense), but from the objectives and interests of the works themselves. Despite their limits and possibilities, they reveal the need to generate a different vision of the national past from the perspective of the dominant 'critical' and rationalist interests, in accordance with the new needs. The new historiography must respond to the call of a history that can no longer be only 'political' (that is, dominated by the primacy of heroic deeds based on aristocratic values). It aims at being a history in which the plea for development and change in the social, cultural and economic spheres would correspond to the analysis of these issues in the past. In this sense, Spanish historiography clearly follows the European general pattern⁵ as it also does with respect to the methodology to be applied, that is, the usefulness of a critical history based on reliable sources⁶.

There were, however, a number of additional and more specifically Spanish requirements. Spain still possessed a considerable, if weakened Empire: three more objectives had to be fulfilled. In the first place, the imperial 'successes' of the sixteenth (and part of the seventeenth) century had to be integrated in a way that would not prove too overwhelming within the context of a current situation that was experienced as quite inferior in terms of power and influence⁷. Secondly, the situation at the time - the failure of the imperial policy of the reigning dynasty, the Austrias, and of their defense of Catholic orthodoxy, with all the negative consequences it had had for the Peninsula - had to be explained. Moreover, this explanation should not affect the Catholic orthodoxy nor the institution of the monarchy. And, thirdly, it should project an image of contemporary reality that

² M. and J. L. Peset, *La Universidad española (siglos XVIII-XIX). Despotismo ilustrado y revolución liberal* (Madrid, 1974); F. Aguilar Piñal, «La política docente», in *Historia de España*, ed. R. Menéndez Pidal, XXXI, 1 (Madrid, 1987), 439-484.

³ On archaeology see G. Mora, «Arqueología y poder en la España del siglo XVIII», in *Historiografía de la arqueología y la historia antigua en España (siglos XVI II- XX)*, ed. s. J. Arce, R. Olmos (Madrid, 1991), 31-32.

⁴ See E. Breisach, *Historiography: Ancient, Medieval and Modern* (Chicago-London, 1983), 220-221.

⁵ See J. A. Maravall, «Mentalidad burguesa e idea de la Historia en el siglo XVIII», in *Revista de Occidente*, 107 (1972): 259-269.

⁶ See, for example, G. Mayans y Siscar in the Preface to their edition of G. Ibáñez de Segovia Marqués de Mondéjar, *Obras Cronológicas* (Valencia, 1744).

⁷ For the theoretical premises of this point see D. Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge, 1985).

would integrate a vision of the past into the prospects of change in the future.

All this has important historiographical implications. The seventeenth-century crisis resulted in a national and local historiography that extolled the more irrational elements of the so-called national glories. It was a historiography that represented, in the field of images of the past, its most ghostly and unreal aspects in an obvious attempt to compensate for the military tragedies and economic ruin with hallucinatory religious and civil histories⁸. By the second half of the seventeenth century, some attempts were made in the direction of a history purified through criticism of the sources by erudites such as Nicolás Antonio who enjoyed the support of groups of the establishment and who were in contact with European authors working along similar lines, such as, for example, Mabillon⁹. But the opposition to change on the part of the more conservative sections brought with it their rejection of the Enlightenment-style critical historiography and support for the old conceptions. At the beginning of the century, Ferreras made an attempt in this direction but the so-called «crisis ferrérica» revealed the strength of the opposition¹⁰. Indicative of this is that Nicolás Antonio's *Crítica a los Falsos Cronicones* was published, notwithstanding problems and criticisms, by Mayans many years later (1742). For this reason, in Spain, an historical work of criticism attentive to the sources was considered to be a product of the Enlightenment. The same occurs throughout the century, with the valuable paleographical and epigraphical collections and even, to a large extent, with erudite studies of the same tenor¹¹. We should point out that the re-publication of works of the sixteenth century and a meticulous attention to sources and medieval works were part of the enlightened program. This should be understood within such a critical context, although also from the perspective of a Spanish Enlightenment which was not anti-medieval, just as the Renaissance it stemmed from¹². In this, the historiographical image of the Spanish past was an essential factor. Nor is it surprising, in this context, that the greatest bulk of criticism (and resistance) in

⁸ See O. Rey Castelao, *La historiografía del voto de Santiago* (Santiago de Compostela, 1985), J. Godoy Alcántara, *Historia crítica de Los falsos cronicones* (Madrid, 1868, 1981²) and J. Caro Baroja, *Las falsificaciones de la historia (En relación con la de España)* (Madrid, 1991).

⁹ See J. L. Abellán, *Historia crítica del pensamiento español*, III (Madrid 1981), 342ff., A. Mestre, «Conciencia histórica e historiografía», in *Historia de España*, XXXI, 1, 301ff., B. Sánchez Alonso, *Historia de la historiografía española*, 11 (Madrid, 1944), 354ff. and G. Stiffoni, *Verità della storia e ragioni del potere nella Spagna del primo Settecento* (Milano, 1989), 16-26.

¹⁰ Ferreras' work was first entitled *Synopsis histórico-cronológica de España* (Madrid, 1700-1727). This title was changed into *Historia de España reducida* with the publication of the second volume. B. Sánchez Alonso (*Historia*, III, 7) points out that this is not yet representative of the eighteenth-century attempt to write a new kind of history despite the fact that he rejected Annio da Viterbo and the 'falsos cronicones'. For the 'crisis ferrérica' see G. Stiffoni, *Verità della storia*, 163-177 and A. Mestre, «Conciencia Histórica», 311-315.

¹¹ On erudition and history see A. Momigliano, «Storia antica e antiquaria» and «Il contributo di Gibbon al metodo storico», in *Sui fondamenti della storia antica* (Torino, 1984), 3-45, and 295.

¹² J. A. Maravall, *Estudios de historia del pensamiento español*, II, (Madrid, 1984), 195ff. and O. Rey Castelao, *La historiografía*, 149.

historiography was directed, above all, against sacred history, within a complex situation where it is also possible to see a number of different perspectives, from the search for documentary support for the monarchic claims to control over the clergy of the Catholic Church to the search for a purer kind of religiousness¹³.

All this has implications in the literary field: eighteenth-century Spanish classicism looks with satisfaction at the sixteenth century but with abomination at the baroque seventeenth century. As it is well known, for the enlightened consciousness baroque 'bad taste' was inextricably tied to an irrational world, not to mention the direct association between *pensamiento racional*, *buen gusto*¹⁴ and a positive cultural, scientific, social and economic situation.

It is therefore not surprising that the two historiographical projects we are going to comment here should be devoted to the history of Spain. It is the work of the brothers Mohedano *Historia Literaria de España*¹⁵ and *Historia Crítica de España y la Cultura Española* by J. F. Masdeu¹⁶. Both are unofficial histories whose declared aim was to trace the history of Spain from its very origins to their own day. Neither work, however, achieved this target. The first gets as far as the late Roman Empire and the second up to the year 1085 A. D.. Both are typically enlightened projects: a 'Literary history' that also seek to be a history of the sciences, literature, knowledge, customs, the economy, but without ignoring the political and military developments, and a reasoned 'critical history', based on reliable sources, that would go beyond the event in itself. Both histories have their roots in the critical environment of the enlightened section of Spanish culture of the first half of the century¹⁷.

There is probably no need here to remind the fact that enlightened historiography contains a strong presence of cosmopolitan components as well as nationalist (or pre-nationalist) elements. This is by no means surprising in a century that witnessed the emergence and expansion of the term 'nation'. Voltaire himself, when he wrote to D' Argenson on January 26th 1740, pointed out to him the need for a history not of kings and queens but of the nation, of *nos lois*, *nos coutumes*, *notre esprit*¹⁸. Equally significant is the importance he attributed to the peculiarities of different peoples and to the idea of a national character, which

¹³ Key studies are A. Mestre, *Historia, fueros y actitudes políticas. Mayans y la historiografía del siglo XVIII* (Valencia, 1970), *Humanismo y crítica histórica en los ilustrados alicantinos*. (Alicante, 1980). *Influjo europeo y herencia hispánica. Mayans y la Ilustración* (Valencia, 1987), *Mayans y la España de la Ilustración* (Madrid, 1990).

¹⁴ «Rational thinking», «good taste».

¹⁵ Madrid, 1766-1791.

¹⁶ In Italy, the first volume appeared in 1781 and the second in 1786; the Spanish edition in Madrid, 1783-1805.

¹⁷ See G. Stiffoni, «La cultura española entre el Barroco y la Ilustración», in *Historia de España*, XXIX, 2 (Madrid, 1985), 7ff.

¹⁸ Cited in W. Kraus, «La vision historique et l' historiographie dans la première moitié du XVIII^e siècle», in *L'histoire au dix-huitième siècle* (Aix-en-Provence, 1980), 335.

Fueter considers the most frequent explanatory element in his work¹⁹. Nor would it be idle to point out here how a common element, along these lines, underlies the needs that led David Hume to produce his *History of England* (1754-62), which remained a classic until the arrival of Macaulay's *History* a century later; nor is it unrelated to the fact that more than seventy editions were produced before the end of the nineteenth century²⁰. And when the European antiquarians seek to penetrate beneath the Roman surface of Western Europe so as to find the Italians, Celts, Germans or Iberians before the Romans interfered²¹, their search is not devoid of such intentions and needs. Another example of how these conceptions make their presence felt, is Count de Caylus in his famous *Recueil d'Antiquités Egyptiennes, Etrusques, Grecques et Romaines* where his contributions to the field of typology are as indubitable as his concern with defining

le goût d'un pays [...] *étant une fois établi* [our italics] on n'a plus qu'à le suivre dans ses progrès et altérations [...] Le goût d'un peuple diffère de celui d'un autre peuple presque aussi sensiblement que les couleurs définitives diffèrent entre elles; au lieu que les variétés du goût national en différents siècles peuvent être regardées comme les nuances très fines d'une même couleur²².

The concern with national spirit was not new. Now, however, it acquires a deeper sense and an explanatory value in the general debates and enlightened reflections on backwardness and advancement, long before they appeared in Herder's concept of the *genetisch und organisch*. Together with conceptions of collective character as determined by the particular landscape, climate and the like, there frequently appears the essentialist notion. This gave cause for, among other things, European debates to assume the form of a confrontation on the basis of the characteristics, good taste or civilising influence of each people as compared to the others. Its own present definition was at stake in this competition. From this point of view, history, all history, is converted into a powerful battlefield and into a space in which to prove each people's own claims.

One of the keys to the two works under examination is precisely the frequent appearance in a negative form of an image of Spain stuck, since the sixteenth century, in the clichés of the 'Black Legend' and which is made to represent, in a way, the role of the Enlightenment's anti-model²³. For the Mohedanos and

¹⁹ Fueter, *Historia*, II, 35 and 17.

²⁰ See J. Fontana, *Historia. Análisis del pasado y proyecto social* (Barcelona, 1982), 84.

²¹ Momigliano, «XVIIIth-Century Prelude to Gibbon», in *Sesto Contributo alla Storia degli Studi Classici*, I (Roma, 1980), 257.

²² Cited in A. Schnapp, «Modele naturaliste et modele philologique dans l'archéologie européenne du XVI^e au XIX^e siècles», in Arce and Olmos (eds.), *Historiografía*, 20. See also Schnapp, «Archéologie et tradition académique en Europe aux XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles», in *Annales. E. S. C.*, 37 (1982): 760-777 for a methodological perspective.

²³ See J. Juderías, *La Leyenda Negra* (Madrid, 1960) and L. Sorrento, *Francia e Spagna nel Settecento. Battaglie sorgenti di idee* (Milano, 1928), 89ff. Recently Stiffoni, *Verità della storia*, 26ff. and Mestre, «La imagen de España en el siglo XVIII. Apologistas y detractores», in *Posibilidades y límites de una historiografía nacional* (Madrid 1984), 225ff. (and J. M. Laso's reply, 247ff.).

Masdeu it was essential to debate this in all fields, opposing the idea of the absence of Spanish contributions to the progress of the human spirit. It turned out to be fundamental, for example, in order to prove, as against Tiraboschi and his *Storia della Letteratura Italiana*²⁴, how the Spanish did not have an essential and inherent tendency towards bad taste (with all the implications that this involves) - which for Tiraboschi was demonstrated by the invention of the baroque style in the previous century and their responsibility in the decadence of culture during the period of the late Roman Empire. Their participation in common concepts of collective identity is obvious.

The task of our two histories was crucial not only in that it was an attempt to respond to all the issues we have pointed out, but also to the extent that old, traditional interpretations of the past had to be taken up and readapted. Our authors did not work on a historiographical *tabula rasa* and this was to generate new dynamics and problems. Therefore, on the one hand, there were the values that had, necessarily, to be proposed: problems regarding the creation and transmission of culture, learning, knowledge, commerce, with all that this involves in terms of contact and communication conceived of as of a basically positive kind. But, on the other hand, there were the existing conceptions of Spanish historical reality. Elsewhere, we have tried to demonstrate the constitution, in the sixteenth century, of the key prototype of the image of Spanish history, a model which survived, in its essential aspects, up to the twentieth century²⁵. In its original formulation it would be something like this: there existed some primitive, monotheist Spaniards (*los españoles*), full of military and moral virtues (and even with a high level of culture originating directly from Noah's sons), who enjoyed an exceptionally rich country and had one, single, albeit fundamental defect: their disunity. To these original people were added other peoples who arrived to Spain attracted by the wealth of the land: Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Goths and Arabs. Indeed, these peoples may have influenced the Spaniards but none of them was capable of altering their authentic essence. Finally, the Catholic King and Queen unified Spain through their marriage and the defeat of the Arabs, thus making the culmination of centuries of Reconquest and imposing at last a single political power and a single religious unity. The unity of the country is, therefore, an exceptionally important interpretative key to the past. All peoples, with the exception of the Goths, are looked upon with similar mistrust, even though, the image of the first two tends to be more commercial and the rest are portrayed more as conquerors. The Goths' exceptional role was justified with different arguments; quite apart from being considered ancestors of part of the nobility of most ancient lineage, they were also considered to be the Spaniards' liberators from the Roman yoke, the first unifiers of the Peninsula under a *single* Spanish Crown and the Catholic Church and, above all, because the Kings of Asturias and their

²⁴ Modena, 1771.

²⁵ F. Wulff Alonso, «Andalucía antigua en la historiografía española (siglos XVI-XIX)», in *Ariadna*, 10 (1992): 7-32.

descendants (those of Leon and Castille) were thought to descend from Gothic Monarchs. This would provide the Castillian Monarchs with a justification of and the right to pre-eminence in the Peninsula.

This interpretation began to be developed in Castille during the fifteenth century on the basis of older material, was reformulated in more concrete terms in the period of the Catholic King and Queen and was amplified and restructured according to the new requirements by official historians such as Ocampo during the reign of Carlos V and Morales under the reign of Felipe II in the sixteenth century²⁶. It is more than curious that both shared the same vision despite their very different historical perspectives and methodologies. Ocampo was an excellent imitator of Giovanni Annio da Viterbo and Morales (who carried on Ocampo's historical work) was an outstanding humanist historian and antiquarian²⁷. These factors apart, it is essential to note how the general model is determined by the Catholic image of the Moslem invasion, an image that cannot be included in an integrated historical framework: its use for propaganda purposes by the Catholic monarchs in the context of the need to maintain the unity of the kingdom, becomes evident²⁸. Its use is also obvious when it comes to justifying the interventions of the Habsburgs abroad: a now unified Spain can do what the rest did to her; the religious wars will thus continue the tradition of the Catholic struggle against the new unbelievers. It is evident that, given the importance of the Reconquest in the new image of a unified Spain, the Renaissance could not be anti-medieval. This was the scheme applied by Mariana at the end of the sixteenth century²⁹, when, at last, the task of tracing the history of Spain up to that century reached its target; this is important since this would be the history *par excellence* until the appearance of Lafuente's work in mid-nineteenth century³⁰.

Another essential aspect of all this is that neither Ocampo nor Morales completed their respective projects of a history of Spain: the former gets as far as the Roman period and the latter continues the task as far as the eleventh century. This implies that the ancient world was dealt with most comprehensively and that the formulations regarding antiquity were quite substantial. An example of this could be the Greco-Roman sources' assessment of Hispanic military value and anti-Roman resistance in the Peninsula. This fitted in perfectly with the model and attitude represented by Morales. He wrote of the defeats and victories over Rome

²⁶ Wulff. *ibidem*.

²⁷ See Wulff, «Mito e historia en la historiografía española (XVI-XVIII)», in *Historia y Crítica*, 2 (1992): 137-150.

²⁸ See Wulff, «Andalucía antigua», 13, 18 -19.

²⁹ *Historiae de Rebus Hispaniae libri XXV* (Toledo, 1592-1595), which reached 30 books in the edition of Maguncia of 1605. Bibliographical information can be found in J. Cepeda Adán, «La historiografía», in *Historia de España*, XXVI, 1 (Madrid, 1988); on the author himself see especially F. Cirot, *Mariana historien* (Bordeaux, 1905), Fueter, *Historia*, 248-249 and Pi and Margall, *Discurso Preliminar* in the first edition of *Biblioteca de Autores españoles* (Madrid, 1854).

³⁰ Wulff, «La Historia de España de D. Modesto Lafuente (1850-1867) y la historia antigua», in *Homenaje al Prof F.J. Presedo Velo* (Sevilla, 1992), forthcoming.

in the first person plural; there is no lack of references to how the enemies' sources themselves commented on the impossibility of conquering the Peninsula had there been unity among the fierce Spaniards. Having said all this, we may pose the crucial question: how could the old scheme dovetail with the new needs arisen in the eighteenth century and with so many potentially conflicting elements?

II. THE HISTORY OF THE MOHEDANO BROTHERS

The work of the Mohedano brothers represents the fundamental change³¹. Ferreras³² had already eliminated the *falsas glorias* of the beginnings of Spanish history using classical information on the Phoenicians as his first reliable source. The two brothers continued his work and oriented the whole stock of their concerns towards proving an essential hypothesis - precisely, the hypothesis they insist on in their conclusions in *Apología del Tomo V* of their work: that «La Nación no es ociosa, perezosa ni inepta para las ciencias»³³. The disposition of *los Nacionales nuestros* is good. At the beginning of their work they doubt the existence of a single national character in a country as varied as theirs but they, in any case, affirm its positive components³⁴. In order to explain the situation of a country at a given moment what is fundamental, they argue, is its historical evolution, which makes a particular people to be in a privileged position in determinate circumstances, fall into decadence and recover once again³⁵. The Greeks themselves had been, at one time, barbarians³⁶. For this reason, it is necessary to think of evolution in historical terms and, in the case of Spain, they propose prospects of change. Thus, it is not surprising that in the presentation of their project they talk about the corruption of taste, the usefulness of republishing valuable works of the past and the need to renew the University system³⁷.

The radical change they introduce does not lie in altering traditional interpretation, in the sense of questioning the role of the invasions or the role of the Catholic king and queen, but in evaluating the foreign peoples who came to

³¹ Wulff, «Los Fenicios en la historiografía española del siglo XVIII: la *Historia literaria de España* de los hermanos Mohedano», in *Homenaje al Prof. D. J. M. Blázquez Martínez* (Madrid, 1992), forthcoming.

³² *Historia*, III, 7. See Sánchez Alonso, *Historia*, III, 14ff., 45ff.

³³ «The Nation is neither idle, nor lazy, nor inept for the sciences», *Apología del Tomo V* (Madrid, 1789).

³⁴ Mohedano, I, 1 ff.

³⁵ In this idea, characteristic of the Spanish Enlightenment, is present the influence of Feijoo. For Feijoo's and Jovellano's egalitarian conception of man and their religious premises, see H. Baader, «La Limitación de la Ilustración en España» in *IIº Simposio sobre el P. Feijoo y su siglo* (Oviedo 1981),

1, 42-44. For an extensive bibliography on the Benedictines see F. Aguilar Piñal, *Bibliografía de autores españoles del siglo XVIII* (Madrid, 1984), III, 258-300.

³⁶ Mohedano, I, 7.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, I, XXIIIff.

settle Spain. There is no doubt that in Morales there is a certain tension between a negative view of Rome, on the one hand, and the proud claim to the presence of 'Spanish' emperors and *literati* or of archaeological and epigraphic remains on the other. Nonetheless, the end result is negative. Our authors change this direction of historiography, considering the arrival of different peoples in Antiquity from a positive point of view. In this case, the leading role is to be played by the Phoenicians³⁸.

Before their arrival there is no proof of the existence of any kind of culture, not even of the settlements that produce it, although they may be assumed. Culture comes from the East, which is its original center, and its extension is produced by diffusion. The Phoenicians settled in the south of the Peninsula, where they set up a lot of colonies and mixed with its inhabitants. Classical sources supported strongly these ideas. The Phoenicians ended up becoming Spanish; Andalusia, the area of major influence, adopted Phoenician culture. The most varied arts, from agriculture, navigation, astronomy and industrial activities to writing and commerce, make of this zone not only a 'cultivated' place thanks to the positive attitude of its inhabitants but also the most cultivated of the West. An inscription quoted by Procopius of Caesarea allows him to situate their arrival around the middle of the second millennium B. C. (more ancient, even, than Greek culture itself which, they argued, was produced afterwards and by some colonies such as that of Cadmus). As the culture of the south of the Peninsula is shown to be earlier than the Greek - and, naturally, also earlier than the Roman which was itself produced by the latter - the claims to cultural antiquity and pre-eminence are no longer left to humanist forgers but are founded on classical sources and are solidly based on *enlightened* and *critical* principles.

Their points of view contrasted with the constructions, above all the French ones, of druidism, Celtism, and the like: over and over again they repeated that there did not exist sources nor believable possibilities of this until the arrival of peoples from the East. The polemic with the Benedictines of St. Maur, who published the *Histoire Littéraire de la France* (printed as from 1733), and others, became explicit. This is also interesting because French cultural superiority was, on the whole, accepted by the Mohedanos, although they did make a point of the usefulness of imitating it in some cases but not in others. This does not mean that they recognized their hegemony in the past: arguing that at one time the French were in exactly the opposite situation, their hegemony is given its due historical and variable value. Culture (always defined as a *single* entity in the manner of the Enlightenment) is spread from the south of the Peninsula towards its central and northern parts, reaching as far as France, where the Celts were barbarous and ignorant. Such is the scheme used to explain, for example, the unknown alphabets of non-Phoenician and non-Greek coins found in the Peninsula; the great distance

³⁸ On the importance of the Phoenicians in the eighteenth century see M. Bernal, *Black Athena. The Afroasiatics Roots of Classical Civilization* (London, 1987), 1.

between those and the Phoenician source will be the one to mark the difference³⁹.

This cultural and political richness does not imply that they assumed the development of a powerful state either in Andalusia or Spain: we can see that, with the criticism of the old constructions, the possible interpretations of Gargoris and Habis, for example, as real monarchs collapse⁴⁰. Finally, the process of *adelantamiento* led them to consider one powerful king in the Levantine zone (Theron, cited by Macrobius) and another one in Tartessus (Argantonio, cited by Herodotus)⁴¹. The latter appears as a far-sighted king, who sought the support of the Greek Phocaeans so as to confront the ambitious Phoenicians of Cadiz - the only ones not to have fused with the Andalusians - within a context of allusions to the multiple Mediterranean conflicts⁴².

The evaluation of the cultural influence of the Greek colonies of the eastern coast is positive, although subordinated to the Phoenician influence not only for internal reasons but also, quite probably, in the context of the disputes with the French historiography and its claims to the influence of Marseilles. Quite noticeable, by the way, is the difference in attitude to culture between the French and the Spaniards of the time: the Greeks of Marseilles needed the Romans in order to pacify their Celt neighbours whereas, long before, the Spaniards of the eastern coast, more willing to be cultivated, had accepted their presence without much conflict. This devaluation of Greek influence, not to mention the Greek sources of the first periods which were considered falsifying, can be traced back to the sixteenth century⁴³.

After the Phoenicians and the Greeks came the Carthaginians, who were also claimed as part of the Spanish cultural history, despite the fact that they were the first real conquerors of part of the Peninsula. Finally, the Romans also received a positive assessment: they are not, as yet, the corrupt people they were to become later. Spain gave in to the charm and politics of Rome, receiving in exchange urbanity and erudition following her old cultural and economic developments. Compared to other peoples which came to the Peninsula, the Romans, moreover, occupied the whole of it and for a long time⁴⁴. They were the true source of Spanish literature: the Spaniards no longer fought in arms but in culture⁴⁵.

One can observe the model still turns out to be as exalting as before⁴⁶, although the differences in formulation are now much more complex. It is indeed possible for us to discover in our two authors concerns of an enlightened kind, their attention to aspects of the economy and development of knowledge - all this

³⁹ Mohedano, III, 1, 195 ff.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, I, 97-98.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, II, 1, 205 ff.

⁴² *Ibidem*, 205-206; 286; II, 2, 283 ff.

⁴³ See F. Wulff, «Andalucía antigua».

⁴⁴ Mohedano, III, 6-7.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁶ It constitutes a historiographical constant of the second half of the eighteenth century. Regarding the element of exaltation in eighteenth-century historiography, see A. Mestre, «Conciencia histórica», 333-337.

justified, generally, on the basis of reliable sources or sources taken as such. What perhaps surprises most, is their way of presenting the foreign populations' contact with the inhabitants of the Peninsula - so typical of the Enlightenment - and the uniqueness it involves with respect to the past and, even, to many later Spanish historiographical works.

We would now like to touch upon some other aspects which speak of conflicts or, at least, difficult articulations of conceptions involving very different consequences. In the first place, the effect of the Phoenicians on the *los españoles* can still be observed. Although the idea of the pure and simple nature of the Spaniard remains, this old historiographical element now takes on (without losing its Catholic doctrinaire connotations) a more Enlightenment-oriented image: culture enriched but also corroded the simplicity of customs and, in the East the level of corruption was, consequently, greater. It is affirmed, for instance, that there are no sure vestiges of polytheism⁴⁷ and, when it was admitted, it was argued that the intimate idea of divinity had been turned into a much simpler and less perverse polytheism (*putrefacto, absurdo, supersticioso*⁴⁸) than the oriental. Not even the existence of wars was considered as known with certainty. They assumed that, perhaps, with so much land available there would be no need for them, arguing, moreover, that the ancient Spaniards were not opposed to the arrival of foreigners⁴⁹. Likewise, therefore, the Phoenician influence signifies corruption of customs and religious beliefs: pretense, cunning, ambition, love of money and idolatry⁵⁰. It is by no means incidental but significant that, in the midst of all these observations, they enter into comparisons with other processes of influence of *más cultos* peoples on *menos cultos* ones⁵¹. This is the case, for example, with Spanish influence in America which is conceived of exactly *al revés*⁵² since, what is exported is monotheism. And it is even less fortuitous that French influence in Spain is alluded to in this context as well as how some of its impacts proved to be ridiculous⁵³. Thus, a distinction is made between a good and a bad example of French culture, a distinction related to that part of the Introduction to the work where, as we mentioned earlier it is said that, French culture is to be imitated, although, evidently not in its entirety⁵⁴. The uneasy relation with French culture considered to be the model for changes, is obviously at stake; the conflict between, on the one hand, its character of model and national Spanish pride and, on the other, between that character and the ideological limitations of the Spanish

⁴⁷ Mohedano, I, 99 (S. Augustin had talked about the monotheism of the Spaniards).

⁴⁸ «Rotten, absurd, superstitious».

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, I, 159ff.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁵¹ «More cultivated [...] less cultivated».

⁵² «The other way round»; *ibidem*, 165.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, 167.

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*, I, LVI. «If fashion is imitated, the Mohedanos wrote, how much more so are writings to be imitated [...] Pride and arrogance should be abandoned. If not, at least - they continue - imitate past Spaniards or those of classical Antiquity» (LXVI-LXVII).

Enlightenment, is also clear enough. The Greeks also affect the Peninsula, particularly in their own zone of influence, although, given the «naturaleza poco supersticiosa»⁵⁵ of the Spanish, the tendency is not to attribute too much importance to them⁵⁶. Something similar to this occurs with the Carthaginians with whom a part of the Peninsula lose in simplicity but, it is said, it does not seem likely that Spanish frankness accommodated itself too much to Carthaginian astuteness⁵⁷.

Yet, there is another possibility of minimising foreign impact, supported by Greco-Roman sources and already used by previous Spanish historians, which is the differentiation, before the Romans' effective presence there, between two zones. The first one includes the South part of the Peninsula (particularly Andalusia) and eastern part of the Peninsula (civilised through contact with the Phoenicians, Greeks and Carthaginians) as well as some other parts of the interior civilised through contact with or conquest by the Carthaginians. The second one includes the rest which, persevering in its old customs, shows no *adelantamiento* and *poca civilidad*⁵⁸ although also less idolatry and perversion. Such a contrast between zones is significant when it affirms that the former participate in the foreign *yugo y la Cultura* and that, they gain in culture but lose out in *riqueza y libertad*⁵⁹ - which is a more than costly education. The defense of the cultivated zone does not, therefore, imply a devaluation of the other one and this leads them into a polemic with the Greco-Roman sources (something already traditional in Spanish historiography since the sixteenth century), with Strabo, for example, in the sense that, if for the ancient historians they were unsociable and barbarous, they were so only with regard to culture, whereas, on the other hand, they possessed many customs more in harmony perhaps with the law of nature than with that of nations that so much boasted of wisdom⁶⁰. Equally, military value is throughout considered essential in this game of valuations, bearing in mind the two centuries of tough resistance to the Roman yoke.

The fact that they felt the need to explain why the Andalusians, the most cultivated of all at that time, fell relatively early to the power of Rome, serves to form a better idea of the framework of this double valuation. Although, the argument goes, «no parecen muy recomendables»⁶¹ as far as their military courage goes, it is not because of lack of it (as in other instances) but because their higher level of culture has made them more docile to the Roman yoke and discipline⁶². On the other hand, it was argued that the ancient sources exaggerated as to the

⁵⁵ «Hardly superstitious nature».

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, II, 1, 187.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*, 332.

⁵⁸ «Advancement», «little civility», *ibidem*, III, 142.

⁵⁹ «Yoke and Culture», «wealth and liberty», *ibidem*, 3.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, II, 2, 289.

⁶¹ «They do not seem very recommendable».

⁶² *Ibidem*, III, 331.

peoples of the North, more frugal than barbarous: once pacified by Augustus, they demonstrated their good disposition to progress⁶³. We may note in passing that, following earlier points of view, Augustus' conquest of Spain was related to the designs of a Divine Providence preparing the coming of Christ together with the imperial peace⁶⁴. This peace brought Spain enormous prosperity; at the same time Spain contributed to the imperial peace in many positive ways, among the others, giving birth to a uncorrupted literature.

It may be useful to point out that the Spanish Enlightenment considered antiquity an ideal reality not because of its identification with the Romans, and still less with the Greeks, but because the centuries before Christ provided a concrete proof that, in the past at least, Spain had been exemplary. This role could not have been represented, according to the Mohedanos' way of thinking, by the Middle Ages that, after the barbarian invasions, meant ignorance and obliteration of the sciences and in which the wars hindered any kind of serious development until the fifteenth century⁶⁵. Nevertheless, this period did not imply total decadence. On the one hand, the Goths cultivated themselves and were hispanicised in the peninsula⁶⁶: they impoverished culture but did not totally destroy it. On the other hand, the Arabs, although active in a period dominated by war rather than by culture, made themselves learned on Spanish land and exported their knowledge to the rest of Europe. Nevertheless, a more positive appraisal of this contribution was not possible: the Christian conquest of Western Andalusia in the thirteenth century turned out to be fundamental and positive for the cultural elevation of the country. Precisely, the celebrated end of foreign *dominaciones* brought with it a splendid sixteenth century⁶⁷. Thus, the Spanish Ancient World became exemplary because it demonstrated the good and civilised spirit of the Spaniards and because it was a proof that the 'Black Legend' was false; in this context, the importance of imitating «nuestros antepasados» in agriculture, fishing, mining, commerce, was underlined⁶⁸.

This claim contains, moreover, another reference of a more internal kind. If Andalusia had been the country's most cultivated area during the Phoenician and Roman periods⁶⁹, the Cordovan Mohedano brothers do not fail to claim a series of changes in the present situation towards that direction. Talking about the navigability of the river Guadalquivir in ancient times, they claim for *it* to be so again:

⁶³ *Ibidem*, 302.

⁶⁴ *Ibidem*, II, I, 217; III, 337, and *passim*.

⁶⁵ *Ibidem*, I, 111.

⁶⁶ *Ibidem*, LXXVI.

⁶⁷ *Ibidem*, LXXV ff. On the other hand, this is a constant in Spanish Enlightenment as opposed to baroque bad taste, see A. Mestre, *Mayans y la España*, 54 ff.

⁶⁸ «Our ancestors»; Mohedano, end of vol. V; III, 295.

⁶⁹ *Ibidem*, III, 150.

La naturaleza es la misma, igual el ingenio de los andaluces: pero no es igual la aplicación. Antiguamente eran los más industriosos de todos los españoles, hoy se reputan comúnmente como los menos aplicados⁷⁰.

A proof of the good nature of the inhabitants of the South would also be the fact that, it was the Andalusian writers who defended the true rules of taste against the corruption of the High Roman Empire⁷¹. All this is inseparable from the Andalusian Enlightenment movement and, more concretely, from the erudites related to the *Academia Sevillana de Buenas Letras*⁷². Some years earlier, in 1762, in Huelva, another cleric, Antonio Jacobo del Barco, had presented his *Retrato Natural y Político de la Bética Antigua o Colección curiosa de los más célebres testimonios y pasages de los autores Geógrafos Antiguos que hablan de esta Provincia*, a manuscript that was not published but copied and distributed among Spanish erudites, as was relatively common in the Spanish Enlightenment⁷³. In this work the past and the present are united in an extremely interesting attempt to mix Geology, Geography, Demography with economic reflections on Antiquity in Andalusia in which, commerce, navigation, fruit, clothing, dyeing, cattle raising, etc., find a place and in which, the data are compared and discussed in relation to those of ancient authors and Andalusian erudites of past centuries such as Rodrigo Caro, bearing in mind, as well, the economic and social data of the last centuries. It is not difficult to see the connection between the questions raised by the Mohedanos and del Barco's regret for the loss of

frugalidad antigua y porque ahora apoderada de nuestras costumbres la contagiosa enfermedad del lujo, y fausto, han desfigurado aquellas facciones, y hoy en el semblante político de la Andalucía, no se ve sino el dolo, la codicia, la pereza y descuido de la agricultura, y una insufrible prodigalidad del Patrimonio con que entre todos los Europeos nos ha mejorado el soberano autor⁷⁴.

This is followed by the claim to the need for change and return to that earlier enterprising attitude. A direct influence on the Mohedanos (who quote del Barco at

⁷⁰ «Nature is the same, same is the ingenuity of the Andalusians: but their assiduousness is not the same. In the olden days they were the most industrious of all Spaniards, nowadays they are commonly deemed to be the least industrious», *ibidem*, IV, 288-289.

⁷¹ *Ibidem*, VI.

⁷² Very important is F. Aguilar Piñal, *La Real Academia Sevillana de Buenas Letras en el siglo XVIII* (Madrid, 1966). On Andalusian erudites since the sixteenth century see F. Wulff, «Andalucía antigua», 28-32.

⁷³ *Natural and Political Account of Ancient Baetica or Curious Collection of the most celebrated Testimonies and Passages of Ancient Geographers on this Province*. We have used that of *Biblioteca Nacional* ms. 1717. There is a summary in *Memorias de la Sociedad Patriótica de Sevilla* (Sevilla, 1779), vol. I. On the author see F. Aguilar Piñal, *Academia*, 171-173 ff.; bibliography in Id., *Bibliografía*, see del Barco.

⁷⁴ «Ancient frugality because now the contagious illness of luxury and pomp has taken over our customs and disfigured those features and today, in the political state of Andalusia we see only fraud, greed, idleness and a neglect of agriculture, and an intolerable waste of patrimony with which, among all Europeans, God has improved us», A. J. del Barco, 103.

the beginning of their volume V) is evident as are evident, above all, the overlapping areas of concern and, on the other hand, the limits of their analysis.

III. THE HISTORY OF MASDEU

The work of the Catalan Masdeu has received greater critical attention than that of the Mohedano brothers⁷⁵. Between them there is a chronological distance, although not so great. The latter publish the essential part of their work around the beginning of the decade of the 70s and the former starts the publication of his in 1781 in Italy and 1783 in Spain. But it would be difficult not to see the continuity in the questions they raise despite the important changes introduced which could be summarised as the taking up of a more critical - more traditional - position with regard to the *dominaciones extranjeras* of Spain. This attitude seems inseparable from his condition of expelled Jesuit (expelled to Italy by Carlos III) and his strong reaction to what he considers a contemptuous European attitude towards Spanish culture, especially by Italian (Tiraboschi, for example, who had already published his work in 1771) and French authors⁷⁶. His work overflows with indignation: it is sufficient to see how, in its beginning, he argues against Vayrac (author of *État présent de l'Espagne*) who presented the Spanish as enemies of the human species and not as *cultos y dóciles dispuestos a dexarse guiar por la luz de la razón*⁷⁷. In the image he presents there are no fissures: Spain was always the most or among the most cultivated countries, except in the seventeenth century; even the Middle Ages is a culturally fertile age since, the Arabs (who cultivated themselves here) and the Spanish Jews maintained and transmitted the Enlightenment as well as the Arts, Navigation, Geography, etc., to an ignorant Europe⁷⁸; a cultural splendor shared by the Christian kingdoms of the Peninsula. In such a clear and structured scheme, the seventeenth-century crisis must also have its explanation: the old wars against the Moors, the depopulation caused by the discovery of America and its colonisation, the commercial role of Flanders, the expulsion of the Arabs and Jews, the *circunstancias infelices*⁷⁹ of some of Carlos V's descendants, etc., are all historically determinant reasons used to explain specifically the decadence as against the envious critics who are unable

⁷⁵ B. Sánchez Alonso, III, 190ff. exaggerates perhaps his importance. See also R. Mantelli *The Political, Religious and Historiographical Ideas of J. F. Masdeu S.J. 1744-1817* (New York-London, 1987).

⁷⁶ Regarding this in Masdeu see R. Mantelli, «Nationalism, Xenophobia and Catalanism in the Writings of an Enlightenment Catholic Historian: J.F. Masdeu S.J. (1774-1817)», in *Analecta Sacra Tarraconense*, 55-56 (1982): 209-260, and the corresponding chapter of the book cited.

⁷⁷ «Cultivated and docile men willing to let themselves be guided by the law of Reason», J. F. Masdeu, I, 17-18. See R. Mantelli, «Nationalism», 11 ff.

⁷⁸ J. F. Masdeu, I, 61 ff., 84-85, 125 ff.

⁷⁹ «Unfortunate circumstances».

to see reality because they do not proceed philosophically, that is, searching for causes⁸⁰.

The peoples who come to the Peninsula⁸¹ are treated less enthusiastically than in the case of the Moledano brothers. Like them, he exalts the Phoenicians, the first civilised people of Antiquity, and the role they played in Spain, particularly in Andalusia, and follows their views on the cultural primacy of the South of the Peninsula over the rest of the West, including, of course, the French-Celts⁸² and the Greeks. The latter are viewed with certain hostility⁸³: they arrive later, they are demographically less important and are presented in the midst of a number of criticisms over their religion, morality and historians - whom he accuses, together with the Romans, of ignorance with regard to other peoples⁸⁴. This negative portrayal is reinforced by his presentation of it within a context of conflicts over hegemony with the Carthaginians⁸⁵. His vision of the sixth century is particularly interesting: the role of Argantonio is still contemplated within the mesh of conflicts between Greeks, Carthaginians and Phoenicians and in the context of the clashes between Tyrrhenians and Phoenicians against the Phocaeans, who will find that, the area of Phoenician influence was vetoed for them. The Greeks, on the other hand, will, in their turn, prevent the settlement of Carthaginians on the east coast by convincing the natives. Thus, Argantonio seeks the support of the Greeks in order to restrain the Phoenicians and Carthaginians. The defeat of the Phocaeans in Alalia and the death of the Tartesian king weakened the inhabitants of Tartessus to the extent that, an attack by Argantonio's successor against the Tartesian city of Gades led, finally, to Carthaginian intervention and conquest. The latter went on to take over their territory and areas of navigation and commerce⁸⁶. Yet, certain aspects of the Carthaginians are claimed: Diodorus Siculus' phrase that, without

80 J. F. Masdeu, I, 173, 178ff.

81 See R. Mantelli. *Political, Religious and Historiographical Ideas*, 432 ff.. Unfortunately, he does not connect, except rarely, his description with earlier historiography or with the work of the Moledanos. The role of the Phoenicians, by the way, in the south of the Peninsula is reinforced by the discoveries of recent years (contra, 444, n. 16).

82 J. F. Masdeu. Prólogo, I, 2 and book IV of that volume.

83 J. F. Masdeu, I, 2, 76 ff.

84 J. F. Masdeu, I, 1, 226-227.

85 J. F. Masdeu, L, 2, 103 ff.

86 J. F. Masdeu, I, 2, 84 ff., 108 ff., 105 ff.. Although a more detailed analysis is here impossible, it is interesting to note that quite a lot of these visions, for example, the historical discourse on what is 'authentically' Andalusian is repeated long afterwards, and only apparently without a line of continuity (see G. Cruz Andreotti, F. Wulff Alonso, «Tartessos de la historiografía del XVI a la del XX: creación, muerte y resurrección de un pasado utópico», in *La Antigüedad como argumento: historiografía de la arqueología y la historia antigua en Andalucía*, eds. J. Beltrán Fortes, F. Gascó (Sevilla, forthcoming), in the work of the great 'discoverer' of Tartessos, a scholar of outstanding influence in Spanish archaeological and ancient history studies, the German hispanist A. Schulten (*Tartessos*, Hamburg, 1922); for a view of his importance in Spanish historiography see G. Cruz Andreotti «Un acercamiento historiográfico al Tartessos de Schulten», in *Baetica*, 10 (1987): 227-240; Idem, «Notas al Tartessos de Schulten: comercio y estado», in *Coloquio de Historia Antigua de Andalucía (Córdoba, 6-9 de Abril de 1988)*, forthcoming; Idem, «Schulten y el 'carácter tartesio'», en

the Hispanic mines and soldiers Hannibal would never have been able to do what he did is proudly underlined. Masdeu also adds that he himself *se españolizó* and learned to fight here and that, for this reason, the Romans found themselves obliged to come to the Peninsula⁸⁷. Nevertheless, too much sympathy for the conqueror is clearly out of place. And it is logical that, a positive idea of the primitive Spaniards, untouched by those superior cultures where the arrogance of philosophers led to depravation, superstition and idolatry⁸⁸, should also be maintained. His acceptance of the theory of the origins of the Celts in Spain, with all that this implies, as we have seen, does not prevent him from marking, like the Mohedanos and following Valerius Maximus, the differences in virtues and character between Celtiberians and Celtigauls⁸⁹. But his positioning with regard to the influence of foreign peoples on the Spaniards is much stronger; the difference between coasts and interior is maintained in the case of the Greeks and Phoenicians and it is also thought that, Carthaginian influence related to their conquest does not go much further than that area. In the remaining area *la independencia sin doblar la cerviz al yugo de Cartago* is maintained and *la primitiva simplicidad y grosería*⁹⁰, the old customs which make them barbarous yet brave, continue free of foreign influence. Idolatry does not spread much further either⁹¹. The allusion to the Celtiberians who, through foreign influence, are to some extent idolatrous and yet *conservan tenaces más que los andaluces muchos usos españoles antiguos*⁹², is significant. Andalusia is the other side of the coin.

Rome, on the other hand, is once again presented as it had been before the Mohedanos: a cruel, ambitious, mean and oppressive conqueror. As opposed to them, he defends Numantia, Viriato, etc., without the least ambiguity and Mariana himself appears accused of pro-Roman tendencies due to his handling of Cato the Censor's behavior with the Spaniards⁹³. In this context, the Andalusians are presented as having been defeated earlier than the rest, relating this to their greater level of culture, comfort, and vice *que mal se compadecen con un ánimo guerrero*⁹⁴, while the rest die for the sake of freedom. In the midst of all this, he adds (in a phrase which reminds one of that of the Mohedanos) that they did so, perhaps, because their greater level of culture made them more cautious⁹⁵. There is no doubt as to where Masdeu's sympathies lie nor of the greater weight of one

Historiografía de la arqueología, eds. J. Arce, R. Olmos, 145-148, and R. Olmos, «A. Schulten y la historiografía de la primera mitad del siglo XX», *ibidem*, 135-144.

⁸⁷ J. F. Masdeu, I, 2, 113 and *passim*.

⁸⁸ J.F. Masdeu, I, 1, 93.

⁸⁹ J. F. Masdeu, I, 1, 163.

⁹⁰ «Independence without submission to the Carthaginian yoke»; «primitive simplicity and coarseness».

⁹¹ J. F. Masdeu, II, 1, 145-146 and 15 l.

⁹² «Stubbornly maintain, more than the Andalusians, many of the ancient Spanish customs», J. F. Masdeu, I, 2, 15.

⁹³ J. F. Masdeu, II, 1, 180 ff.

⁹⁴ «Which do not fit with a warlike spirit».

⁹⁵ J. F. Masdeu, II, 1, 194.

model over another. After the conquest, his attitude to Rome does not change. Behind the different legal classifications of the subjects there lies hidden a genuine servitude⁹⁶ and, in fact, the high cultural and economic level of the Peninsula did not need the Roman presence in order to develop⁹⁷, although, no doubt Spain took advantage of the circumstances.

Ali this did not prevent him from taking an interest in the culture and society generated as well as in Spain's contribution to the Empire. The claim to the 'Spanish literati' (Seneca, Quintilianus, Marcial or Mela) or the emperors of Hispanic origin is, in a sense, more than traditional. Much more important, however, as far as the novelty of his contributions is concerned, was his continuation and improvement of the work of the Mohedano brothers regarding the use of all evidence available for studies on provincial organisation, population, mining, fishing, agricultural production, manufacture, arms, road construction, architecture and an interminable series of other issues. To this should be added studies more typical of antiquarians, on the location of cities or other similar ones as, for instance, those in which he resorts to ancient references, coins, inscriptions, or other means (such as the comparisons between Plinius and the official Geographer Tomás López). This mixture of erudition and history is manifested in the work, as in the case of the Mohedanos, through the combination of *Ilustraciones* and text, an ideal system which prevents the breaking up, with the insertion of more specialised or polemical contributions, of the historical narrative structure. His important collection of inscriptions in different volumes - especially in volume V - fulfils an erudite role, provides historical references and serves as a cause for patriotic pride due to its quantity as well as quality. Let us add that, his resort to a dense network of correspondents all over Spain allows for a genuine reconstruction of a good part of the totality of Spanish antiquarians of his time. Not even here does he give up on his determination to demonstrate the negligence and ignorance of foreign compilers: it is very frequent, he affirms, for them to take up just a few inscriptions, alter them and not know how Spanish authors have dealt with them (such as Antonio Agustín, Morales, Caro, Argote, etc.). Under a shower of criticisms come, among others, Grutero, Fabretti, Muratori, Montfaucon and Maffei - of whom he is glad to note how he locates the bridge of Alcantara in Alicante. It is not surprising that, following the traditional model, the end of Rome (about which he disagrees with Montesquieu and Gibbon) should have been seen as a liberation⁹⁸. The effect of Rome had not been too profound. Although, as Robertson had pointed out, a certain weakening of Spanish valor had taken place, the Spaniards went on demonstrating it in their fights against the Goths in the North and, above all, against the Moslems⁹⁹. Likewise, the Goths continue to be

⁹⁶ J. F. Masdeu, VIII, 35.

⁹⁷ So, he tells us that Rome was responsible for the economic crisis of the Iberian Peninsula during the period of the Empire (J.F. Masdeu, VIII, 146) or that none of the mines of the Roman Age had not already been discovered here by the Phoenicians and Cathaginians (J. F. Masdeu, I, 2, 106).

⁹⁸ J. F. Masdeu, X, 1ff.

looked upon positively from the point of view of political, religious and cultural unity as well as due to their exemplary legislation and Royal control of the Church¹⁰⁰. Leaving aside the valuation of the cultural and economic role of the Arabs, it is clear the idea of catastrophe implied by their arrival and presence that the author wishes to transmit. Precisely, the volume dedicated to the Moslem domination up until 1100 is entitled *Los cuatro siglos de mayor abatimiento de nuestra nación*¹⁰¹. With D. Pelayo, the *restaurador de la libertad*¹⁰², a new path opens up whose culmination point are the Catholic King and Queen.

IV. FINAL NOTES

It is evident that the Mohedano brothers' enlightened focus follows the traditional Spanish historiographical scheme, although it also introduces certain important changes. Interesting innovations concerning the change in the object of historical interest are also present and are a response to the Enlightenment's search for a History that would go beyond the political and military spheres. Masdeu, who shares a similar intention and owes a lot to their work, reduces the divergence from the traditional model and, in exchange, pulls together, amplifies and perfects the inquiries of these new focusses and points of view. This is also in accordance with an assessment of foreign influences which would be possible to describe as positive with certain nuances in the case of the Mohedanos and, on the contrary, negative with certain nuances in that of Masdeu. Probably, there is more than just a personal difference behind. Masdeu's life experience and personality do not seem to account for a probably much more general process which the French Revolution did no more than continue. Both historical works represent the wish to help formulate a restructuring in the *Weltanschauung* of a collective which, like all humans, cannot conceive of itself without a reference to the past and which cannot change, try to change or become conscious of change without altering it. And they also show clearly how they tried to do so with the stock of knowledge of the European culture of the time: Tiraboschi, Robertson, the authors of the *English Universal History*, Winckelmann, Gibbon, Montesquieu, etc. But their work is, at the same time, a demonstration of the limits and possibilities of eighteenth-century Spain as well as of successes and new problems which will not be renewed in Spanish historiography for a long time to come.

Undoubtedly, it is difficult to produce an overall assessment of the relation between Enlightenment and history¹⁰³. Yet, we should ask ourselves whether it is

⁹⁹ J. F. Masdeu, I, 109-110.

¹⁰⁰ See R. Mantelli, *The Political*.

¹⁰¹ *Four Centuries of our Nation's Greatest Humiliation*.

¹⁰² «Restorer of freedom».

at all possible without putting in the balance these and other histories which Croce called 'special'¹⁰⁴. And it would not be superfluous to ask whether the historiographical view of the great thinkers would not have gained a lot had it taken into account these works that show us the other side of a cosmopolitan interest which is not always so clear even in them. Likewise, it is useful to ask, when it comes to drawing up the balance we mentioned earlier, whether this type of national historical literature has been sufficiently taken into account and, moreover, from this comparative point of view, in all countries (including those of a 'peripheral' Enlightenment), in relation to their aspirations, their techniques and impact. Their combination of History and erudition does not seem to be among their least interesting features, including as regards their contribution to later historiography. Finally, in this last sense, it would be interesting to analyse, as in our case, their continuity and/or rupture with earlier models of historical interpretation and their relation to future works. In the Spanish process, this is particularly interesting because the most important representative of the new histories of Spain in the nineteenth century and up until its last decades is Lafuente¹⁰⁵. He maintains the essentialist, and unitarianist image in all its crudeness, superimposing it onto a model of constitutional-political progressive advancement through the centuries that culminates in his own age. Invaders are on the whole negatively presented and considered only to the extent that they have contributed to this process. It is not surprising to find that the positive assessment of the Phoenicians has disappeared¹⁰⁶ - there is no trace of such an attitude - together with the interest for wider economic and social studies; those, precisely, which had been an essential trait of the enlightened use of the old Spanish model of historical interpretation. Nor, finally, should it surprise us to find that the very quality in the use of literary as well as non-literary sources has suffered considerably in this process.

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¹⁰³ For an attempt in this direction see F. Diaz, «Une réévaluation de l'histoire des Lumières», *Storia della Storiografia*, 10 (1986): 91-106.

¹⁸⁴ B. Croce, *Théorie et histoire de l'historiographie* (Genève, 1968), 164 ff.

¹⁸⁵ F. Wulff, «La Historia de España de D. Modesto Lafuente».

¹⁸⁶ Regarding other reasons see M. Bernal, *Black Athena*.