

The Battle over Spanish between 1800 and 2000

Language ideologies and Hispanic
intellectuals

**Edited by José del Valle and
Luis Gabriel-Stheeman**



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The Battle over Spanish between 1800 and 2000

This book examines the ways in which a group of key Spanish and Latin American intellectuals of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries discussed the concept of Spanish as a language, and how these discussions related to the construction of national identities and the idea of a Hispanic culture.

Among the many historical processes that have characterized the life of Spain and Latin American nations over the past two hundred years, two are particularly relevant for this book: Spain's modernization, and the post-colonial construction of the Hispanic community. Also dealt with is a phenomenon closely associated with these processes – the discussion of language matters in various spheres of public life.

Key issues include:

- The political character of the debate over what Spanish is, what it represents, and who has the authority to settle linguistic disputes.
- The specific form these discussions have taken in the context of the lives of Hispanic nations during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
- The role of institutions such as the Spanish Royal Academy and the Instituto Cervantes.
- The role of leading intellectuals such as Andrés Bello, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, Juan Valera, Rufino José Cuervo, Miguel de Unamuno, Ramón Menéndez Pidal, José Ortega y Gasset and José María Arguedas.

This book will be essential reading for sociolinguists, scholars of the Spanish language, historians of Hispanic culture, and all those with an interest in the relationship between language and culture.

José del Valle teaches Spanish language and linguistics at Fordham University. He has published articles on linguistics and Hispanic cultural history in journals such as *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, *Hispanic Review*, *Language and Communication*, and *Quimera*. He is author of *El trueque s/x en español antiguo: aproximaciones teóricas* (Tübingen, 1996).

Luis Gabriel-Stheeman teaches Spanish language and literature at The College of New Jersey. He has published articles on Spanish and Latin American contemporary narrative in journals such as *Inti* and *Estudios orteguianos* and more recently, *Función retórica del recurso etimológico en la obra de José Ortega y Gasset* (Coruña, 2000).

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Contributors

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Luis Gabriel-Stheeman teaches Spanish language and literature at The College of New Jersey. He has published articles on Spanish and Latin American contemporary narrative in journals such as *Inti* and *Estudios orteguianos* and, more recently, *Función retórica del recurso etimológico en la obra de José Ortega y Gasset* (Coruña, 2000).

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Barry L. Velleman is Professor of Spanish at Marquette University. He is currently researching topics in the cultural and linguistic history of Latin America and Spain. His publications include *Andrés Bello y sus libros* (Caracas, 1995). His book *My Dear Sir: Mary Mann's Letters to Sarmiento: 1865–1881* is scheduled to appear in 2001.

Biographical notes

Andrés Bello (Venezuela, 1781–Chile, 1865) was the foremost Latin American humanist of the nineteenth century. During the decades he spent in London (1810–1829), Bello investigated literary, cultural and scientific topics and published a number of poetic works and short studies in the journals which he founded (*Repertorio americano*, *Biblioteca americana*). Bello's most active period was in Chile (1829–1865), where he founded the University of Chile (1843), serving as its President until his death, and wrote Chile's *Civil Code* (1856), a *Cosmography* (1848), and numerous studies on Roman and International Law, science, literary criticism, philosophy and education. His *Semantic Analysis of the Spanish Tenses* (1841) and *Spanish Grammar* (1847) place him among the most astute and influential language scholars in the history of Hispanic letters.

Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (b. Argentina, 1811; d. Asunción, Paraguay, 1888). He studied educational systems in North America and Europe, contributed to the creation of a pedagogical literature in Latin America, and established schools in Argentina and Chile. In 1842 he was named Rector of the newly-founded Escuela Normal in Santiago. In politics, he was an influential figure and one of the major ideologues of Argentina's transition from a Spanish colony to a modern independent state. He was President of Argentina from 1868 to 1874.

Juan Valera (Spain, 1824–1905). Born and raised in Andalucía, don Juan moved to Madrid as a young adult and pursued a political career, becoming a member of parliament for the Liberal Party. He held important posts in the diplomatic corps, including an ambassadorship to the United States. Valera distinguished himself among his contemporaries as a writer (his best-known novel being *Pepita Jiménez*), but mostly as a true man of letters, an impressive intellectual, and a sharp literary critic. He was a member of the Spanish Royal Academy (one of its most progressive members). He took great interest in "Spanish-American" literature and was instrumental in introducing Ruben Dario's poetry in Spain. Refined diplomat, casual politician, idealist writer, and enthusiastic polemicist, the Andalusian's oeuvre – which included literary, journalistic and epistolary

pieces as well as essays – is a most valuable resource for interpreting nineteenth-century Spain.

Rufino José Cuervo (b. Bogotá, Colombia, 1844; d. Paris, France, 1911). Cuervo is considered to be the greatest Hispanic philologist of the nineteenth century. His classic works include the *Apuntaciones críticas sobre el lenguaje bogotano*, an edition of Bello's *Gramática*, and the *Diccionario de construcción y régimen de la lengua castellana*. He did not pursue an academic career, and only held, early in his life, a few teaching jobs in Bogotá. He made a living running, with his brother, a beer-brewing company. In 1882, the Cuervo brothers sold the factory and moved to Paris, where Rufino José would give his heart and soul to the study of philology until his death.

Miguel de Unamuno (b. Bilbao, Spanish Basque Country, 29 September 1864; d. Salamanca, 12 December 1936). He was a poet, novelist and essayist with a late romantic cast of mind and a tortured obsession with death and the need for certainty about a personal afterlife. A polemical figure who enjoyed and promoted debate, his personality often takes center stage in the expression of his opinions, which often take the form of convictions and are persistently colored by a strong individualism. As a consequence of this subjectivism, he often swapped his social and political views in contradictory ways. From his platform as Rector of the University of Salamanca, he took part in public life through intense writing for the press and eventually came to see himself as a prophetic figure and a moral leader of Spain. A substantial part of his thought helped to give form to the discourse of Spanish nationalism and an expansive Transatlantic Hispanism based on the substitution of linguistic and cultural hegemony of Castile's "spiritual blood" for Spain's lost imperial dominions. His better known works include the essays *En torno al casticismo* (Barcelona 1902), *Del sentimiento trágico de la vida* (Madrid 1913), *L'agonie du christianisme* (Paris 1925; first Spanish edition: Madrid 1931), and the novels *Niebla* (Madrid 1914), *Abel Sánchez* (Madrid, 1917), and *San Manuel Bueno, mártir* (Madrid 1933).

Ramón Menéndez Pidal (Spain, 1869–1968). A titanic intellectual. His oeuvre includes works in historiography, linguistics, philology, literary history and paleography. His outstanding intelligence, selfless dedication and powerful family connections brought him to positions of great responsibility within Spain's cultural and political establishment. His power within the cultural institutions of the state (he was Head of the Center for Historical Studies and Director of the Spanish Royal Academy) enabled him to create a prolific and wide-ranging school of thought deeply committed to the regeneration of Spain through intellectual and cultural development. His biographers often associate him with the members of the Generation of 98.

José Ortega y Gasset (1883–1955) is Spain's most important philosopher, and one of the very few Spanish thinkers ever to achieve wide international recognition. Educated in Spain and Germany, in 1910 he became Professor of Metaphysics at the University of Madrid. A person of great insight, perspicuity and charisma, Ortega soon became a leading intellectual figure, an advocate of Spain's Europeanization and a passionate, exemplary contributor to his country's cultural and scientific revival. He was a true erudite, a voracious reader and a prolific writer; one versed in a broad range of disciplines that included, besides his philosophical interests, art criticism, history, sociology and linguistics. He founded several journals and magazines, including the influential *Revista de Occidente*, a forum through which he introduced to the public a high number of foreign cultural luminaries. Ortega's commitment to Spain's recovery also led him to participate in the political arena, both as an assiduous commentator and as a member of the parliament that elaborated the republican constitution. He is best known for *The Revolt of the Masses* (1930), a clever and controversial analysis of the crisis of modern civilization. His most important works include *The Modern Theme* (1923), *The Dehumanization of Art* (1925) and *Man and People* (1950).

José María Arguedas (Peru, 1911–1969) is one of the most influential twentieth-century Peruvian intellectuals. His prolific writings are almost singularly focused on the place of Andeans, and Andean culture, within Peruvian society. His works include narrative fiction, ethnographies, articles on Andean folklore, as well as numerous collections and translations of songs, stories, legends and myths from Quechua oral tradition. He is perhaps best known for his narrative fiction: his most well-regarded novel is *Los ríos profundos* (1959). One of the most original features of Arguedas's fiction is that it actively incorporates aspects of Quechua orality into written Spanish. This is important because Arguedas viewed the hybrid form and language of his novels as a kind of model in miniature of an ideal Peruvian nation in which social inequality would be eliminated, and the world-view of Quechua-speakers would be foundational.

Preface

Among the many historical processes that have characterized the life of Spain and Latin American nations in the past two hundred years, two are particularly relevant for the present book: Spain's modernization, including the delicate administrative articulation of the state, and the post-colonial construction of the Hispanic community, including Spain's renewed presence in Latin American economies. While we recognize the complexity and multidimensionality of these processes – their cultural, economic, political and social repercussions – our project deals more directly with one phenomenon closely associated with them: the discussion of language matters in various spheres of public life. In particular, the present book examines the political essence of the debate over what Spanish is, what it represents, and who has the authority to settle linguistic disputes and dilemmas. The public debate about linguistic topics is in no way new. However, the chapters that follow explore the specific form these discussions have taken in the context of the lives of Hispanic nations during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Since this project revolves around a well-defined aspect of the interface between language and politics, it cannot afford to and is not meant to be comprehensive. For excellent surveys of the politics of language in the Spanish-speaking world, we refer the reader to Miranda Stewart (1999) and Clare Mar-Molinero (2000). These texts offer concise and insightful discussions of the broad spectrum of language debates surrounding Spanish.

The – at times latent – linguistic debates that constitute the thematic core of this book are far from settled (as chapter 9 will show). Numerous examples of the existing controversies can still be found in Spain's daily press and in popular as well as academic publications: Angel López García's award winning *El rumor de los desarraigados* (1985), Gregorio Salvador's *Lengua española y lenguas de España* (1987), Fernando Lázaro Carreter's *El dardo en la palabra* (1997), Juan M. Lope Blanch's *La lengua española y sus problemas* (1997), Alex Grijelmo's *Defensa apasionada del idioma español* (1998), Juan Ramón Lodares' *El paraíso políglota* (2000), etc. The publication of these essays and the commercial success of most of them attest to the currency of the issue and underscore the need to produce critical approaches to such influential texts.

To date, in the Hispanic intellectual context there has been a remarkable absence of in-depth critical studies of the ideological/political foundations and implications of linguistic standardization. While there is a continuing tradition of works calling for the maintenance of a unitary *and* uniform linguistic standard across the Spanish-speaking world, there have been few attempts to study the inevitably hierarchical structures that result from such efforts.

With this book we hope to spark among Spanish and Latin American intellectuals, as well as among Hispanists everywhere, a discussion that will lead to a useful critical analysis of the public debate about language. There is no question that we are presenting our readers with a piece of sociopolitically engaged scholarship. Given the political twist of our academic undertaking – its provocative character – we can only hope that our ideological or intellectual adversaries respond to our texts not with anger or disdain, but with alternative analyses and with careful critiques of their own.

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1 Nationalism, *hispanismo*, and monoglossic culture

José del Valle and Luis Gabriel-Stheeman

Introduction

In the history of Hispanic culture, the first few decades of the nineteenth century were marked by the independence movements that led to the birth of most Latin American nations (Cuba and Puerto Rico would remain Spanish until the fateful year, 1898). The movement toward independence of Spanish colonies was not an exclusively political phenomenon; it was accompanied by various projects of cultural emancipation, by a cultural schism. Latin American liberalism was surely influenced by a number of Spanish intellectuals (C. M. Rama 1982: 67–102), but the failure of the Spanish liberal project – evidenced by Spain’s submission to Napoleon (1808–14) and the subsequent setback under Ferdinand VII (1814–33) – caused the intellectual leaders of the independence movement to shift their attention from the former metropolis to the French and Anglo-Saxon world. While these nations represented progress and modernity, functioning as beacons for the young Latin American nations, Spain continued to be identified by many with the Inquisition and the reactionary structures of traditional societies.

Naturally, in Latin America, independence created the urgent need to construct the administrative structures and cultural contents through which nations materialize. In Spain, despite the existence of the political infrastructures and cultural prestige of one of the old national states, liberal politicians and intellectuals also confronted the challenge of creating a *modern* nation that would serve the interest of what was becoming the new dominant social class, the bourgeoisie.

The two phases of nationalism

In contrast with the ideas spread by the creators of nationalist mythology, many contemporary scholars have emphasized the modern character of the nation. Contrary to its conception as a natural and eternal entity, endowed with an objective existence, many historians define it as a construct, or, to use Benedict Anderson’s well-known term, as an *imagined community* (1983).

After the Age of Revolutions, the power of the state was displaced from the monarchy, the aristocracy, and the interests they represented, to the bourgeoisie; this change in the source of power entailed a parallel displacement of sovereignty from God to the people. It was at this point that the state, the nation and the people became equated and that the material and ideological creation of the nation occurred. According to Hobsbawm, the nineteenth century witnessed the unfolding of the first phase of nationalism, favored by the liberal bourgeoisie and closely connected with the development of capitalism. In this period, the great national states – many of which had emerged during the Renaissance – completed their construction. The correlation between capitalism and national development had a clear corollary: only those territories in which economic growth was possible could be considered nations. This is what Hobsbawm refers to as the *threshold principle*, which he illustrates with the following statements made in the nineteenth century by the German liberal economist Friedrich List:

A large population and an extensive territory endowed with manifold national resources, are essential requirements of the normal nationality . . . A nation restricted in the number of its population and in territory, especially if it has a separate language, can only possess a crippled literature, crippled institutions for promoting art and science. A small state can never bring to complete perfection within its territory the various branches of production.

(quoted in Hobsbawm 1992: 30–1)

For Hobsbawm, three other criteria, in addition to the threshold principle, were established to determine whether a territory could constitute a national entity: “Historic association with a state, . . . a long-established cultural elite, *possessing a written national literary and administrative vernacular*, . . . and a proven capacity for conquest” (37–8, emphasis added). As we can see, one of these criteria makes reference to language. However, according to Hobsbawm, in the discourse of nineteenth-century liberal nationalism, the connection between language and nation was stated much less emphatically than it would be after 1880, the onset of the second phase of nationalism. The existence of a national language was certainly considered a defining criterion, but it was taken for granted that all citizens would adopt it as a model of linguistic behavior in view of the obvious material advantages that could be derived from its knowledge and use. With this attitude, the presence of other languages – minority languages as well as dialectal usage – was not perceived as a threat, but as a natural situation that, in an equally natural fashion, would be progressively modified according to the dictates of the laws of progress.

After 1880, however, a new type of nationalism started to emerge. Ignoring the threshold principle, this new nationalism based its discourse mainly on linguistic and ethnic criteria. Several reasons have been proposed

as reasons for this new development. Among them, two are particularly useful for understanding the attitude of philology and modern linguistics towards language (Hobsbawm 1992: 109–11). The first one is the democratization of politics, which reduced, at least on the surface, the distance between the common citizen and the institutions of power. The capitalist bourgeoisie, in order to ground its power in the sovereign *people*, had to create mechanisms that allowed the citizens to intervene – or at least appear to intervene – in matters of the state. At the same time, the defenders of the capitalist national state had to create more or less subtle control mechanisms that guaranteed the loyalty of the individual to the dominant system. Thus the modern state infiltrated the daily life of all its citizens, through the school, the army, the police, the postal system, the census, the telegraph and the railway system. This complex administrative network facilitated the spread of ideas from the top down, but it also allowed for the rapid diffusion of ideas that were contrary to the established order. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the *new* highly popular nationalisms competed with the national state for the loyalty of the citizens. Consequently, the great nations would have to use the full power of the ideological state apparatus in order to spread their idea of nation and integrate all citizens, persuading them of their membership in a national, cultural and *linguistic* whole.

A second reason for the appearance of the new nationalism was the great population movements. Migrations brought into contact peoples who spoke different dialects and mutually unintelligible languages and increased the linguistic, cultural and social diversity of urban centers. The growth and greater protagonism of non-traditional social groups, due to the mobility of capitalist liberal society, seemed to weaken the political, cultural and linguistic order that in the first phase of nationalism had remained unquestioned. Next to the urban bourgeoisie and its cultural elite, new groups of population were growing, and their linguistic usage – as well as many other patterns of behavior – displayed a disconcerting distance from the standard language. The emergence of these centrifugal elements triggered the intensification of a homogenizing centripetal activity. These trends, as González Stephan has indicated, often manifested themselves in the elaboration of *disciplinary texts* [“*escrituras disciplinarias*”], that is, texts that civilize subjectivity: constitutions, grammars and etiquette handbooks:

El proyecto de nación y ciudadanía fue un imaginario de minorías pero . . . se postuló como expansivo, y que efectivamente tuvo la capacidad de englobar-domesticar a comunidades diferenciales que ofrecían resistencia a costa de no fáciles negociaciones.¹

(González Stephan 1995: 25)

In sum, the emergence of language-based peripheral nationalisms and the protagonism of marginal social groups forced the defenders of liberal nationalism to react by intensifying the production of discourses that would secure

the loyalty of citizens as well as their faith in the indivisible unity of the national state.

Spanish nationalism and its challenges

From this perspective, it seems reasonable to suggest that nineteenth-century Spain was an ideal candidate for the construction of one of the great European national states. Its size practically guaranteed compliance with the threshold principle; its historical association with a state apparatus was unquestionable; its capacity for conquest could still be dreamed of, thanks to its imperial past, the actual remains of the empire, and more recent expansionist adventures:

The capture of Tetuan evoked a nation-wide apotheosis of the army with the queen as the heiress of the Great Isabella. The war brought no territorial gains . . . but vindicated Spain's mission against the infidel and slaked the thirst for national regeneration . . . this was a proof that national patriotism could still subsume regional loyalties in the sixties.

(Carr 1982: 261)

Finally, the existence of a cultural elite loyal to the administrative and literary standard was the obvious legacy of a long tradition that could be traced back to the *alfonsí* court and Renaissance humanism, that had culminated in 1713 with the creation of the Spanish Royal Academy, that would be continued in the twentieth century in the form of a prestigious school of philological and linguistic studies (cf. chapter 5), and that will be maintained, it seems, in the twenty-first century by highly publicized, state and corporately funded, cultural-linguistic institutions (cf. chapter 9).

Throughout the nineteenth century, Spain slowly engaged in the project of articulating the territory of the state as a modern nation: the railway, the extension of the postal network, the creation of national banks, the expansion of the school system and the opening of government offices in all provinces, are some of the accomplishments associated with modernization and national construction. According to García de Cortázar and González Vesga, the 1812 Constitution had already established the bases for a national unification:

Hasta el más mínimo detalle es regulado por la Constitución de 1812, cuyo diseño de Estado unitario imponía los derechos de los *españoles* por encima de los históricos de cada *reino*. La igualdad de los ciudadanos reclamaba una burocracia centralizada, una fiscalidad común, un ejército nacional y un mercado liberado de la rémora de aduanas interiores. Sobre estos cimientos, la burguesía construirá, a través de los

resortes de la administración, la *nación española*, cuya idea venía siendo perfilada desde el siglo anterior.²

(García de Cortázar and González Vesga 1999: 431)

The process of national construction was not easy, and had to face internal and external challenges. Industrialization was slow, in spite of the promising prospects which, according to Pierre Vilar (1985: 73–5), the demographic and economic progress of the eighteenth century had anticipated. In addition, throughout the century, the pressure generated by the Latin American secessionist movements was intensified by the specter of secessionism in Spain's own periphery. *Carlismo*, a movement associated with traditional ideologies and with the maintenance of the privileges of the *Ancien Régime*, demanded the preservation of the Basque Country's legal and fiscal dispensations. In the late 1860s, the growing power of federalists within the democratic party caused the defection of those (*unitarios*) who felt Spain's unity to be in jeopardy. Towards the end of the century, the vigor of centrifugal forces was intensified as echoes of the new nationalism reached Spain; the emergence of peripheral nationalism – in Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia – presented a challenge to the political articulation and cultural definition of Spain. Spanish history, due in part to the absence of a coherent natural system of communications, had generated a level of economic, cultural and linguistic diversity that had only become more complex with industrialization and urban growth.

From a nationalist perspective, this diversity had to be overcome, not only materially but also ideologically. The intervention of the state's ideological apparatus thus became necessary, its mission being the configuration of a homogeneous space that guaranteed the linguistic, cultural and national unity of Spain: "The identification of the state with one nation . . . implied a homogenization and standardization of its inhabitants, essentially, by means of a written 'national language'" (Hobsbawm 1992: 93).

Slow industrialization and internal dissent produced a sense of crisis that was reflected in the intellectual polemics that revolved around the "problem of Spain," that is to say, the nation's cultural stagnation and scientific backwardness with respect to the European neighbors. The "polémica de la ciencia española" and the debate over religious intolerance and the Inquisition, revealed the concerns that haunted turn-of-the-century intellectuals: doubts about the dignity of Spain's past and desolation in view of the "intellectual wasteland" that characterized their time (cf. Pérez Villanueva 1991: 82–5; Varela 1999).

The feeling of national insecurity, caused by economic and political instability, by the danger of disintegration, by the crisis of cultural identity, and by general apathy, reached unprecedented levels after Spain's infamous 1898 defeat by the United States and the subsequent loss of the final remains of the old empire. The outcome of the Spanish–American war (immortalized

as the “Desastre”) has been chosen by Spanish historiography to represent the general feeling of crisis with which intellectuals entered the twentieth century.

The persistence of the cultural empire

Despite the irreversibility of the process of Latin American independence, throughout the nineteenth century, Spanish governments persevered in their attempts to regain control over the former colonies, both by military means (cf. Pike 1971: 3; Fogelquist 1968: 15–16) and by way of cultural diplomacy. The organization of different conferences and symposia, as well as the publication of journals such as *La Ilustración Ibérica*, *La Revista Española de Ambos Mundos* and *La Ilustración Española y Americana*, was meant to create a climate of harmony that, on the one hand, would foster the subsequent establishment of commercial links, and on the other, preserve the image of a truly Hispanic civilization rooted in Spain and spread over the Americas. One of the first journals espousing this ideology was *La Revista Española de Ambos Mundos*, which in its first issue stated:

Destinada a España y América, pondremos particular esmero en estrechar sus relaciones. La Providencia no une a los pueblos con los lazos de un mismo origen, religión, costumbres e idioma para que se miren con desvío y se vuelvan las espaldas así en la próspera como en la adversa fortuna. Felizmente han desaparecido las causas que nos llevaron a la arena del combate, y hoy el pueblo americano y el ibero no son, ni deben ser, más que miembros de una misma familia; *la gran familia española, que Dios arrojó del otro lado del océano para que, con la sangre de sus venas, con su valor e inteligencia, conquistase a la civilización un nuevo mundo.*³

(quoted in Fogelquist 1968: 13–14; emphasis added)

The movement inspiring these initiatives of cultural diplomacy began soon after the independence of the Latin American republics in the 1820s and is variously known as *hispanismo*, *hispanoamericanismo* and *panhispanismo*. While difficult to define in precise terms, *hispanismo* can be said to consist of at least the following ideas: The existence of a unique Spanish culture, lifestyle, characteristics, traditions and values, *all of them embodied in its language*; the idea that Spanish American culture is nothing but Spanish culture transplanted to the New World; and the notion that Hispanic culture has an internal hierarchy in which Spain occupies a hegemonic position (cf. Pike 1971).

From the perspective of Spain's state of crisis, *hispanismo* can be interpreted in two different but complementary lights. First, in order to present itself on a par with the United States and the European powers – which best represented the expansionist character of the modern nation – Spain needed to demonstrate some sort of preeminence over its former colonies, especially in

view of the United States' increasingly interventionist policies in those territories. Since economic and military hegemony were largely out of the question, the cultural solution implicit in *hispanismo* – the persistence of the cultural empire – became the essential instrument to reach the expected level of international prestige. Second, as we have already mentioned, Spain underwent a sustained identity crisis throughout the nineteenth century, a crisis that culminated with the questioning of the nation's integrity by the development of nationalist movements in the peripheral areas of the Peninsula. In this context, the notions proposed by *hispanismo* provided the much-needed signs of identity which Spain could display in front of those who questioned its integrity and viability as a modern nation.

The acceptance of language as a national symbol

In view of the developmental parameters of nationalism, Spain needed to define itself, not only as an effective unit of political action, but also as a social and cultural unit (cf. Haugen 1972: 244). As Hobsbawm indicated (1992: 93), the process of unification that nation-building entails requires homogenization, that is, the minimization of internal differences; individual and local idiosyncrasies must be subordinated – even sacrificed – for the sake of the nation's identity. Since, as we have seen, language is conceived of in the romantic and post-romantic era as the embodiment of the *Volksgeist*, and, therefore, as one of the essential components of any specific culture, it became imperative for any supralocal community to achieve the desired unity by exercising a strict control over language. Selected individuals and institutions would thus be assigned the task of determining the legitimate forms of speech and of developing mechanisms that influence people's linguistic behavior and attitudes. In other words, language unity is attempted through the designing of language planning mechanisms.

Language planning (henceforth LP) has been defined in a variety of ways. For Robert Kaplan and Richard Baldauf, who provided an insightful and detailed definition, LP consists of

[i]deas, laws and regulations (language policy), change rules, beliefs and practices intended to achieve a planned change (or to stop change from happening) in the language use in one or more communities. To put it differently, language planning involves *deliberate*, although not always overt, *future oriented* change in systems of language code and/or speaking in a societal context. (1997: 3)

One of the most important processes in which language planners become involved is *standardization*. Following Haugen (1972: 237–54), this process is normally considered to consist of four stages: *selection*, *codification*, *elaboration* and *acceptance*. Selection entails the identification of an existing vernacular that will serve as a model for the targeted standard. Codification constitutes

the development of the form of a language, i.e. its phonology, grammar, lexicon and orthography. Elaboration is the expansion of the standard so that it may perform a maximal number of functions, that is, so that it is usable in every possible context. Finally, in the acceptance stage, language planners must earn the consent of the people and persuade them to learn and use the standard. These stages do not always occur in a strict sequence, and in fact, often coincide in time (cf. chapter 3).

Standard languages function in a variety of ways. They perform an *instrumental* function when used within the community for administrative convenience; they perform a *communicative* function when they serve as a common linguistic system for everyday social interactions; and finally, but most importantly for our purposes, they also function *symbolically*, as they allegedly embody the spirit of the nation and/or represent national unity. Investing the language with this symbolic power is often what poses the biggest problem for language planners:

I would dare to suggest that the most frequent single problem in installing a national language has nothing to do with vocabulary expansion, spelling or grammar standardization, the adequacy of the educational system or the presence of an ensconced colonial language. *The biggest problem is that there often simply is no language that a sufficiently large majority of the citizens will accept as a symbol of national identity.*

(Fasold 1988: 185, emphasis added)

It can be argued then that people's reluctance to accept the standard as the national language *is* a language problem. Therefore, LP agencies as well as individuals and institutions that support them have the responsibility of confronting it.

We must keep in mind that LP is a goal-oriented activity intended to influence people's linguistic behavior and attitudes. Often, LP may include strategies of *coercion*: a civil servant, for example, may have to demonstrate a certain level of proficiency in a given language in order to have access to certain jobs; or a journal publisher may have to commit to using a certain language or a certain variety of a language in order to receive public funding. However, strategies of *persuasion* are likely to be more effective than openly coercive measures: "The linguist with his grammar and lexicon may propose what he will, if the methods that could assure acceptance are missing . . . In the end the decisions are made by the users of language" (Haugen 1972: 178). Successful LP efforts, therefore, will persuade people that speaking a certain way and holding certain linguistic beliefs are in their best interest, or even better, natural. In other words, the goal of these strategies is to naturalize and legitimize the behavior and attitudes that the LP agencies are trying to promote.

The language battle

We may now understand the importance of LP for the processes of nation-building undertaken by the newly created Latin American nations and for the *hispanismo* movement, so closely associated with the modernization of Spain. For Latin American intellectuals who were involved in the process of building their own nations, gaining control over language – over its selection, codification, elaboration, and acceptance – was a natural consequence of independence. For intellectuals involved in the creation of a modern Spain, retaining control over those same processes became a necessity to demonstrate Spain's viability as a nation. As the reader will recall, being one of the old European national states, Spain needed to boost its international image and demonstrate the loyalty of its former colonies. The clash between the discourses that verbalized these two conflicting projects constitutes what Carlos Rama has referred to as *the language battle* [*la batalla del idioma*] (1982: 115–59).

While in both discourses, the variable nature of language is a prominent and highly symbolic issue, the treatment of change varies according to each author, as they hold different views on the extent to which linguistic evolution can be channeled and the direction in which it can be channeled. Would change inevitably cause the fragmentation of the Spanish language or could unity be preserved? In such a case, who should be in charge of channeling change in order to preserve this unity? These are the questions that seem to underlie the language battle. Some authors such as Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (cf. chapter 2) welcomed the fragmentation of Spanish as a step towards the consummation of the cultural autonomy of the new Latin American nations. Others, such as Rufino José Cuervo, saw fragmentation as the unfortunate but inevitable outcome of language change (cf. chapter 4). However, many others – Bello, Valera, Palma – believed that language unity could be maintained in spite of evolution (cf. chapters 3, 4 and 5).⁴ The preservation of this unity would of course require well-coordinated and widely accepted LP strategies. But where did the legitimacy of language planners reside in the post-colonial Hispanic community? Again, the different views postulated in this regard revealed underlying tensions that seriously hampered the achievement of any consensus regarding LP.

In the previous section, we pointed out that the symbolic function of languages often has more social relevance than the merely instrumental and communicative. In fact, as this book will attempt to demonstrate, the language battle has been in reality a manifestation of the power struggles associated with the modern elaboration of the cultural and political map of the Hispanic community.

Monoglossic culture and the *dogma of homogeneity*

As we indicated above, the identification between language and nation became particularly intense towards the end of the nineteenth century, when the old national states were challenged by the emerging culture-based nationalisms. At this time, the nation-states intensified the cultural component of their nationalist discourse in order to secure the loyalty of their citizens for which they now had to compete with aspiring national entities. This was precisely the case in Spain, where the emergence of Catalan, Basque and Galician regionalist movements disrupted the process of construction of the modern nation. The equation language = nation on which these battling nationalist movements (Basque, Catalan, Galician and Spanish) rest is a synthetic formulation of the dominant linguistic culture of modern times: the linguistic culture of monoglossia (cf. del Valle 2000).

The term *linguistic culture* – as we are using it in this book – is taken from a theoretical framework developed by Harold Schiffman in *Linguistic Culture and Language Policy* (1996). Linguistic culture refers to a relatively abstract and supposedly universal set of beliefs about general concepts such as language, speech, speech community, literacy, etc. In heteroglossic cultures, for example, several linguistic norms coexist, and the verbal behavior of individuals is best represented as a series of vectors that point in the directions of the multiple norms available to them. While each linguistic norm may be associated with a different culture, their coexistence and complex interaction are considered natural and may in themselves constitute a source of identity. As Ana Celia Zentella has shown (1997), New York City Hispanics use multiple varieties of English and Spanish both to communicate for practical purposes and to express their complex identity. Their linguistic behavior, as Zentella indicates, should be represented as a constant process of choosing from a wide linguistic repertoire and not as the simple interaction of two grammars.

In Western societies, however, heteroglossic cultures have been for the most part either ignored or stigmatized. As we noted above, the dominant nationalist ideology was constructed on a very different conceptualization of the relationship between language and identity: the linguistic culture of monoglossia, which, as del Valle defined it (2000), consists of two principles. The *principle of focalization* reflects the idea that speaking always entails using a grammar, understood as a well-defined and minimally variable system; unfocused or highly variable linguistic behaviors are thus stigmatized in linguistic communities where monoglossic culture is dominant. The *principle of convergence*, which is the diachronic counterpart of focalization, assumes that the verbal behavior of the members of a community tends to become more and more homogeneous with time. Multilingualism is assumed to slowly disappear as people acquire the dominant language, and dialectal variation is believed to decrease as the educational system spreads the dominant variety.

The culture of monoglossia is consistent with the conceptualization of human communities as naturally homogeneous, an idea referred to by Blommaert and Verschueren (1991, 1998) as the *dogma of homogeneity*:

[A] view of society in which differences are seen as dangerous and centrifugal and in which the “best” society is suggested to be one without inter-group differences . . . Nationalism, interpreted as the struggle to keep groups as “pure” and homogeneous as possible, is considered to be a positive attitude within the dogma of homogeneity. Pluriethnic or plurilingual societies are seen as problem-prone, because they require forms of state organization that run counter to the “natural” characteristics of groupings of people. (1998: 195)

It is precisely the convergence of the linguistic culture of monoglossia and the dogma of homogeneity that produces the philosophical foundations of cultural nationalism. National communities are imagined as culturally and linguistically homogeneous (or as moving towards the ideal homogeneity), and this uniformity justifies the political claim for self-government.

While nationalist ideology is always grounded in monoglossic culture, each nationalist movement produces its own *language ideologies*. In this book, we consider a language ideology to include a vision of the linguistic configuration of a specific community, as well as the reasoning that first, produces that vision, and second, justifies its value. Through our use of the term *language ideologies*, we explicitly recognize our association with a growing school of thought that explores the cultural, economic, political and social foundations and implications of language and discourse on language (cf. Joseph and Taylor 1990; Kroskrity 2000; Schieffelin, Woolard and Kroskrity 1998).

As the reader will hopefully recognize, the language ideologies produced by the authors analyzed in this book are all grounded in the linguistic culture of monoglossia. In one way or another, they all revolve around the maintenance or development of a national language, that is, a well-defined linguistic system in which the verbal behavior of all members of the community must converge. In keeping with the monoglossic basis of their ideologies, language becomes instrumental for our authors' conceptualizations of either the national or the *supernational* community. Since their at times contradictory language ideologies are grounded in the very same linguistic culture, and since they often pursue similar goals, in an apparent paradox, all the authors resort to ultimately equivalent strategies of argumentation and self-legitimization.