

Menéndez Pidal and the beginnings of Ibero-
Romance Dialectology: a critical survey
one century later¹

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When Ramón Menéndez Pidal began his intellectual activity at the start of the last century, little or nothing had been done to incorporate the theoretical principles and methods developed by European philologists at the end of the nineteenth century into the sphere of Spanish linguistics. Some forty years later, however, when the Civil War interrupted the research projects of Menéndez Pidal and his colleagues, shutting down the Centro de Estudios Históricos and forcing the researchers to disperse or go into exile, Hispanic philology had come into existence, and was largely comparable with the philology of other European countries.

It was in the first few years of the twentieth century that the serious study of Spanish dialects began, under the leadership of Menéndez Pidal. The start of Spanish dialectology was not accidental, nor the result of a short-lived interest, but part of a long-term plan that he had developed. As early as 1903, he wrote a letter to Miguel de Unamuno mentioning his interest in studying the Leonese and Aragonese dialects and writing two monographs about them:

Mi ambición es hacer dos libritos, uno sobre el Leonés y otro sobre el Aragonés, que sean la base para una futura historia de la Lengua española que algún día escribiré. Sé que la tarea es muy grande, pues tengo que perderme primero en pormenores y luego organizar conjuntos; pero si tengo vida, espero realizar mi idea.²

¹ I owe the English version of this paper to Roger Wright's kind generosity.

² Quoted by Catalán (2005: 89) and Pérez Pascual (1998: 81).

The planned monograph on Leonese, *El dialecto leonés*, was published in 1906; but the one he had planned to dedicate to Aragonese was never completed, in spite of the fact that the first two studies he made of texts containing dialect data, the *Poema de Yusuf* (1902) and the *Razón de amor* (1905), were dedicated to texts showing Aragonese features. I will not expand here on the reasons for the postponement of the Aragonese monograph, which might have been academic, political or personal.³ *El dialecto leonés* was undoubtedly the first monograph that systematically organized all the linguistic data available at that time for an Ibero-Romance dialect area, so it can be seen as the symbol of the start of the research into Ibero-Romance dialects carried out by Menéndez Pidal and his colleagues.

But *El dialecto leonés* is far from being an isolated achievement. It needs to be seen in the context of Menéndez Pidal's other publications (section I below), and those inspired and supported by him in the Centro de Estudios Históricos (section II).

I. THE FIRST DIALECT STUDIES

Poema de Yuçuf. Materiales para su estudio (1902)

Manual de gramática histórica española (1904)

Razón de amor con los Denuestos del agua y el vino (1905)

³ Academic reasons could have included the fact that Umphrey published an article on Aragonese in 1911 which Menéndez Pidal referred to as a reliable description of the characteristics of Old Aragonese (1923: 19). His plan to write a monograph on Aragonese must have lasted until at least 1906, when he addressed the first *Congrés de la Llengua Catalana* on the border between Aragonese and Valencian (Fernández-Ordóñez 2006: 174–75). A possible political reason could have been the controversy which accompanied his article 'Cataluña bilingüe' in 1902, in which he discussed whether Castilian in Catalonia was a foreign import or had been present for centuries (Cid 1991: 539–49, esp. 541–42; Pérez Pascual 1998: 79–80; Perea 2005: 263–78, 287–92; García Isasti 2004: 336–42; Morgades 2006: 33–38). A personal reason could have been that Aragonese never interested him as much as Asturian. Given the origin of his family, as well as his childhood journeys to Asturias, it is likely that he did not have as much first-hand data on Aragonese as he had on Asturian (Pérez Villanueva 1991: 23–37). The many surveys which he planned and carried out after 1906, in 1907, 1910, 1912, 1932 and from 1946 to 50, when he was aiming to improve his knowledge of the Asturian linguistic domain (Catalán & Galmés 1989: 167–70), reveal that he was always attracted more to Asturian than to Aragonese.

El dialecto leonés (1906)
Cantar de Mio Cid. Texto, gramática y vocabulario (1908–11)
Elena y María. Poesía leonesa inédita del siglo XIII (1914)
 Review of A. Griera i Gaja, *La frontera catalano-aragonesa* (1916)
Roncesvalles. Un nuevo cantar de gesta español del siglo XIII (1917)
Documentos lingüísticos de España. Reino de Castilla (1919)
Orígenes del español (1926)

II. COLLECTIONS OF DIALECT DATA INSPIRED BY MENÉNDEZ PIDAL
 Tomás Navarro Tomás (dir.), *Atlas lingüístico de la Península Ibérica* (1923–36)
 Tomás Navarro Tomás, *Documentos lingüísticos del Alto Aragón* (1919)
 Américo Castro and Federico de Onís, *Fueros leoneses de Zamora, Salamanca, Ledesma y Alba de Tormes* (1916)

By 1936, these studies had established the basic pattern of the dialects spoken on the Iberian Peninsula; both those spoken in the present, as the *Atlas Lingüístico de la Península Ibérica* compiled the twentieth century data, and in the past, as the publication of medieval documents and texts made it possible to know their remote medieval origins.

The research methodology used by Menéndez Pidal in the studies mentioned in section I remained largely the same in all of them, from 1900 until the Civil War, and subsequently in his later studies. All his publications show some consistent features in their working methods; that is, his conclusions are always reached in accordance with certain recurring techniques (section III):

III. METHODOLOGY

1. The interpretation of medieval data is combined with, and supported by, present-day findings; and vice versa. This can be observed in *El dialecto leonés*, *Manual de gramática histórica*, *Cantar de Mio Cid* and *Orígenes del español*.
2. More is required than just combining medieval and current data. It is necessary to gather data from every Romance dialect spoken on the Iberian Peninsula. Linguistic phenomena are interpreted by comparing the data found on the peninsula; in particular, Castilian

can be understood only by comparing it with the Leonese and Aragonese dialects.

3. Evidence from toponymy is valuable in addition to the modern and ancient data; toponymy is considered to be of particular relevance when testing the validity of proposed hypotheses.

4. The vast majority of the data discussed are of a phonetic nature. Historical phonetics is the architectural framework, to which Menéndez Pidal adds grammatical and lexical support.

5. For Menéndez Pidal it was not enough just to establish the territorial distribution of linguistic phenomena. He aimed to discover the historical reasons for the formation of each linguistic area, and for the linguistic preferences of each human community. His need to find the effective historical cause for each phenomenon has a corollary: according to Menéndez Pidal, linguistic evidence is of equal, if not greater, importance than written records for reconstructing the history of a given place or area; that is, linguistics is a branch of general history.

6. In addition, we can already see in *Orígenes del español* the 'diffusion' hypothesis of linguistic change. This implies that the more frequent and more consistent the data are for the occurrence of a linguistic phenomenon, the older it is. From a methodological point of view, this hypothesis is based on statistics (e.g. concerning the evolution of the diphthong *ai*, of the *m'n* combination, or of forms derived from *medietate*) and on comparisons between different peninsular geographical areas (the geographical-chronological criterion) which allow one to identify the focal area of the spread of these linguistic phenomena. The importance of using statistics as a means to reach conclusions reappears from time to time in his later works; for example, in the *Historia de la lengua española* written in exile during and after the Civil War, and published posthumously in 2005.⁴

This methodology is used in support of his views about the linguistic organization of the Iberian Peninsula, which can be summarised as two fundamental ideas: the first is the overwhelming role that Castilian played in the development of the Spanish

⁴ See, for example, the discussion of final vowel apocope (2005: 547–53, 580–84 & 643–44); of *leísmo* (2005: 1019–24); or of the aspiration of Latin F- (2005: 999–1003).

language; the second is that the Spanish language is the result of the evolution of the Peninsula's three central Romance dialects: Castilian, Astur-Leonese and Navarro-Aragonese.

IV. CASTILIAN'S LEADING ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPANISH
Menéndez Pidal's best known view is his consistent claim that Castile played a fundamental role in the development of the Spanish language. This idea has two sources. On one hand, it corresponds to the desire of the Generation of 1898 to restore the prosperity of the Spanish nation; in the same way as Azorín and Unamuno did, Menéndez Pidal ascribed to Castile a leading role in the shaping of Spain. On the other hand – this is what I consider to be the deciding factor for Menéndez Pidal – Castile had achieved that leading role because of a cultural factor: the attractiveness of its literature.⁵

According to Menéndez Pidal, Castilian was the first language to have its own literature. It was the language of epic poetry, and that literature exerted such a powerful attraction that it made Castilian the language of literature par excellence:

Esos poemas tradicionales de Castilla, renovados por la actividad y la erudición de los juglares, eran literatura oral, efímera: el único cantar de gesta cuyo manuscrito se nos conservó, el de *Mío Cid*, no es castellano. Los cantares épicos castellanos no consiguieron perpetuarse en las bibliotecas, pero su popularidad los imponía a la atención del cronista autor de la Najerense, y ellos, sobre toda otra producción literaria, ganaban crédito y admiración para el dialecto castellano. (My italics; Menéndez Pidal 2005: 472)

This is why Menéndez Pidal was irritated by the evidence of the first literary texts, which were not always written in Castilian. So even though he acknowledged that in *Razón de amor* 'aragonés, como el copista, es el lenguaje del texto', he refused to accept that the author was Aragonese too: 'no podemos asegurar si el aragonesismo de este texto es propio del autor, o sólo del copista Lope [...]. El estar el pueblo de Moros a unas cinco leguas de la frontera occidental aragonesa, pudiera apoyar la suposición de un original poético venido de Castilla' (1905: 108–09).

⁵ See Portolés (1986), Armistead (2001), Gerli (2001), Santano (2003), Garatea Grau (2005) and the much less thorough analysis by García Isasti (2004).

This attitude can also be found in his analysis of *Elena y María*. The fact that the language of this poem did not attest the regularity which he expected to find in the articulation of diphthongs – as usual his line of argument was based upon a phonetic feature – was used to undermine the importance of Leonese as a language of literature, even though he accepted that the *Poema de Mio Cid* attests similar inconsistencies:

Los textos literarios y los diplomas notariales [leoneses] no concuerdan en su testimonio; ni aquellos ni estos reflejan con suficiente fidelidad el dialecto leonés hablado; y en los textos literarios, especialmente, se ven luchar dos influencias, literarias también, y enteramente opuestas, la galaico-portuguesa y la castellana, que no se ejercieron de igual modo, ni mucho menos en la lengua hablada. La lengua hablada mantuvo hasta hoy caracteres propios bien armonizados entre sí, en los cuales se observa la transición gradual en el espacio, de los rasgos gallego-portugueses hasta los castellanos; en vez de esta transición gradual, los textos escritos nos muestran mezcla antagónica, pues la literatura leonesa, falta de personalidad, se movió vacilante entre los dos centros de atención que incontrastablemente la sobrepujaban. (1914: 156)⁶

But of all the non-Castilian texts of the thirteenth century which did not conform to Menéndez Pidal's view of the dominance of Castilian language and literature, it was the *Roncesvalles* fragment

⁶ For the whole question of the medieval representation of diphthongs in the Leonese area it is now worth consulting the new analysis made by Pascual (2004), and the observations of Wright (2000) in his comparative analysis of the spelling options chosen in the Leonese and Castilian versions of the *Tratado de Cabrerros* of 1206. It seems to be clear that the rarity of written representations of rising diphthongs in León may have something to do with the presence of less regular diphthongizations in León than Menéndez Pidal envisaged, or with scribal traditions different from those of Castile; but either way we cannot conclude, as Menéndez Pidal did, that those written traditions had as a result 'menos personalidad'. Pascual (2004: 518–24) points out that in the twelfth-century documents from León the difficulties which they experienced in representing rising diphthongs were not felt when representing the monophthongization of falling diphthongs: the result is that, depending on the feature which we are concentrating on, Leonese scribal traditions can appear to be either relatively conservative or as innovative as those of Castile. Wright (2000: 79–82), for his part, points out that the Leonese chancery's version of the *Tratado de Cabrerros* finds it easier than the Castilian version to represent the diphthong *ie* (except in the future subjunctive) and that both versions alternate in roughly the same proportions between the use in writing of *o* or *ue*. All these are facts which cast some doubt on the phonetic and graphic decisions ascribed by Menéndez Pidal to Castilian.

which particularly worried him. While the *Poema de Mio Cid* more or less fits his theory that epic poetry had its origins in Castile (he located its first manifestation in the *Infantes de Lara*), the only other epic poem to be preserved was copied down in the Navarrese dialect. As a result, he insisted on snatching it away from Navarre and granting it to Castile:

En resumen, diremos que las formas navarro-aragonesas que ofrece nuestro texto son muy pocas, muchas menos aún que las que ocurren en los documentos del sur de Navarra (Fitero, Tudela) [...]. De modo que nuestro manuscrito presenta un desequilibrio entre la grafía y las formas dialectales; su carácter navarro se debe, pues, en gran parte a un amanuense, y acaso a éste se le puedan atribuir no sólo en gran parte, sino en su totalidad los dialectalismos navarros [...].

El lugar en que se redactó el poema de *Roncesvalles* pudiera ser Navarra. Cierto que no nos lo asegura ningún navarrismo de rima que se halle en nuestro fragmento; mas acaso parecerá natural que Navarra, el país que primero recibía a los juglares franceses que pasaban por el puerto de Roncesvalles a Santiago y otros puntos, se interesase primero por una leyenda que se desarrollaba en su propio territorio [...]. No obstante, [...] como se desconoce una literatura poética navarra en general, como se desconocen hasta meros relatos en prosa navarra acerca de la leyenda de Roncesvalles, y, por otra parte, como la literatura épica es muy activa en Castilla, como en ésta el desastre de Carlomagno fue popular hasta dar nacimiento a otro tema, el de Bernardo del Carpio, y como, en fin, la métrica de *Roncesvalles* es en extremo parecida a la de *Mio Cid*, parece más natural suponer que en Castilla se compuso el *Roncesvalles*, y que el lenguaje navarro con que hoy se nos presenta el fragmento recién descubierto es fruto simplemente de una adaptación debida a cualquier copista. (1917: 23 & 90)

Roncesvalles made it necessary to consider the possibility of Navarrese epic literature. Equally influenced by Navarre was Castilian Extremadura, where the *Poema de Mio Cid* was supposed to have been composed. Also Navarrese was the *Crónica najerense* written towards the end of the twelfth century, which contained the first summaries, in Latin prose, of many of the epic songs that had been lost in their original verse form. Nevertheless, Menéndez Pidal believed that the topics of the poems incorporated in the *Crónica najerense* must have been Castilian.⁷

⁷ 'La *Crónica Najerense*, escrita a raíz de la muerte del emperador Alfonso VII, hacia 1160, nos da resumen o prosificación latina de cinco poemas de asunto castellano' (2005: 471). This is a highly debatable statement, since several of the poems could

The first written literary evidence was not composed in Castilian. But Menéndez Pidal had no hesitation in uprooting it from its origins, classifying that literature as 'dialectal' in his *Historia de la lengua*. Calling it 'dialectal' only makes sense, of course, from an anachronistic Castilian nationalist perspective in which Castilian has already been identified as the variety which would later prevail as the language of literature.⁸ However, if we consider that one of the fundamental steps in initiating the standardisation process of a linguistic variety is the formation of a written representation for it, it could be argued that in this early period, due to the absence of Castilian written literature, it is Castilian which should be considered as being 'dialectal', as compared with, for example, Navarro-Aragonese, which is attested in such works as the *Razón de amor* and the *Liber regum*.

At the heart of Menéndez Pidal's linguistic Castilian nationalism there lay a literary nationalism. Its origin lay in his view that traditional poetry is the only genuine expression of the collective soul of the Spanish people. This idea can be seen clearly in the quotation below, in which the first written works of literature are not taken entirely seriously, on the grounds that they are 'dialectal' and imitations of foreign models, while on the other hand the literature of the oral tradition, whose origin and linguistic expression is considered to be Castilian, is highly praised, despite only being attested indirectly in the sources:

easily be considered to be Navarrese or Aragonese, including, for instance, the story of the succession of Sancho el Mayor. Rather than containing specifically Castilian topics, what the stories collected in the chronicle seem to share is a distaste for the Kingdom of León.

⁸ Chapter X of Part III is entitled 'Esplendor de la literatura dialectal (1140-1180)'; section 8 is called 'Carácter dialectal de la literatura'. In chapter XI, the titles of section 1, 'Preponderancia castellana', and section 7, 'Castellanización de la lengua literaria', contrast with those of section 6 'Convivencia y mixtura de dialectos' and section 8 'Dialectalismo cancelleresco y notarial'. In chapter II of part IV, which discusses the language of the *Mester de Clerecía*, section 1 is entitled 'Dialectalismo atenuado'. In all of these sections, every linguistic form which is not Castilian is described as 'dialectal'. Castilian Extremadura and the Kingdom of Toledo are among the areas considered to be non-Castilian; this is why the *Auto de los reyes magos* and the *Poema de Mio Cid* are not considered to be Castilian.

Castilla, durante el reinado de Alfonso VIII, afirma más que en los períodos anteriores su individualidad lingüística y propaga rápidamente su influencia por los dialectos circunvecinos. *No se conserva en este tiempo obra ninguna en castellano que nos revele gran actividad poética o prosística como apoyo de la preponderancia idiomática.* [...] Mientras la literatura escrita, de imitación de modelos foráneos, escrita en pareados o en cuaderna vía, continúa firme en su dialectalismo, los juglares castellanos conseguían para Castilla la hegemonía de la literatura cuasi-oral. (My italics; Menéndez Pidal 2005: 474-75)

It is well known that Menéndez Pidal took it as axiomatic that the *romancero* could be found 'wherever Spanish is spoken', and the fact that the language of the ballads sung in Galicia or Catalonia is Castilian, proved, as he understood it, the vitality of Castilian literature, and also of the language in which that literature was transmitted.⁹ This argument was constantly used to argue that Spanish had been spoken for many centuries in Catalonia, which explains why Catalan folklorists have reacted by showing little interest in their own *romancero*.¹⁰

The successful expansion of the Castilian language is, according to Menéndez Pidal, a result of its irresistible literature.¹¹ Castilian poetry is revolutionary, and so, in the same way, the language that

⁹ Thus, when commenting on the ballad written down by the Majorcan Jaume de Olesa in 1421, the first preserved documentation of a 'lyrical' ballad, he said: 'el castellano, en sus manifestaciones populares, hablado o cantado, ejerce influjo poético en tierra catalana antes e independientemente de su difusión política. La lengua no sigue al imperio, como decía Nebrija; la lengua sigue a la cultura' (2005: 647).

¹⁰ 'Muchos folkloristas catalanes dejaron de interesarse por *su* romancero, excelente como pura poesía sin más, al recelar que no fuera tan netamente catalán como deseaban' (Cid 1991: 550). Nevertheless, there are bilingual areas which have not accepted the *romancero* as a genre of oral transmission; for example, the Basque Country, despite using Romance for many centuries and the intensive contact it has had with Castile (Cid 1991). On the other hand, contrary to Menéndez Pidal's assumption, in Catalonia, Galicia and Portugal the ballads display a hybrid linguistic nature, or even complete adaptation to the language of the area; see the studies carried out by Forneiro on the languages used in the Galician *romancero* (2000, 2004, 2005, 2010).

¹¹ Garatea Grau (2005) accurately highlights the parallel between his *tradicionalismo literario*, the theory which he developed on the basis of his study of the ballads, and its subsequent expansion into *tradicionalismo lingüístico*, which pervades his conception of how linguistic changes operate: they begin in the speech of particular individuals, and then acquire supporters until they are, or are not, accepted by the community as a whole.

conveys it must also be revolutionary. The dissident, deviant, rebellious and innovative characteristics of Castilian are constantly repeated in *Orígenes del español*, as in these two brief extracts:

Se ve que la tendencia vulgar a suprimir la *g*- estuvo algo extendida por casi toda España, aunque sólo en la revolucionaria Castilla arraigó decididamente. (1950: 235)

El artículo en Castilla se encuentra más adelantado en su evolución [...]. Las grandes vacilaciones de forma que el artículo tiene en León y en Aragón son en Castilla poquísimas usadas o totalmente desconocidas. Castilla, como en otros fenómenos que ya hemos notado, es la región en que la evolución se ha realizado más rápida y decididamente. (1950: 337 & 339)

Such comments are reiterated throughout the book, and conclude with his well-known summary of the revolutionary features found in Castilian – apart from the article, they are all phonetic features – and the following statement:

Cantabria, la última conquista romana, y además comarca de romanización más lenta, nos aparece en su evolución lingüística como región más indócil a la común evolución de las otras regiones, más revolucionaria, más inventiva, original y dada al neologismo [...]. Hemos visto que Castilla aparece en la Historia rechazando el código visigótico vigente en toda la Península y desarrollando una legislación consuetudinaria local. Pues lo mismo sucede con el lenguaje. El dialecto castellano representa en todas esas características una nota diferencial frente a los demás dialectos de España, como una fuerza rebelde y discordante que surge de Cantabria y de las regiones circunvecinas. (1950: 487)

This reconstruction of the geographical area in which Castilian originated, as Cantabria and its surrounding areas, seems to me to be essentially right, although some rephrasing of Menéndez Pidal's statement is necessary. For a start, it is obvious that the terms 'archaic and conservative' and 'revolutionary and innovative' are inappropriate when describing dialects; those attributes depend mainly on which features are selected for analysis. There are some instances in which the Castilian developments could be considered to be the 'conservative' ones; examples would include the absence of diphthongization before a yod, and the absence of palatalization of initial L-. On the other hand, in the *Orígenes* Menéndez Pidal never highlights the non-Castilian linguistic features which were later preferred over Castilian ones in the formation of the common

Spanish language; an example of this is the form *mitad*, which was established much earlier in the East (as he shows in the book; 1950³: 265–70). The same tendency has been observed in the discussion of the assimilation of MB > *m*, which also had its origin in the East, or the palatalization of PL-, KL- y FL-, which originated in the West; in these examples Castile was an ‘área intermedia, ni pionera ni radical’ (Cano Aguilar 1998: 130).

Menéndez Pidal’s desire to stress the revolutionary linguistic nature of Castilian created problems for him when texts which he regarded as Castilian because of their geographic location do not attest Castilian linguistic features. This is why, acknowledging the Navarro-Aragonese nature of the *Glosas Silenses*, he refrained from considering them to be Castilian, despite the geographical location which they belong to, and the scribal tradition which they were written in:

Las Glosas Silenses, si por la escritura de su amanuense son tan castellanas como lo que se escribía por los monjes a las orillas del Arlanza, por su lenguaje son tan riojanas, casi, como lo que se escribía en las celdas de San Millán [...]. La falta de documentos notariales viejos de Silos nos impide comprobar el lenguaje de las Glosas Silenses. Es de suponer que todos estos rasgos navarro-riojanos que hemos apuntado no eran comunes a la alfoz de Lara, sino que eran lenguaje individual del monje glosador que quería seguir el patrón de los escritos usuales en el monasterio navarro de San Millán. (1950: 484–85)

Never let it be said that Navarrese had been infiltrating into the heart of Castile!

For similar reasons, he does not accept that the documents from Oña accurately reflect the local speech, supposedly as a result of archaism in their notarial traditions, even though in other areas, such as León, he takes such archaism as belonging to their speech:

El idioma castellano que servía para la elocuencia de este conde Sancho García era una continuación progresada del idioma que había servido para redactar las Glosas Silenses en los tiempos ya lejanos de Fernán González [...]; pero no conocemos muestras de esa progresada habla vulgar castellana, sino sólo de su variedad latinizada que usaban los notarios. En el archivo del monasterio de Oña, fundado por el mismo Sancho García en 1011, y rico depósito de buena parte de nuestros documentos lingüísticos, todavía podemos descubrir algunos restos del habla vulgar corriente en el Norte del condado de Sancho, la cual conservaba *fossateira*, junto a la forma nueva más general, *fossadera* o ‘fonsadera’, y prefería aún *lomba* y *portiello*, *canaliella*, en vez de los neologismos *loma*, *portillo*, etc, que se usaban ya corrientemente en Castilla. (1950: 477)

In a similar way, because he was following a criterion for identifying linguistic areas based *a priori* on political frontiers, Menéndez Pidal sometimes collated evidence from Eastern León with that from the rest of the Kingdom of León, thereby concealing the fact that the original Castilian and Eastern Leonese features were the same. This is what happened, for example, in the case of the evolution of words that started with BR-, FR-, or the evolution of the *ai* diphthong, in which the evidence from Sahagún matches that from Castile.¹² Nevertheless, with regard to some other developments, such as those of M'N, KT > *tf*, or SK^E > *ts*, Menéndez Pidal openly acknowledged that the Eastern part of León coincided with Castilian; but even so, when commenting on the data, he always emphasized that Castilian was the leader:

Una vez más Castilla sigue evolución diversa de la mayoría de los romances: *fascia* > *haça*. (1950³: 308)

El neologismo de la *ch* en *pechar*, *lecho*, ya aludido, que se propaga por el Oriente y el Centro del reino astur-leonés, obedece probablemente a influjo castellano. Seguramente viene de Burgos el grupo *mbr* en vez de las formas leonesas *mn*, *m* en *nombre*, *techumbre*, etc. (1950³: 452)

It could be argued that this kind of distortion also applies to the definite article, since in Eastern León the solutions coincided with those of Castile much earlier than those of the rest of the Kingdom.¹³ As regards *leísmo* applied to masculine count nouns, there is also the same usage in Eastern León and the original area of Castilian.¹⁴ Perhaps we should consider, then, whether this coincidence is also original: if so, the early Castilian linguistic area should be expanded westwards to include the Eastern part of the old Kingdom of León.

We know today that some of the allegedly differentiating Castilian features had a much wider diffusion than that acknowledged by Menéndez Pidal; for instance, the change from -LY- > *ʒ* and G^{E,L}- > *Ø*. Re-evaluation of the documents used by Menéndez Pidal has

¹² As Pascual and Santiago (2003) have shown.

¹³ As can be deduced from Egido (2003).

¹⁴ See Fernández-Ordóñez (1994, 2001, 2006–07) and Matute (2004).

revealed much less consistent phenomena within Castilian than we are given to believe in the *Orígenes*.¹⁵

But all these observations are only of relatively minor importance. Menéndez Pidal's framework, and, in my view, his reconstruction of many of the linguistic details up to the eleventh century, are primarily correct, even though they could be improved, amended and refined with the help of new documents in more reliable editions. The main mistake, or rather one of the main mistakes, in the *Orígenes*, probably lies in Menéndez Pidal's conclusions at the end, where he assumes that the history of the Spanish language after the end of the eleventh century has been securely established; that is, he took the evolution of the language from the twelfth century onwards for granted, without basing it on the same firm foundations on which his interpretation of the language of the ninth to eleventh centuries was based. The least convincing part of the *Orígenes* consists of the following well-known words towards the end:

Hasta el siglo XI los dialectos romances de la Península tenían distribución y relaciones muy diversas de las que estamos habituados a considerar más propias de ellos desde el siglo XIII acá. Los rasgos de los dos extremos dialectales que los diferencian del castellano, es decir, los rasgos del leonés y gallego al Occidente y los del aragonés y catalán al Oriente, no sólo se acercaban más por el Norte, estrechando en medio a los rasgos castellanos, sino que se unían por el Centro y por el Sur mediante el habla mozárabe de Toledo, de Badajoz, de Andalucía y de Valencia, análoga a la de los extremos en muchos de sus rasgos principales. Castilla no era más que un pequeño rincón donde fermentaba una disidencia lingüística muy original, pero que apenas ejercía cierta influencia expansiva.

The reconstruction can still be accepted up to this point, apart from his comments on *mozárabe*. But in any case, that too was acceptable then, both in the light of what was known at that time about the Mozarabs and because he was making assertions based on his data and the period which he had studied. But from this point on Menéndez Pidal launched into assumptions concerning the period after the eleventh century. This is where he prejudged what happened on the basis of his Castilian nationalist vision:

¹⁵ Cano Aguilar (1998: 131–34).

Todo esto cambia con la hegemonía castellana que progresa desde el último tercio del siglo XI. El gran empuje que Castilla dio a la reconquista por Toledo y Andalucía y el gran desarrollo de la literatura y cultura castellanas trajeron consigo la propagación del dialecto castellano, antes poco difundido, el cual, al dilatarse hacia el Sur, desalojando de allí a los empobrecidos y moribundos dialectos mozárabes, rompió el lazo de unión que antes existía entre los dos extremos oriental y occidental e hizo cesar la primitiva continuidad geográfica de ciertos rasgos comunes del Oriente y el Occidente que hoy aparecen extrañamente aislados entre sí.

La constitución de la lengua literaria española depende esencialmente de este fenómeno [...]: la nota diferencial castellana obra como una cuña que, clavada en el Norte, rompe la antigua unidad de ciertos caracteres comunes románicos antes extendidos por la Península y penetra hasta Andalucía, escindiendo alguna uniformidad dialectal, descuajando los primitivos caracteres lingüísticos del Duero a Gibraltar, esto es, borrando los dialectos mozárabes y en gran parte también los leoneses y aragoneses, y ensanchando cada vez más su acción de Norte a Sur para implantar la modalidad especial lingüística nacida en el norte cántabro. *La gran expansión de la lengua castellana no se realiza sino después del siglo XI, es decir, después de la fecha que nos hemos impuesto como término a este estudio.* (My italics; 1950³: 513–14)

There is increasing evidence that this expansion of Castilian was not as straightforward a process as Menéndez Pidal thought; his vision was far too dependent on his desire to allot to Castile the hegemonic and leading role. He also based his hypothesis exclusively on phonetic data. It is probably necessary to understand many of the changes which transformed Old Castilian into Spanish in a Peninsular context, as the result of linguistic innovations of Western or Eastern origin which ended up by prevailing also in the Central areas, or as an outcome of linguistic 'levelling' of the different dialects.¹⁶ Despite not taking into account any aspects of

¹⁶ The number of those who support the theory of dialect levelling as a result of the repopulation process, rather than simple Castilianization, is rising; see Ridruejo (1995), Penny (2004), Tuten (2003), Enguita Utrilla (2008). Menéndez Pidal was also in favour of this idea: 'Cuando se produce la conquista de Andalucía y Murcia, se habían unido para siempre Castilla y León, así que la repoblación se hace con gentes mezcladas de los dos reinos, sin separación territorial entre gallegos, leoneses o castellanos, mezcla favorable a los influjos dialectales que integran la lengua común' (2005: 491). Nevertheless, he always claimed that the basis for the prevailing variety was Castilian, as can be demonstrated by his comments on dialect mixing in Toledo after its reconquest: 'Junto a los mozárabes (y los

historical dialectology other than the phonetic, and any textual evidence other than the literary, Menéndez Pidal managed to establish his oversimplified view of the history of the Spanish language from the thirteenth century on. This vision has meant that subsequently only a very few scholars have made the effort to formulate a dialectal account of the history of the Spanish language. The paradoxical consequence is that the scholar who founded historical Spanish dialectology was also the one who demolished the chance that it would flourish with reference to the period following the eleventh century.

This outcome was undoubtedly determined by the overall acceptance of two of Menéndez Pidal's criteria for evaluating the evidence which are, at the very least, debatable. As he saw it, literary language was the benchmark for the development of the common language;¹⁷ and, secondly, only phonetic data could be used to assess each variety's linguistic lineage. The following example is only one among many which could be chosen to illustrate his method of reasoning:

Todo este dialectalismo [leonés o aragonés] se ve cada vez más minado en todas partes por la intrusión de formas extrañas, sobre todo por el avance de los castellanismos: primero, el diptongo *ué* se impone a las vacilaciones *o*, *uo*, *ua*; luego la *ch* se propaga rápidamente, excluyendo a la *t* etimológica; algo más tarde, la *j* va arrinconando a la *ll* o *y* antigua. Todas estas grandes innovaciones castellanas, que van descomponiendo y arruinando los dialectos literarios, señalan el fin de la edad primitiva del idioma. Pero Castilla, en suma, va haciendo respecto al idioma lo que

musulmanes y judíos, que en el reino toledano permanecieron o concurrieron a él) se establecieron, desde la conquista, como pobladores diferenciados los "castellanos" (nombre bajo el cual se incluían ya indistintamente tanto los procedentes del reino de León como a los procedentes del reino de Castilla y a los de las Extremaduras) y los "francos". Con el paso del tiempo, la legislación mozárabe del *Fuero Juzgo*, rechazada al principio por los pobladores castellanos, se fue generalizando en el curso de los siglos XII y XIII para todos. En cuanto al lenguaje ocurrió lo contrario, la lengua vulgar fue unificándose sobre base castellana' (2005: 453).

¹⁷ Del Valle (1999, 2004) is right to analyse Menéndez Pidal as ascribing greater value to the language of written culture than to speech; that is, his tendency to identify the language with the standard, and to subordinate to it any other possible variety. But he fails to realize that this prejudice of Menéndez Pidal's had its origin in the basic role which he attributed to it as the medium for literature. As we have seen in note 9 above, Menéndez Pidal thought that 'La lengua no sigue al imperio, como decía Nebrija; la lengua sigue a la cultura'.

había hecho respecto a la política durante el siglo anterior, combatir el estado de cosas propio de la Alta Edad Media para instaurar un orden nuevo. El castellano se ha impuesto ya a los dialectos circunvecinos, y pronto acabará con los sincretismos primitivos así como con el polidialectalismo literario. *Pero claro es que Castilla, fuera de la literatura, tenía mucho menos fuerza para acabar con el dialectalismo.* Los dialectos continuaron no sólo dominando en la lengua familiar de varias regiones, sino en la lengua escrita no literaria. (My italics; 2005: 482-83)

The postulated expansion of Castilian is based exclusively on phonetic data. Its imposition over the dialects of neighbouring areas is taken as proved, despite the fact that it is not documented in literature before the mid-thirteenth century nor in notarial documents until much later. And since Menéndez Pidal regarded it as established that Castilian was the most suitable mode for written representation from the mid-thirteenth century onward, he preferred to ignore the evidence of non-literary texts, which were less likely to conform to his theory of the leading role of Castilian, and to concentrate on the evolution of the literary language alone, considering this to be the fundamental basis for the standardization of the common language. This might be the reason why his *Documentos lingüísticos de España*, which distinguish as many as fifteen different Castilian areas (La Montaña, Campó, Castilla del Norte, Rioja, Álava, Burgos, Osma, Valladolid and Cerrato, Segovia and Ávila, Sigüenza, Toledo, Cuenca, Plasencia, Andalusia and Murcia) hardly include documents from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; there are 271 from the thirteenth century, compared with 42 from the fourteenth and 16 from the fifteenth. This reluctance to show the potential dialectal variety of Castilian documents from these periods is explained by Menéndez Pidal with the following value judgement:

porque de ese tiempo ya los textos literarios castellanos se conservan en gran número y la lengua restringida y cada vez más amanerada de los notarios pierde casi todo su interés frente a la más rica de los escritores de varia índole que entonces abundan. (1966²: v-vi)

The decline of Leonese in the modern era is also explained, according to Menéndez Pidal, by literature being the benchmark:

En el antiguo reino de León, Asturias ofrece una producción literaria mínima, casi nula, y Galicia muy poca. Y aunque exceden con mucho a esas dos, las otras regiones del reino, considerando éste en conjunto du-

rante la edad del español clásico, muestran una fecundidad bastante menor (244 autores) que la de Castilla la Vieja (450 autores) o Castilla la Nueva (519 autores), con ser cada una de estas territorio menor que el del reino leonés. Esto por sí solo explica la supremacía incontrastable del patrón lingüístico castellano. (2005: 701)

For the same reason, Menéndez Pidal placed no importance on the inconvenient Aragonese medieval literature overseen by Juan Fernández de Heredia, in case the suspicion might arise that it could have overshadowed Castilian, explaining that it was copying foreign models rather than representing genuine Aragonese literary tendencies:

La más importante acción cultural del reino de Aragón no procede de su propia entraña (casi estéril en la época medieval), sino de importación externa. (2005: 595)

As if a significant part of medieval Castilian literature, including the epic, had not also been subject to external influence!

V. SPANISH IS THE RESULT OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE THREE CENTRAL ROMANCE DIALECTS ON THE IBERIAN PENINSULA

This view of Castilian's leading role in the linguistic evolution of the Peninsula has come to be firmly held not only by Menéndez Pidal's supporters but also by his critics. As a consequence of the unconditional acceptance of his ideas by his supporters, the possibility that Astur-Leonese or Navarro-Aragonese (not to mention Galician-Portuguese or Catalan) might have contributed to the formation of the Spanish language has never been considered, in such a way that evidence from these has frequently been ignored by those researching the history of the Spanish language, which in turn has become exclusively the history of the Castilian language. The acceptance of Menéndez Pidal's views by his critics, on the other hand, does not only consist of the identification of Spanish with Castilian, but also of the belief that Spanish (Castilian) was a foreign language outside the borders of Castile; i.e. that it invaded linguistically distinct territories and subjugated them to a process of Castilianization. Both his supporters and critics forget that in addition to his persistently biased view that the Castilian was the core and essence of everything Hispanic, Menéndez Pidal always maintained the idea that Spanish (or 'the common Spanish language', *la lengua común española*, as he sometimes called it) evolved

from a Castilian base which would have absorbed, or merged with, Leonese and Aragonese. If we read his *Historia de la lengua*, it becomes clear that he was keen to explain the stages of this process.¹⁸ In contrast, the process by which Spanish was created was only touched on tangentially by Rafael Lapesa in his own *Historia de la lengua*, because by that time his mentor's Castilian nationalist views had become so deeply ingrained that, as can be deduced from the structure of the book, the history of the Spanish language is considered to refer to the history of Castilian, from the thirteenth century on, without considering the problem of the way in which the old dialects had come to disappear, nor their territories' subsequent Castilianization, nor the possibility that in this process those dialects might have influenced the evolution of 'the common Spanish language'.¹⁹

Already at the beginning of the twentieth century Menéndez Pidal was aware that he would have to take some account of the Leonese and the Aragonese dialects in order to explain 'Spanish'. In the above-mentioned letter to Unamuno, written in 1903, it can be seen that he thought he could tackle the history of the Spanish

¹⁸ Apart from the sections mentioned above in note 8, other examples that show his interest in the contribution of Leonese and Aragonese to the formation of the common Spanish language include: part IV, chapter VI 'Estado de la lengua común', 1. 'Relativa estabilidad', 2. 'La lengua común. Toledo y Sevilla', 4. 'Los dialectos laterales y el dialecto central'; chapter VII 'Período de transición (1370–1400)', 1. 'Influjo galaico-leonés. Romances y arte mayor. *Romances and arte mayor*', 2. 'Ensayos humanísticos en aragonés: Fernández de Heredia'; part V, chapter II 'Los dialectos viejos completan su nacionalización', 1. 'Ojeada general', 2. 'La unidad política y el reino de Aragón', 3. 'El reino de León', 4. 'Castilla la Nueva. Toledo y la corte como normas uniformadoras'. We should add to these, as examples of the analysis of phenomena liable to dialectal variation, the sections dedicated to Andalusian individuality and to the phonetics of Old Castilian.

¹⁹ Comparing the two books entitled *Historia de la lengua*, by Menéndez Pidal and Lapesa, brings to light important similarities and differences (cf. Arenas Olleta 2007 as regards their methods of periodization). In addition to the attention given to Leonese and Aragonese, another significant difference lies in the greater attention devoted to history in general by Menéndez Pidal from the thirteenth century onwards, consistent with the overall plan of his *Historia*, whereas from the fourteenth century Lapesa hardly mentions the general historical framework, in order to concentrate instead on literary and cultural history (see Cano Aguilar 2009). Wright, in this volume, also points out the greater attention paid to modern linguistic history in Menéndez Pidal's *Historia* as compared with Lapesa's *Historia*.

language only after having studied Leonese and Aragonese. In his *Manual de gramática histórica* he states:

El castellano, por servir de instrumento a una literatura más importante que la de otras regiones de España, y sobre todo por haber absorbido en sí otros dos romances principales hablados en la Península (el leonés y el navarro-aragonés) recibe más propiamente el nombre de lengua española. (1940⁶: 2)

As is generally known, this was how he presented his case successfully to the Real Academia Española, and unsuccessfully to those who were drawing up the Constitution of the Second Republic. The preeminence of Castilian is said once again to have been ensured by its being the main language for the expression of Spanish literature; but what I want to emphasize here is that he considered it inappropriate to speak about a 'Castilian' language since he acknowledged that the result, the 'common Spanish language', also contained Leonese and Navarro-Aragonese elements. This became clearer when he discussed loanwords taken from other Romance languages into Castilian:

Las otras hablas de España más afines al castellano y que se fundieron con él para formar la lengua literaria, dieron también a ésta muchísimas palabras; pero son difíciles de reconocer, pues como estos dialectos afines tienen la mayoría de sus leyes fonéticas comunes con el castellano, tales palabras no llevan sello de evolución especial. (1940: 27)

In this passage we can highlight the importance, mentioned previously, that was conferred on phonetics by Menéndez Pidal. Although he genuinely envisaged the evolution of Spanish as a complex process, he admits his inability to identify exactly how each linguistic area contributed to this process when basing almost all of his conclusions on phonetic arguments.

The title itself of *Orígenes del español* is illuminating as regards Menéndez Pidal's conception of the common Spanish language; they are not the origins of Castilian but of Spanish. The *Glosas emilianenses* were, according to Menéndez Pidal, written in Spanish Romance ('romance español') despite their clear Navarro-Aragonese features:

Esta zona es la patria de las Glosas Emilianenses en que un monje mezcla el naciente idioma español con unas frases en vasco [...]. Las Glosas [...] son el primer texto en que el romance español quiere ser escrito con total independencia del latín. (1950³: 225 & 470)

In line with this perspective, the book analyses data from the linguistic areas of the central Iberian Peninsula from León to Aragón, which he considered to be the basis of Spanish, whereas Galician-Portuguese and Catalan are almost completely overlooked.

To show that to some extent he believed in the linguistic assimilation (levelling) of the Peninsula's central dialects, it can be pointed out that he considered, for instance, that the decision not to represent apocope in the common literary language, which he dedicated many sections of his *Historia de la lengua* to, was the result of Leonese influence (again, this is a phonetic phenomenon). In his analysis of the dialectalisms present in the works of Alfonso X he states:

En la misma *General Estoria* (manuscrito vaticano) aparece otro leonesismo que más especialmente nos interesa: *piedade, salute*, indicio de que el leonés echa el peso de su tradicional autoridad en contra de la apócope de la vocal final que el castellano extremaba; el leonés, veremos que obtendrá un triunfo en ese terreno.

En sintaxis se observa más abundantemente el influjo leonés, generalizando la interpolación de una palabra, a veces más de una, entre el pronombre átono y el verbo [...]. Es un uso irradiado desde el Occidente de la Península, pues estas interpolaciones tienen su máximo uso en el gallego portugués, donde aún hoy subsisten; luego abundan en el leonés antiguo, y son desconocidas, o casi, en el aragonés. Su boga en Castilla se ha de deber a influjo galaico-leonés. (2005: 532)

When discussing the apocope of the pronouns *me* and *te* in the *Libro de buen amor*, he indicates that in every instance:

ocurren en la parte de las serranillas, sin duda representando la lengua rústica de Guadarrama, a la cual no había llegado la influencia leonesa adversa a la apócope. (2005: 577)

During the transition from the fourteenth to the fifteenth centuries, Menéndez Pidal again affirms the contribution made by Leonese to Spanish language and literature by relating the rejection of apocope to the success of two new metrical forms, the *romance* and the *octavas* of *Arte Mayor*, which replaced the previous traditional poetic forms:

El leonés vencerá por completo en cuanto a la apócope, como en otros puntos, pero ya no hay clara conciencia de que represente un dialecto aparte. (2005: 584)

Con estas dos invenciones métricas [romance y arte mayor], la lengua española había encontrado su propio ritmo en frases o hemistiquios de 6 y 8 sílabas [...]. Este cambio de versificación sin duda se relaciona con el olvido de la apócope, o sea, con la conservación de la *-e* final latina que, por influjo principal de León, dio al idioma su nuevo y definitivo ritmo; no es por esto de extrañar el influjo del reino leonés en la constitución de los dos metros de Romance y de Arte Mayor. (2005: 594)

He grants León the leading role in the disappearance of non-verbal apocope:

Durante cuatro siglos el dialecto central castellano vacila entre el leonés y el aragonés respecto a la conservación o pérdida de la *-e* final, cediendo por fin a la tendencia leonesa, como era de esperar, dada la antigua unidad política de los reinos de Castilla y de León. (2005: 645)

This absence, which was 'as would be expected' ('como era de esperar') is, of course, not at all what we would expect in the light of Menéndez Pidal's continual insistence that on the whole it was Castilian forms which prevailed. Compared with this recognition of the contribution made by Leonese, based on documentary evidence, there does not seem to be any case in which Aragonese is presented to us as playing the winning role in the formation of Spanish, except for the odd lexical item such as *entremés*, *faxa* or *arrollar* (2005: 646 & 698). This lack of Aragonese influence seems to be linked to the fact that Menéndez Pidal's working methodology was mainly based on phonetic differences, since he was unable to find traces of authentic Aragonese phonetic phenomena in the common literary language (unlike the loss of *apócope extrema*, which was a Western characteristic).

Nevertheless, we cannot rule out that the possibility that there was an underlying tendency in his account not to focus on, or to downplay, possible Aragonese contributions as compared to those of Leonese. This is noticeable, for instance, in his reconstruction of the development and diffusion of the phonological system of Modern Spanish. In his *Historia de la lengua* he insistently attributes the responsibility for the new pronunciations to the phonetics of Old Castilian, despite the fact with the phrase 'Old Castilian' he is actually referring to the pronunciation of Northern areas which include territories on the banks of the Ebro and the Duero settled by people coming from several different areas.

It is worth pointing out that, as Menéndez Pidal conceived it, Old Castile was limited to Cantabria and its neighbouring regions

in the Middle Ages; and so, consistently with this reconstruction, he argued that the *Auto de los reyes magos* and the *Poema de Mio Cid* were not Castilian (2005: 468–72). However, after that period its territory expanded considerably; he considered as part of ‘Old Castile’ places which were part of the Kingdom of León until well into the Middle Ages, such as Valladolid and Palencia, and even areas located in Eastern León and in the Tierra de Campos. In this way Menéndez Pidal could consider to be an accurate representation of ‘Old Castilian’ pronunciation the evidence provided by Antonio de Torquemada, who is said to ‘hacerlo conforme al uso y estilo de la casa de Benavente’, despite being aware that:

Torquemada [...] parece describirnos la pronunciación más autorizada de su tierra, esto es, desde el Esla (Benavente) hasta el Pisuerga (Torquemada) en cuyo centro está tierra de Campos (Mayorga) (2005: 880);

that is, in territories that belonged to the Kingdom of León until the mid-twelfth century.²⁰ Regardless of where Torquemada, the

²⁰ The areas between the rivers Cea and Pisuerga were only incorporated into Castile after Sancho III el Mayor took them away from León in 1034 (Fernando I inheriting them as part of Castile); or possibly even as late as 1157, when Alfonso VII’s lands were divided, in the opinion of Martínez Sopena (1985: 13–14). Either way, the incorporation into Castile took place long after the initial medieval colonization of that region in the ninth and tenth centuries, which makes it unlikely that the political frontier could have had any linguistic consequences. This makes it surprising that those areas have been taken to belong linguistically to Castile, and are never included as part of the Leonese linguistic area, despite the fact that many features that are thought to be Leonese in origin are also commonly found in Palencia, Valladolid and even Burgos (see, for example, the studies in Morala 2008). This is the case, for example, with the analogical strong perfects (Pato 2004b, 2009) or of *leísmo* for masculine count nouns, which group together the Eastern Leonese area with Castile within an isogloss which coincides with that of the conservation of initial F- and the palatalization of L-, separating Central from Eastern Leonese (Fernández-Ordóñez 2001: 449–54). In many ways Castilian is just the dialect which developed in the Eastern part of the Kingdom of León. Being varieties spoken in the same kingdom, as part of the same dialect continuum, it is impossible to establish clear frontiers between Galician and Astur-Leonese, or between Astur-Leonese and Castilian, at least for those areas in which Latin had developed in situ from ancient times, or which were repopulated before the twelfth century, as both Neira (1989), discussing a number of linguistic features, and Penny (2004b), rightly point out. But as in studies on the history of Castilian, Menéndez Pidal’s prestige can still be seen today in the fact that those who study Asturian and Leonese still follow the boundaries that he proposed for the dialects

author of the *Manual de escribientes*, actually was, time after time Menéndez Pidal insisted that the modern pronunciation originated in Old Castile (2005: 875–87 & 995–1017); and he maintained that because of its influence:

Desde luego los dialectos afines al español literario, el astur-leonés y el navarro-aragonés, ensordecieron contemporáneamente sus fricativas *j*, *z*, *s*. (2005: 1016)

Even though he acknowledged in a note that ‘casos esporádicos de ensordecimiento ocurrían desde época antiquísima en aragonés’ (2005: 1016, n. 47), no attempt was made to connect this with the evolution of Castilian; and there is no discussion of the linguistic features found in works by authors from Navarre or Aragón who were writing at the same time as the Castilians whose language is commented on extensively and in detail.

VI. CONCLUSION

As early as 1916, in his review of Griera’s study of the Catalan-Aragonese border, Menéndez Pidal developed a typology of the different kinds of dialect border, which is still in essence in effect today; as far as I can see, it was deployed then for the first time ever with reference to the study of the Peninsular Romance languages. In that review, Menéndez Pidal made a distinction between two different kinds of isoglosses; those that do not coincide and criss-cross each other, which characterize a transitional zone, and those that do coincide, forming a bundle, and which thus delimit clearly two different linguistic areas:

A veces observamos varios límites confundidos en un haz o conjunto de líneas que marchan juntas en toda o gran parte de su extensión: límites coincidentes, que obedecen a la irradiación de grandes masas de fenómenos lingüísticos; es decir, una porción de fenómenos fonéticos, morfológicos o sintácticos alcanzan un mismo límite llevados por el mismo impulso propagador. La coincidencia de los límites es por lo

in 1906, in *El dialecto leonés*, basing those on the political borders of the Kingdom of León at the start of the thirteenth century; the consequence is that they do not consider the data from the territories in Eastern León that are situated north of the Duero (Cantabria, Burgos, Palencia and Valladolid), and thus do not take into account the fact that many features found there are the same.

común el resultado del choque de dos lenguas o dialectos que se sienten entre sí como diversos; hay conciencia de la distinción entre las lenguas colindantes y ambas se excluyen mutuamente en gran parte de sus fenómenos característicos [...]. Pero más, por lo común, observamos que los límites siguen direcciones muy variadas, entrecruzándose de muy diverso modo; estos límites obedecen a irradiaciones parciales dentro de un medio lingüístico relativamente homogéneo, capaz de ser afectado por esta especie de movimientos ondulatorios que se propagan, cada uno según su impulso independiente, a diversas distancias y en diversas direcciones [...]. En España esta diferencia tiene una aplicación muy importante cuando se estudian las fronteras de los dialectos románicos del norte. Los límites lingüísticos entre el leonés y el gallego desde el Cantábrico hasta hacia el Duero, o los del aragonés y el catalán desde los Pirineos hasta hacia Benabarre, son principalmente sueltos o entrecruzados, mientras que más al sur son límites por lo general coincidentes. (1916: 77-78)

The most interesting aspect of this double distinction is that it has consequences concerning whether we think that the linguistic variety in question is genuinely native or has come from elsewhere, taking into account what we know about Peninsular history:

al norte de la región los límites fonéticos van por lo general sueltos y [...] al sur todos ellos se juntan en un haz a partir de cierto punto. Al norte tenemos el resultado de la evolución ininterrumpida de dialectos románicos primitivos, y al sur el resultado de una invasión en masa debida principalmente, como es de presumir, a la reconquista, invasión de una lengua completa que se propaga desplazando a otra preexistente. (1916: 79)

This historical interpretation of the dialectal framework of the Peninsula has been generally accepted by all those who study the history of the different Ibero-Romance languages, distinguishing the dialect continuum in the North from areas with clearer dialect borders further south (e.g. Penny 2004a). Even so, the same Menéndez Pidal who postulated this in order to explain the pattern of the geographical distribution of the isoglosses between Galician-Portuguese, Spanish and Catalan, was unable to put it into practice when he was studying the central dialects which he considered to form the basis of Spanish: that is, Astur-Leonese, Castilian and Navarro-Aragonese. This inability may well be due to the fact that his reasoning was based, as we have seen many times already, on phonetic features. But it is probably also to be explained by his assumption of the 'Castilianization' of the whole

central and southern region, and the disappearance of the transitional zones, which were replaced by a homogeneous 'Castilian'. Since he had not identified those linguistic features of Astur-Leonese and Aragonese which had coincided originally with those of Castilian, the linguistic source of the language used in the central part of the Peninsula could be ascribed without any problem to Castilian alone.²¹

Menéndez Pidal's Castilian nationalism undoubtedly reflects the ideological prejudices of the age, as well as the role he ascribed to Castile in the literary expression of Spanish national identity. We should therefore discount it, as being a prejudice, as prejudging the issues, since it is, in any event, based on an exclusively phonetic analysis of the linguistic features. But more than that, it is not clear, even as regards pronunciation, that his famous *cuña castellana* ever existed, since that could only ever be deduced on the basis of the incomplete knowledge of dialect phonetics that there was between 1920 and 1950. The data had not then been published then, indeed they have never been published, which would have enabled linguists to work out a complete dialect map of the Peninsula; that is, the data that were used for the *Atlas lingüístico de la Península Ibérica (ALPI)*, which should be regarded as a unique treasure, since they are the only data which organise the whole of the peninsula in one common grid, however imperfectly.²² If those data had been known at the time, they would have shown a far more complex reality than that of the Castilian 'wedge'.

That complexity has already been pointed out by Navarro Tomás, in his phonetic dialect geography studies published in 1975, after the first volume of the *ALPI* came out; and by Diego Catalán in his masterly article (also 1975) 'De Nájera a Salobreña. Notas históricas y lingüísticas sobre un reino en estado latente', where he analysed the only lexical map currently available in the

²¹ For example, Menéndez Pidal regarded as exclusively Castilian the language spoken to the north of the Duero in Palencia or Valladolid, even though it is only after 1157 that we can be sure that those areas belonged administratively to Castile: see note 20 above.

²² Only one volume of the *ALPI* was published, in 1962. Its source materials went missing for more than four decades until they were eventually found by David Heap in 2002. The data are now available in the form of images on the Internet: Heap (2003-).

ALPI: aguijón. Navarro Tomás's studies make it possible to see that many Western Castilian phonetic features coincide with those of Leonese regions (for instance, the reduced pronunciation of final *-s* and *-θ*, and the open articulation of stressed *o*), while the Basque Country, Navarre, Aragón and La Rioja coincide with Eastern Castile.²³ Thus there is no such thing as a uniform Castilian in many respects, including phonetic ones. In this way it turns out that many of the phonetic developments which Menéndez Pidal considered to be exclusively Old Castilian could well have also at the same time been Navarrese, or Aragonese, or Leonese, and not because of a simple process of Castilianization; in the same way that, as early as the 1960s, scholars including Dámaso Alonso (1962) took it upon themselves to make clear that the medieval confusion of *b* and *v*, or the devoicing of sibilants, were complex processes in which Castilianization was not the main cause.²⁴

Diego Catalán's article does not only demonstrate the existence of linguistic areas that fail to correspond with the leading role at-

²³ These are Navarro Tomás's conclusions to his analysis of the *o* in *boca*: 'Las zonas del catalán, aragonés y del castellano oriental excluyen visiblemente la variedad de tendencia abierta. Las del castellano occidental y del leonés rechazan la tendencia cerrada' (1975: 91). There is a similar division between two types of Castilian in the realization of final *-s*: 'La diferenciación entre las variedades plena y reducida de la final *-s* señala en Castilla dos zonas distintas. La *-s* plena en el mapa de *árboles* corresponde con raras excepciones a las provincias orientales de Logroño, Soria, Guadalajara, Cuenca y Albacete [articulación en que coinciden con Aragón y los territorios catalano-hablantes]; la reducida se da en las provincias centrales y occidentales de Santander, Burgos, Palencia, Valladolid, Segovia, Ávila, Madrid, Toledo y Ciudad Real' (1975: 189). The distribution of final *-z* is also very similar: 'La amplia extensión de la *-z* interdental comprende las provincias castellanas, leonesas y aragonesas. Se distinguen en la articulación de la final *-z*, como en la de la *-s*, una modalidad plena y otra reducida y débil. La zona más uniforme de *-z* plena incluye Navarra, La Rioja, Aragón, La Alcarria y Cuenca. Soria practica la modalidad reducida, pero Logroño, Guadalajara y Cuenca, con variedad plena, contrastan con la atenuada predominante en Santander, Burgos, Palencia, Valladolid, Segovia, Ávila y Madrid. Se advierte también en este caso la mencionada diferencia entre el lado oriental de Castilla y el occidental, aunque con menos regularidad que en el de la *-s*. En Asturias, León, Zamora, Lugo y Orense, la *-z* interdental plena es más frecuente que la reducida, al contrario que Salamanca, adscrita a la variedad reducida de la Castilla occidental' (1975: 191-92).

²⁴ This is a view also held by many others: see Pascual (1996-97: 89-92) or Cano Aguilar (1998: 135-38; 2005).

tributed to Castile by Menéndez Pidal; it also makes clear that when working out the dialect map of the Iberian Peninsula we should take into account not only phonetic but also lexical features. For my part, I would add that there is also a need to consider grammatical features. There are Castilian grammatical features, such as *leísmo*, which are only found in Eastern León, Western Castile and the Basque Country. The many phenomena related to the *neutro de materia*, which has been a feature of Castilian alone since the Middle Ages (Fernández-Ordóñez 1994, 2001, 2006–07), have not been welcomed into the standard language, nor in the Spanish spoken in most of the Peninsula. Neither do we find south of the Duero, in Castile, or south of the Ebro, in Navarra and La Rioja, a feature which has its focal area in the Eastern Castilian of Burgos, Vizcaya and La Rioja: the replacement of verb forms in *-ra* and *-se* by the conditional form *-ría*, despite its being well documented in that region during the Middle Ages (Pato 2004). Castilian features have not always prevailed in the development of the common language of the old medieval kingdoms of León, Aragón, Navarre, Castile, Toledo, Seville, Murcia and Jaén (as Alfonso X referred to them). Compound tenses, for example, originated in the East of the Peninsula, in Catalonia and Aragón (Rodríguez Molina 2004, 2008), and were used only later in the centre, firstly in the East of Castile. Thus even now in Galician and Asturian these forms are still unknown, while in the North of Castile and areas formerly in the Kingdom of León, as well as in Extremadura, Western Andalusia and Spanish America, the use of compound tenses is more limited today than in other areas or in standard peninsular Spanish. In turn, the replacement of *amase* with *amara* must have had its point of origin in the West of the peninsula, as evidenced by Asturian, the speech varieties of the former Kingdom of León and Western Andalusia, and Atlantic Spanish, in all of which *amase* has been completely replaced with *amara* as a subjunctive form, whereas in the mountains of Aragón *amase* is preferred (cf. Alvar 1979–83). The same argument can be made as regards many other features. Many of the linguistic changes which transformed medieval varieties into modern ones, if contemplated from a straightforward Peninsular-wide perspective that takes into account the coexisting evidence of all Ibero-Romance languages, could be explained by hypotheses concerning the focal areas of the expansion of modern features which have barely been considered

up to the present day. Without denying the occasional existence of a Castilian wedge,²⁵ we should acknowledge that we can also see a Castilian-Leonese wedge,²⁶ a Castilian-Navarro-Aragonese wedge,²⁷ and sometimes one that groups together the whole central Leonese-Castilian-Aragonese area.²⁸ There are also areas into which the Castilian wedge has not expanded, stopping sharply at the Duero or the Tagus, and remains anchored in an area of still uncertain linguistic affiliation.²⁹ The linguistic levelling between those who came from several different dialect areas to repopulate that no man's land was probably such a decisive factor in the for-

²⁵ As well as the lexical map for *mustela* which was included in the second edition of the *Orígenes* (cf. Pato 2007), the geographical distribution of the *-illo* diminutive also fits the pattern of the Castilian wedge, as the *ALPI* questionnaires allow us to see.

²⁶ That grouping is probably operative as regards the replacement of *amase* by *amara*, or the use of the periphrastic future (*ir* + infinitive) rather than the synthetic.

²⁷ The linguistic studies of thirteenth-century Teruel are very significant in this respect; in those documents and *fueros* both Castilian and Aragonese phonetic developments are attested (Enguita Utrilla 2008). Since Navarrese and Aragonese participated in the repopulation of Teruel in equal numbers, this seems to indicate that by that time the Navarrese already used a type of language which was predominantly 'Castilian', despite being politically independent of Castile at that time.

²⁸ This possibility was suggested by Pascual (1996–97) or Cano Aguilar: 'En los muchos casos de diferencias dialectales (históricas y modernas) basadas en la morfología, en especial la verbal, tampoco se trata de que el castellano desplazara desde el principio unas formas que, ante su empuje, quedaran arrinconadas en los márgenes: por el contrario, el castellano compartió muchas de esas formas en la época antigua, e incluso después. [...] en el plano sintáctico [...] este dialecto vuelve a estar acompañado por los vecinos: del leonés al aragonés, con el castellano como elemento central, la imagen de homogeneidad interna y de mutua comunidad sintáctica es completa. Los dialectos centrales forman en este sentido un bloque compacto, en el que comparten fenómenos como el empleo de *a* ante Objeto Directo en condiciones idénticas, el uso de los tiempos y modos verbales, los mecanismos y modos específicos de rección y complementación oracional e interoracional...' (1998: 138–39). Although I do not agree with Cano Aguilar that there is complete syntactic uniformity among the central dialects, it is true that they share many features different from those of Galician-Portuguese and/or Catalan.

²⁹ The replacement of the subjunctive by the conditional has not crossed south of the Duero; and the pronominal distinction between count and mass has not gone much further south than the Tagus (as I pointed out above).

mation of the ensuing linguistic characteristics of the area that the result cannot simply be ascribed to Castilian influence, or indeed the influence of anywhere in particular.

The conclusion should be that linguistic developments can only be correctly interpreted in a comparative context. If the Romance languages on the Iberian Peninsula have frequently been overlooked during research into Spanish, that is clearly a result of the Spanish School of Philology being so heavily imbued with the Castilian nationalism of Menéndez Pidal that it may well have been taken further than he intended. It is the duty of the philologists and linguists of the twenty-first century to remedy this.

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