

# (Re-)Constructing Spain: Francisco Parcerisa's Cultural Nationalism in *Recuerdos y bellezas de España* (1839-1872)

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## Abstract

'We will make it so that people, who may not even know that their fatherland contains beautiful memories and monuments, pay attention to them and learn that not everything is on the other side of the Pyrenees.'

These boldly nationalistic claims are made in the introduction to *Recuerdos y Bellezas de España*, a historical and artistic travel guide to Spain conceived, edited and illustrated by the Catalan artist Francisco Parcerisa (1803-75), with texts by four important literary and political figures of the age. The first and most ambitious Spanish contribution to a literary and artistic genre dominated by foreigners, it was published in instalments over 33 turbulent years of “continuous political upheavals, bombings ... and other calamities”, many of which were revolutions and civil wars fought precisely over the question of what form the nation-state should take.

This article will examine, for the first time, the nationalistic aspect of the series. The first part will discuss how Parcerisa inevitably constructs a myth of nation around cultural output, even whilst his stated aim is to reflect and to catalogue with “exactitude” those monuments which British and French are accused of “disfiguring”. This construction includes artistic re-constructions of monuments lost as a result of political turmoil. Looking at the uneasy relationship with the foreign, it will also identify French artistic sources which Parcerisa appropriated directly.

The second part will argue that *Recuerdos* can best be categorised by historian Álvarez Junco's term “cultural nationalism”, closely connected to the ethnic strand of nationalism and opposed to the civic model, associated with French domination. Emphatically unaggressive, Parcerisa's approach attempts to unite the Spanish people through a shared culture. His cultural nationalism is, paradoxically, part of an international movement to preserve the past.

**Keywords:** Spain, Spanish, travel writing, travelogue, monuments, landscape, nationalism, nineteenth century

We will make it so that people, who may not even know that their homeland contains beautiful memories and monuments, pay attention to them and learn that not everything is on the other side of the Pyrenees; we will arouse in all hearts a love for what is ancient, for what is beautiful and venerable, for what honours the homeland! (*Recuerdos y bellezas de España: Principiado de Cataluña*, p.7).<sup>1</sup>

These boldly nationalistic claims are made in the introduction to *Recuerdos y bellezas de España* ('Memories and beauties of Spain'), a historical and artistic travel guide conceived, edited and illustrated with lithographs by the Catalan artist Francisco Parcerisa (1803-75), with texts by four important writers of the age (see figures 1-2). The series was published in instalments over 33 turbulent years of 'continuous political upheavals, bombings [...] and other calamities' (Parcerisa, letter to the subscribers, 1872, *Recuerdos: Salamanca, Ávila y Segovia*, p.225), many of which were revolutions and civil wars fought precisely over the question of what form the nation-state should take. This paper examines how Parcerisa and his authors construct a myth of nation around past cultural output against this background of present turmoil, embracing a particular brand of non-aggressive nationalism, and enjoying an uneasy relationship with foreign literary and artistic models throughout.

The creators of *Recuerdos* articulate their patriotic pride on two counts: not only does the series explicitly set out to demonstrate that Spain's historical monuments rival any to be found abroad (*Recuerdos: Principiado de Cataluña*, p.4), but theirs is the first Spanish contribution to a genre – illustrated travel literature – dominated by foreigners who are deemed to have 'disfigured' Spanish monuments in a search for the picturesque (*Recuerdos: Principiado de Cataluña*, p.5). Indeed, Spain, and in particular 'exotic' Andalusia, had become a popular alternative to the Grand Tour, attracting numerous British and French travellers, and resulting in illustrated publications including Henry Swinburne's *Picturesque tour through Spain* (1804), Alexandre de Laborde's *Voyage pittoresque et historique de l'Espagne* (1806-1820) and David Roberts' *Picturesque sketches in Spain* (1837). It is in this context that Parcerisa and his authors explicitly propose to offer 'faithful portraits' taken 'from life' of Spain's existing monuments, presenting these 'to their countrymen *exactly as they are*' and following the principle of 'exactitude [...] in both the plates and the articles'.<sup>2</sup> The press of the day enthusiastically echoed this pride in accuracy, P.F.M. in *La España* (15 July 1855, p.4) praising Parcerisa's lithographs for 'correcting' the errors found in foreign

<sup>1</sup> All translations from the Spanish are my own unless otherwise stated. In subsequent citations the full title *Recuerdos y bellezas de España* will be abbreviated to *Recuerdos* and followed by the title of the volume, which corresponds to a geographical region of Spain. The author will only be named if the volume cited has more than one author, or if he is not the main author of the volume. See figure 1 for a full list of volumes and their respective authors.

<sup>2</sup> Parcerisa, letter to the subscribers, 1872, *Recuerdos: Salamanca, Ávila y Segovia*, p.230 and letter to the Princess of Asturias, 1855, *Recuerdos: Asturias y Leon*, n.p.; *Recuerdos: Principiado de Cataluña*, pp.5-7.

publications. Although this exactitude is somewhat overstated, particularly with reference to the early illustrations, most of the lithographs do bear this out; for example, Parcerisa's representation of the *Torre Nueva* of Zaragoza – Spain's answer to the leaning tower of Pisa, demolished in 1892-3 – is far closer to Charles Clifford's 1860 photograph than to the 1824 print by British traveller Edward Locker, who cannot resist exaggerating the angle and making other changes (figures 3-5).<sup>3</sup> While *Recuerdos* is primarily considered a romantic production, steeped in the aesthetic of the picturesque and the sublime, as Ariño (2007) has explored, Parcerisa differs from the British approach by rarely altering the architecture itself. For example, in *Claustro del Monasterio de Ripoll* (figure 8), it is actually the haunting glow which the moonlight casts over the scene, picking out the invading ivy and the gown of the solitary praying monk, rather than the dimensions or form of the building itself, which endow it with sublime qualities.

This pursuit of truth probably encouraged Parcerisa to exploit photography – which had been introduced to Spain in 1839, the same year as *Recuerdos* began – as the basis for some of his lithographs, a development which I would date to around 1855.<sup>4</sup> *Exterior [sic] de la Iglesia de S. Miguel de Lino* is one of the earliest images which has explicitly been 'taken' rather than freely drawn, and a comparison with Clifford's photograph of the same building appears to confirm this photographic quality (figures 6-7). Much was also made by both the creators and the press of the fact that the authors did their historical research *in situ*, travelling extensively and sometimes in the face of danger to do so.

The emerging idea that, for an accurate image of the country, Spaniards must learn to revalue their own direct experience is an evident preoccupation of the age, reflected in publications such as *Los españoles pintados por sí mismos* ('The Spanish depicted by themselves', 1843) and expressed in Estébanez Calderón's *Escenas Andaluzas* (1847) by an old man indignant that his countrymen believe everything they read in Chateaubriand's *Adventures of the Last Abencerrage*:

We Spaniards do not understand anything of our country except that which foreigners tell us [...] Even if we were to concede that all genius and talent is to be found across the Pyrenees, we must consult Spaniards if we want to talk about Spain (p.25, cited and translated in Tully 1997, p.185).

<sup>3</sup> Photographer Charles Clifford (Wales, c. 1820- Madrid, 1863) had settled in Madrid by 1850, where he became official photographer to Queen Isabel II. His photographs aimed at recording Spain's historical monuments and modern industrial progress.

<sup>4</sup> The technique was used explicitly in the *Córdoba, Sevilla y Cádiz* volume (1856-63) and the *Asturias y Leon* volume (1855-1859), on which he was working simultaneously, contains images with a marked photographic quality. He probably used the *camera oscura* from the beginning of the project. See also Martínez 1999.

Recalling the opening quote from *Recuerdos*' introduction, this approach typifies the way in which nationalisms almost inevitably involve defining one's identity against other, alternative, national identities. Yet the opposition is not straightforward, for it is precisely the enjoyment of reading Chateaubriand's novel (translated into Spanish in 1826) which Parcerisa claims inspired him to conceive the project of *Recuerdos y bellezas de España* and, moreover, to aspire to a literary style similar to that of another French writer, Victor Hugo (Parcerisa, letter to the subscribers, 1872, *Recuerdos: Salamanca, Ávila y Segovia*, p.227). In fact, in spite of the rhetoric, it is the British rather than the French artistic treatment of Spain which Parcerisa and his authors apparently object to. The colder, more academic illustrations in publications by French travellers Laborde and Girault de Prangey were obviously an acceptable artistic source for Parcerisa, who appropriated images, often without acknowledgment, from both. For example, I have identified that *Paseos al rededor [sic] del Alhambra* is taken directly from Girault de Prangey's *Souvenirs de Grenade et de l'Alhambra* (1837), while the models for *San Miguel del Fay* and *Aqueducto [sic] romano cerca de Tarragona* can be found in Laborde's *Voyage pittoresque et historique de l'Espagne* (figures 12-13).

This desire to show 'true' Spain originally included the ambitious intention of inventorying the architecture of the whole country, essential for *Recuerdos* to be a truly national project. Undisclosed circumstances, however, caused the project to end in 1872, leaving large parts of the country uncovered (see figure 1).<sup>5</sup> Although the editor was satisfied that they had shown 'enough to understand the merit and the historical periods' of Spain's monuments (Parcerisa, letter to the subscribers, 1872, *Recuerdos: Salamanca, Ávila y Segovia*, p.229), he regretted the omission of the cathedral of Burgos, star of the Spanish gothic.<sup>6</sup> The textual and artistic preference for Romanesque and Gothic architecture, with its Christian character, shall be discussed later.

If the truthful representation of Spain's *bellezas* (beauties) has a patriotic motivation, the other word in the publication's title – *recuerdos* – evokes the concept of a collective national memory of a shared glorious past. In all of its meanings – 'memories', 'souvenirs' or 'reminders' – the word denotes absence and the concept of something standing in for what is no longer. The traditional equation of 'memory' with 'history' is outlined by Michonneau,

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<sup>5</sup> The gaps were filled by the editions of Daniel Cortezo (1884-91), who also reprinted the original volumes, replacing Parcerisa's lithographs with photographs and lithographs after photographs. As Ariño suggests (2007, p.81), the project probably ended due to the end of royal patronage as a result of the 1868 revolution, which ousted Queen Isabel II, general economic problems and a loss of interest. Health may have been another factor; travelling was arduous at this time and Parcerisa was already 69 years old in 1872.

<sup>6</sup> Parcerisa almost certainly visited Burgos cathedral around 1859. His painting of the building, now in the Museo Nacional del Prado (P-4738), won a third class medal at the 1860 National Exhibition in Madrid.

whose words imply that no fundamental distortion exists between the original and the ‘remembered’ fact:

The memory resembles a weight applied by the past onto the present, which leaves an imprint proportionate with the importance of the person or of the events remembered (Michonneau 2002, p.102).

It is in this spirit of historical replication that Parcerisa fulfils the introduction’s promise to ‘publish in plates, whenever possible, what is no longer standing’ by interspersing visual reconstructions amongst the images of existing places in all volumes (*Recuerdos: Principiado de Cataluña*, p.8). Examples include representations of the Arab Baths in Barcelona, destroyed in 1834, or the Montearagon castle in the process of being burnt down (figure 10). This regret at the loss of vestiges of a glorious past is conceived as emphatically collective from the first; the introduction promises that the publication will ‘show what we once were, to conceal and to console ourselves about what we are’ (*Recuerdos: Principiado de Cataluña*, p.8). Although the nostalgia for a lost golden age characterised cultural production across Europe, in Spain it was exacerbated by the widespread belief that the country had reached its lowest point of decline following French domination and the loss of most of its Latin American colonies.

*Recuerdos* also seeks to create collective *recuerdos* (memories) of a shared journey. Parcerisa’s concluding words to his subscribers reinforce the camaraderie of the frequent addresses, in the informal ‘tú’ form rather than the formal ‘usted’, to the reader appearing throughout the texts:

You will remember with what pleasure we have visited together, though us on pilgrimage and you [‘tú’] without leaving your [‘tu’] house, those historic cities... (Parcerisa, letter to the subscribers, 1872, *Recuerdos: Salamanca, Ávila y Segovia*, p.225).

This sensation that the reader was a participant in the journey was constantly reinforced in press articles which enthusiastically reported on the latest movements of both Parcerisa and the authors. On 25 August 1852, for example, *El Observador* (p.3) informed its readers that Quadrado had ‘just left’ for Asturias and León to begin work on the next volume of *Recuerdos*, soon to be joined by Parcerisa. Based on the assumption of a shared ideology and sense of pride, the subscribers were named at the end of each volume as a reward for their ‘support of a work which must principally be seen as an artistic and national endeavour’ (Advertisement for *Recuerdos*, published in *El Áncora* 15 July 1852, p.16). The reader is also invited to identify with the tourists, artists and writers who appear in many of Parcerisa’s scenes, admiring and contemplating the views. The texts and plates thus function as ‘souvenirs’ (*recuerdos*) of the artist’s (real) and the viewer’s (fictional) artistic ‘pilgrimage’.

These collective memories of a community of art lovers extend beyond the imagined journey into the patriotic territory of imagined history. The authors, as well as the melancholic figures contemplating ruins who appear in some of the lithographs (eg. figure 9), demonstrate by example that gazing at ancient monuments or landscapes of patriotic significance can prompt historical evocations of a common past, which Piferrer denotes ‘the memories of the homeland’ (*Recuerdos: Cataluña*, Vol. II, p.1). For Parcerisa, the contemplation of Las Navas de Tolosa and Covadonga, famous sites where Christian forces triumphed over Islam, evokes collective memories of ‘exploits which we knew since our infancy from the lullabies which sent us to sleep in the cradle’ (Parcerisa, letter to the subscribers, 1872, *Recuerdos: Salamanca, Ávila y Segovia*, p.226).

Nations have been described as ‘imagined communities’, a concept coined by Benedict Anderson (1983). They are often ‘imagined as things enduring – endowed with [...] *memory*, heritage, history’, (Cubitt 1998, pp.4 and 8, my italics) and, most importantly, require a sense of cohesion and common purpose (Riquer 2002, p.24). *Recuerdos* is probably the first publication of its kind about Spain to consciously seek to create these. All of Parcerisa’s sources cater for foreign audiences, and even the artist Genero Pérez Villaamil’s famous *España artística y monumental* (1842-1844) was bilingual, lithographed in France, and aimed partly at the French market.<sup>7</sup>

‘Cultural nationalism’ – a term which some historians use to define a common strand of nineteenth-century nationalism (Álvarez Junco 2001, pp.188-189) – perhaps best describes *Recuerdos*’ promotion of a sense of national identity on historical-artistic grounds, based on a collective cultural ‘memory’. Given the divided state of Spain at the time, this cultural approach was necessary for the project to be a national one. Between 1812, when Anglo-Spanish forces defeated Napoleonic forces – giving birth, many have argued, to Spanish nationalism – and 1839, when the *Recuerdos* series began, the country had experienced a period of rapid political change and internal conflict. After the first constitution was hastily drawn up in the same year as independence, the monarchy was soon restored (1814), the constitution declared void (1814), the first of many army coups took place (1820), hundreds of liberals were systematically killed (1823), a rival to the crown was declared (1833), religious orders were closed down and church property confiscated (from 1836), a new constitution drawn up (1837), and a bloody war of succession began between supporters of the new Queen and those of her uncle Don Carlos (1833-40). The last of these conflicts, the

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<sup>7</sup> *España artística y monumental* was described as ‘very showy and untrustworthy’ by Gothic historian George Street (Street 1865, xviii). Villaamil was criticised even in his lifetime for aping British artists such as David Roberts. Pedro de Madrazo praised Parcerisa’s ‘sincerity’ in direct comparison (*La América* 1860 p.11).

first Carlist war, cost 140,000 lives and was not yet over when Parcerisa embarked upon *Recuerdos* in 1839. Given these divisive circumstances, which continued over *Recuerdos*' 33-year time span, it is easy to understand not only why Parcerisa wished to raise awareness about Spain's ancient architecture and save from destruction, if only on paper, 'the monuments which were falling to the revolutionary pick-axe' (Parcerisa, letter to the subscribers, 1872, *Recuerdos: Salamanca, Ávila y Segovia*, p.225), but also why the focus on a glorious shared cultural past was used to promote cohesion.

In spite of Parcerisa's use of the apparently charged word 'revolutionary', the nationalism of *Recuerdos* is actually characterised by an avoidance of violence and is a far cry from the foreign image of the Spanish 'championing virile and even primordial conceptions of patriotism, liberty and identity' (Jacobson 2006, p.217), both reflected in and probably influenced by Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1812). Thus, refusing to take sides in Spain's internal struggles, Francisco Pi y Margall writes on the devastated town of Ripoll:

Who reduced the town to such a sad state? ... It was the civil war: Ripoll was unfortunately one of its bloodiest victims [...] Do not seek to learn now the name of the side which devastated it: it is enough to know that they were Spaniards. Of the two sides in the struggle, if one destroyed the town, the other destroyed the monastery (*Recuerdos: Cataluña*, Vol. II, p.270).

The identity of the perpetrators is also impossible to determine from Parcerisa's poetic rendition of the ruined Ripoll monastery (figure 8), in which sympathy lies only with the solitary monk, apparently revisiting by night the ruins of a building from which he was now also barred as a result of disentanglement. Similarly vague in detail is *Claustro del demolido convento de los Franciscanos* (in *Recuerdos: Principiado de Cataluña*), one of Parcerisa's architectural 'reconstructions', published in the first volume. It shows soldiers, possibly those responsible for the destruction of the building indicated in the title of the lithograph, resting, smoking and apparently writing on the cloister walls. No doubt reflecting a common sight in war-ridden nineteenth-century Spain<sup>8</sup>, the soldiers' nonchalant behaviour invites censure, yet who this should be directed at is unclear, since the costume of Parcerisa's soldiers is difficult to identify.

This attempt to gloss over internal divisions rather than deepen them does not extend, however, to wars with exterior forces. With respect to these, Parcerisa and his authors frequently conform to the definition of national identity as 'a socially constructed and

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<sup>8</sup> Other works on paper, such as Henry Thomas Alken's *Tenth Regiment of Dragoons (or the Regiment of the Prince of Wales)* which records British involvement in the war of Spanish independence, have similar subject-matter.

continuous process of defining friend and enemy', and display the 'antipathy towards France' which Tully argues is the origin of Spanish literary constructions of nationhood (Sahlins 1989, p.270 and Tully 1997, p.252). Quadrado, for instance, explicitly blames the 'barbarous vandalism' of the church of San Juan de los Reyes on Bonaparte's men (*Recuerdos: Castilla la Nueva*, p.425), and only a few pages after refusing to assign blame in Ripoll's destruction, Pi y Margall fully harnesses the nationalist potential of the French attack on Manresa in 1811, describing in heroic terms the resistance of the local soldiers, who were 'armed more with patriotism than with steel' (*Cataluña*, Vol. II, p.279). Consistent with the idealisation of Spain's medieval Christian past, the texts also glorify wars with combined religious and 'national' importance, such as the battle of the Navas de Tolosa and other so-called 'heroic campaigns against the moors' (*Recuerdos: Reino de Granada*, p.268 and *Valladolid, Palencia y Zamora*, p.21). However, they do not go so far as to advocate the aggressive modern day equivalent of these: the new imperialism of the 1850s and 60s in North Africa.

Rather than attempting to assign blame, both Parcerisa's images of poetic ruins and the authors' descriptions convey a message about the transience of human creation; as Patrik argues, 'the ruined artwork discloses all art's susceptibility to human destruction and all art's dependence upon peace for survival' (Patrik 1986, p.50). In fact, the present day is frequently described as a violent, war-like assault on the past and its vestiges. Vandalism, which is repeatedly criticised, is deemed most common in 'modern culture', which Quadrado considers quite capable of flattening a Romanesque church in order to build a road (*Recuerdos: Reino de Córdoba*, p.444, *Recuerdos: Valladolid, Palencia y Zamora*, p.283 and Parcerisa's letter in *Recuerdos: Asturias y León 1855-59*, p.247). Parcerisa's lamentations regarding the 'revolutionary pick-axe' seem to refer not to political or social revolutions but rather to modernity's disregard for historical monuments. In fact, through both the lithographs and the texts, *Recuerdos* implies that war, human destruction and vandalism in general are Spain's true enemies.

This cultural nationalism is, paradoxically, part of an international movement to preserve the past. The fact that the identity of art lovers and preservers of cultural heritage is cross-border is recognised in Piferrer's poetic description of a northern romantic spirit which motivates souls across Europe so that 'all nations [...] feel like friends, sisters' (*Recuerdos: Principiado de Cataluña*, p.322). Similarly, Parcerisa wishes Spain would follow its neighbour's example in setting up 'a council of high inspection' to protect against vandalism and to promote education on Christian architecture 'as it is in France, where it has contributed so much to inspiring an enthusiastic love towards the monuments amongst the youth destined for an ecclesiastic career' (Parcerisa's letter to Quadrado, 2 August 1856, *Recuerdos:*



*Asturias y León*, Appendix, pp.247-8). Indeed, at the outset, Piferrer proudly declares that *Recuerdos* too has an educational, even democratic, purpose:

Do not think that such a project lacks usefulness; [there are] many subjects who, due to their occupation or their condition in life, live in the greatest ignorance of the history of their homeland (*Recuerdos: Principiado de Cataluña* 1839-41, p.5).

Indeed, although produced for a select group of subscribers, in cost and dimension *Recuerdos* is much more modest than comparable publications, its lithographs only one-third of the size of those appearing in the publications of Baron Taylor, Alexandre de Laborde, Genaro Pérez de Villaamil or David Roberts. Whilst even the cultural elite remarked upon the ‘immense costs’ of Villaamil’s *España artística y monumental*, the press and Parcerisa himself draw attention to his and Piferrer’s working-class origins (*La Discusión* 29 October 1858, p.3).<sup>9</sup> The cultural nationalism of *Recuerdos y bellezas de España* was, at least in spirit, inclusive of different social classes.

Although I have argued that *Recuerdos* constructs a sense of national identity on cultural and artistic grounds, the series does not entirely avoid engagement with political models of nationhood, and a consideration of rival and overlapping conceptions of the nation is therefore crucial. The dominant alternative was the civic model which originated in France, and took as its basis the concept of a well-established state, whose inhabitants form ‘a free union of citizens [...] able to identify and to pursue aggressively a common good’ (Jacobson 2006, p.213). Spain as a nation-state had adopted the French political model in the form of a liberal constitution and many of its laws dated from the period of French domination (1808-1812) or were of French inspiration.

*Recuerdos* is evidently opposed to certain aspects of the civic model of nationhood, as the territorial division into volumes reveals. Even taking into account that the original intention of covering the entire country was not fulfilled, the geographical chunks into which the eleven existing volumes are divided initially appear illogical (see figure 1). This is because they do not perfectly follow the new 1833 administrative borders which delimited new *provincias* and *regiones* – part of a centralising system devised by the liberals based on the French model – but are often determined by the location of ancient kingdoms.<sup>10</sup> Parcerisa disregards the official divisions in north-west Spain, to the extent that the three provinces forming the new region of León are each dealt with in a distinct volume of *Recuerdos*.

<sup>9</sup> In a letter to Federico de Madrazo (29 November 1841) Eugenio de Ochoa mentions the ‘immense costs’ of Villaamil’s series (cited in Arias Anglés 1986, p.195).

<sup>10</sup> The 1833 administrative model was closely based on the 1822 model, which had been instigated by the liberals in opposition both to the absolutist and to the French *départements*-inspired models.

Similarly, two of the volumes dealing with the region of Andalusia follow earlier territorial divisions, so that the Kingdom of Granada volume covers four of the new provinces, while the Kingdom of Córdoba volume covers only one.

The strong political dimension to the new 1833 map has been noted by Vincent, who argues that it ‘visibly demonstrated the liberal principles of *uniformity* and *equality*’ (Vincent 2007, p.25, my italics). The concept of uniformity is repeatedly rejected by *Recuerdos*’ writers; Piferrer criticises the statisticians’ drive to ‘make everything uniform’, and Quadrado blames centralization in Madrid for ‘absorbing [...] the personality of provinces and municipalities’ (*Recuerdos: Cataluña*, Vol. II, p.6 and *Valladolid, Palencia y Zamora*, p.13). Equality, on the other hand, is promoted by *Recuerdos*’ contributors, who seek to redress the balance between cities and the countryside. The insertion of images such as *Abside de S. Juan de Amandi* (figure 9), in which the peasants are the protagonists, create a balance which complements Quadrado’s belief that ‘sometimes the humble population eclipses the famous capital’ and shares the spirit of the Cataluña volume, in which Piferrer asks, ‘With what right do cities, proud cities say: we are the nation; [...] our ideas are those of everyone [...]?’ (*Recuerdos: Reino de Aragón*, p.302 and *Principiado de Cataluña*, p.361).

The principle of equality between regions is also suggested in an anecdote about the series which was published in the *Diario Constitucional de Palma* (18 July 1849, p.3). The newspaper reported that, in gratitude for royal patronage, Parcerisa asked the king to choose which region would be covered in *Recuerdos*’ next volume, to which the King replied that he loved all provinces equally and could not choose between them, leaving the decision in Parcerisa’s hands.

The other main strand of nationalism identified by historians, ethnic nationalism, overlaps with *Recuerdos*’ cultural approach. Originating in Germany, this tradition has historicist and ethnographic foundations and often a racial element. Jacobson considers that the concept of the Spanish nation put forward in *Centinela contra los Franceses* (‘Sentinel against the French’, 1808) by the politician Capmany may be defined as typically ethnic. At one point, Capmany asks:

What would become of Spaniards, if there were no Aragonese, Valencians, Murcians, Asturians, Galicians, Extremadurans, Catalans, Castilians, etc? Each one of these names shines bright and looms large. These small nations make up the mass of the Great Nation (Capmany 1808, pp.88-89, cited and translated in Jacobson 2006, p.215).

These words, suggesting that regional identities are compatible with and contribute to a wider Spanish identity could be neatly applied to Parcerisa’s organisation of *Recuerdos* into self-

contained volumes collectively forming the nation of Spain. They also mirror Parcerisa's evident feeling that neither Spain's remaining colonies (including Puerto Rico and Cuba) nor their culturally and ethnically-different inhabitants have a place in this national picture. Homogeneity as a unifying principle is strongly rejected by all *Recuerdos*' contributors; indeed, Madrazo emphatically and somewhat surprisingly refutes another historian's claim that Spain 'appears made or designated by the great creator of nature to be inhabited by a people united in the form of a nation', praising instead its natural diversity (*Recuerdos: Sevilla y Cádiz*, p.18, quoting from LaFuente's *Historia General de España 1850-1866*). *Recuerdos*' creators consistently celebrate regional difference, faithfully recording local costumes and traditions (eg. figure 9). It is also interesting that Pi y Margall, the author of two volumes of *Recuerdos* who later became Spain's second president, was the politician responsible in 1873 for de-centralising Spain into a short-lived federal system of states with regional autonomy.<sup>11</sup>

The Catalan heritage of Parcerisa and two of his authors requires brief consideration in this context of this regionalism. The Catalan regionalist movement originated in the nineteenth century, when it was primarily motivated by a desire for economic autonomy from the rest of Spain, though most historians argue that its impact was negligible until the final decades (eg. Carr 1966, p.543). Whilst sharing the movement's rejection of centralisation, Parcerisa and his authors appear genuinely committed to territorial equality, and their goal is the preservation of local traditions all across Spain. For some scholars, Spanish people entertained 'multiple conceptions of *pueblo*, *región*, *patria*, and *nación*, which often intersected and overlapped' (Jacobson 2006, p.211) without being at odds with one another, and indeed, Piferrer refers to both Cataluña and Spain as his 'homeland' in the same volume (*Recuerdos: Principiado de Cataluña 1839-41*, pp.3, 7 and 19). Fontbona is right to conclude that, though originating in Cataluña, *Recuerdos* 'was a Spanish project' (Fontbona 1983, p.89).

Finally, National Catholicism is considered to be another, distinct model of nationalism in nineteenth-century Spain. Based on the myth that Spain's character was inherently catholic, it was later appropriated by Francisco Franco's regime, resulting in an uncomfortable legacy which may explain why *Recuerdos*, with its religious sympathies, has never previously been studied as a nationalist project. The long-standing association between Spain and Catholicism was officially revived after the expulsion of Napoleon's troops in the

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<sup>11</sup> Pi y Margall was the father of Federal Republicanism, which in other respects had a very different ideology to *Recuerdos y bellezas de España*. Despite Pi's Catholic point of view in his volumes for *Recuerdos*, Federal Republicanism was anti-clerical, anti-monarchical and was not averse to employing violent means when considered necessary (Jacobson 2006, p.221).

1812 constitution and subsequently in the restoration of the Spanish monarchy (1814), and given literary weight in publications such as Amado's *Dios y España* (1831), whose full title translates as 'God and Spain, that is, an essay on the historical demonstration of what Spain owes to the Catholic Religion' (Álvarez Junco 2001, p.405). In 1861, Federico even argued that Spanish art had a unique character which sprang from its 'eminently national and profoundly catholic' source of inspiration (Federico 1861, p.174 cited in Hernando 1995, p.164).

*Recuerdos'* cultural nationalism shares many aspects of this National Catholic self-image, seamlessly and unquestioningly connecting Spain, Christianity and historic architecture. The Romanesque church of San Miguel de Lino, captivatingly lithographed by Parcerisa (figure 6), is thus described as exemplifying 'the first awakenings of a new art, singularly Spanish and Christian' (*Recuerdos: Asturias y León*, p.80). This 'new art' is seen to reach its full potential in Gothic architecture, as Piferrer confidently declares:

'The gothic is the object of our worship [...] and in our opinion the most spiritual, profound, philosophical, beautiful and, above all, Christian [architectural style]' (*Recuerdos: Reino de Mallorca*, p.5).

This architectural preference, which is discussed in detail by Ariño (2007), is artistic as well as literary, and Parcerisa's lithographs of medieval Christian architecture are probably the most emotive and reverential of the series. In this respect his approach is fundamentally different to that of British artists such as David Roberts, who either sideline Spain's Catholic heritage or consider it as 'exotic' as the Moorish, associating it with the superstition and cruelty of the Inquisition.

The national character of medieval Christian architecture is given an emotive boost by a systematic use of the religious dimension of the sublime to describe it; 'what architecture,' asks Piferrer, 'is a more lively and sublime expression of nature [...] than that of the Middle Ages?' (*Recuerdos: Principiado de Cataluña*, p.122). By now a well-known concept in Spain – pre-dating the early Spanish translation of Burke's influential *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* in 1807 – the sublime's evocation of vastness, power and infinity had inevitably become associated with God, divine creation, and virtue. The lithographs of religious buildings frequently 'raise the soul to God' (*Recuerdos: Reino de Mallorca*, p.320) by drawing the eye upwards, and the foreground crucifixes in *El Gorch Negre* (in *Recuerdos: Cataluña*, Vol. II) and *La Peña de Martos* (in *Recuerdos: Reino de Granada*) invest these moonlit scenes of sublime, divinely-created nature with Christian significance. The religious dimension of the natural sublime is furthermore likened to that of

gothic architecture (Ariño 2007 pp.172-5 and p.369). Both Madrazo and Piferrer compare medieval cathedrals to forests of trees (*Recuerdos: Reino de Córdoba*, p.284 and *Principiado de Cataluña*, p.122), probably drawing on the conceit from Friedrich Schlegel's description of a gothic cathedral:

With all its countless towers and turrets, the whole looks not unlike a forest [...] These miraculous works of art [...] resemble nothing so much as the works of nature itself (Schlegel 1804-5, cited and trans. in Buberl 1994, p.293).

If gothic architecture resembles nature, nature also resembles gothic architecture. The *Interior de la segunda cueva de Artá* (figure 14) imagines the cave as a cavernous church, its fantastical formations resembling tall, slender columns, and the anthropomorphic foreground rocks suggesting the congregation, so that the scene bears a striking similarity to the *Interior de la Catedral* published in the previous volume (figure 15). Evidencing the close collaboration between artist and author, Piferrer enthusiastically describes the cave as a 'sublime' gothic cathedral complete with 'statues, altars, sepulchres' and even an 'organ' (*Recuerdos: Reino de Mallorca*, pp.320-322). Asserting the superiority of Christianity and its natural architecture, the author explicitly states that this marvellous creation far exceeds any 'oriental fantasy' (*Recuerdos: Reino de Mallorca*, p.322).

This comparison with oriental art typifies *Recuerdos'* ambivalent attitude towards the Moorish architecture which made the country such an attraction for foreign travellers. Celebrated by authors and editor alike as the pride of Spain – 'where else in the world,' asks Piferrer, 'is there another Alhambra?' (*Recuerdos: Principiado de Cataluña*, p.4) – Moorish art is also censured as the 'sensual and capricious' product of an exotic and decadent culture (Pi y Margall, *Reino de Córdoba*, p.11).

In fact, I would argue that National Catholicism has an inherently ethnic element, as the continued preoccupation with racial/religious purity – 'pureza de sangre'<sup>12</sup> – suggests. *Recuerdos* engages with this ideology since, throughout the series, moors come across as both racial and religious outsiders. The complete exclusion of Spain's colonial inhabitants – officially 'Spaniards' according to all successive civic constitutions until 1898 – from Parcerisa's vision of Spain also appears to spring from his difficulty in reconciling Catholic belief with an ethnic background entirely alien from that of mainland Spaniards.

The sentimental construction of the country around the Catholic religion could be defined in opposition to British Protestantism or against the anticlericalism of the French occupying forces, criticised for arriving with 'impiety in their hearts' (*Recuerdos: Reino de*

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<sup>12</sup> Pureness of blood, whereby one was 'uncontaminated' by Jewish or Muslim ancestry.

Granada, p.218). However, it also has immediate political resonance in Spain as a reaction to the internal growth of anti-religious feeling. In 1836 royal minister Mendizábal began an ambitious programme of disentailing Church lands, which were put up for sale, resulting in the abandonment and subsequent ruination of many ancient religious buildings. Parcerisa eloquently captured several of these, including the *Panteon de Poblet* (figure 11) whose sublime grandeur is imaginatively portrayed ‘before its destruction’ and is complete with ghostly figures which indicate its unreality, and the *Claustro del Monasterio de Ripoll* (figure 8), which had also suffered in a civil war, as previously discussed. Parcerisa’s allegiances are unusually evident in the artistic re-creation of the destroyed *Claustro del demolido Convento de Dominicos* (in *Recuerdos: Principiado de Cataluña*), in which two priests are shown pleading with a figure of authority, presumably for the right to retain their home and place of worship. In 1840, in an open letter to George Sand, Quadrado made public his dislike of Mendizábal.<sup>13</sup> It is clear that, in spite of the desire to smooth over internal divisions and avoid violence, *Recuerdos* is opposed to those for whom anticlericalism was a political principle.

*Recuerdos*’ cultural approach also overlaps with National Catholicism in the idea that religious architecture not only reflects a common national past, but that an appreciation of it can help to revive a collective religious feeling. Parcerisa’s lithographs envisage a present Spain whose inhabitants maintain the religious traditions of their ancestors, and his Gothic and Romanesque buildings frequently feature praying figures in spiritual harmony with their surroundings. In his closing letter of 1872, he suggests that his fondest memory from the trips undertaken is not of admiring historic monuments for their own sakes, but of witnessing ‘scenes and customs of Christian faith’ (Parcerisa, letter to the subscribers, 1872, *Recuerdos: Salamanca, Ávila y Segovia*, p.230).

However, the unity in faith which seems to characterise early images such as the *Interior de la Catedral* (figure 15) – bursting with contemporary worshippers – seems to erode over time across *Recuerdos*’ volumes. The Romanesque and Gothic buildings become increasingly empty or even closed, providing the backdrop for solitary, melancholic local figures and tourist-artists. Thus the *Abside de San Juan de Amandi* (figure 9) seems to reflect Parcerisa’s final words, ‘sacred customs of our forefathers! Customs which are so rapidly disappearing from our land...’ (Parcerisa, letter to the subscribers, 1872, *Recuerdos*:

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<sup>13</sup> This was written in response to her unflattering portrait of Majorcan people in *Winter in Majorca*, in which he states, ‘we shall avoid pursuing you into the realm of politics, or disputing your love for Señor Mendizabal, in which you need not fear many rivals’ (Quadrado’s refutation in *La Palma: a weekly Journal of History and Literature*, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 1841 in Sand, translated and annotated by Robert Graves, with a refutation by Quadrado, 1978, Cassandra editions, Chicago, p.196). Quadrado probably disapproved of the fact that, whilst in Mallorca, Sand and her lover took up residence in an ex-monastery from which the monks had been removed through disentailment in 1835.

*Salamanca, Ávila y Segovia*, p.230). Catholic faith and ritual are seen as natural unifiers of the Spanish people, but the series ends with a degree of disillusionment with the attempt at unification around a common religion.

To conclude, *Recuerdos y bellezas de España* was an ambitious cultural and national project, whose ideological and aesthetic unity is remarkable given its long duration and the large number of collaborators. The series prides itself on revealing Spain's existing and lost architectural and natural marvels from a truthful and authentic Spanish perspective, in explicit and almost defiant response to foreign publications, yet simultaneously inspired by them. The textual and artistic (re-)creation of a nation based on past cultural creation, which I have termed 'cultural nationalism', blends elements of ethnic, civic and national catholic ideologies, but is emphatically unaggressive. The *Recuerdos y bellezas de España* project is a heartfelt attempt not only to reflect a glorious past but also to promote a united future based on respect for the cultural and religious heritage which its historical monuments inspire.

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## Illustrations



Figure 1. Map of Spain with the areas covered in *Recuerdos y bellezas de España* and their respective authors.

Blue outlines denote official regional boundaries and grey outlines follow the new provincial boundaries. Each numbered block of colour corresponds to a different volume of *Recuerdos y bellezas de España*. The numbers correspond to the order of their appearance as listed below:

Volume title	Years	Author(s)
1. <i>Principiado de Cataluña</i>	1839-41	Pablo Piferrer (1818-48)
2. <i>Reino de Mallorca</i>	1842-44	Pablo Piferrer
3. <i>Cataluña (Vol. II)</i>	1844-50	Pablo Piferrer and Francisco Pi y Margall (1824-1901)
4. <i>Reino de Aragón</i>	1844-48	José María Quadrado (1819-96)
5. <i>Castilla la Nueva</i>	1848-53	José María Quadrado
6. <i>Reino de Granada</i>	1850-52	Francisco Pi y Margall
7. <i>Reino de Córdoba</i>	1852-55	Francisco Pi y Margall and Pedro de Madrazo (1816-98)
8. <i>Asturias y León</i>	1855-59	José María Quadrado
9. <i>Sevilla y Cádiz</i>	1856-63	Pedro de Madrazo
10. <i>Valladolid, Palencia y Zamora</i>	1861-65	José María Quadrado
11. <i>Salamanca, Ávila y Segovia</i>	1865-72	José María Quadrado



Figure 2. Title page. *Recuerdos: Reino de Granada*, c.1850.

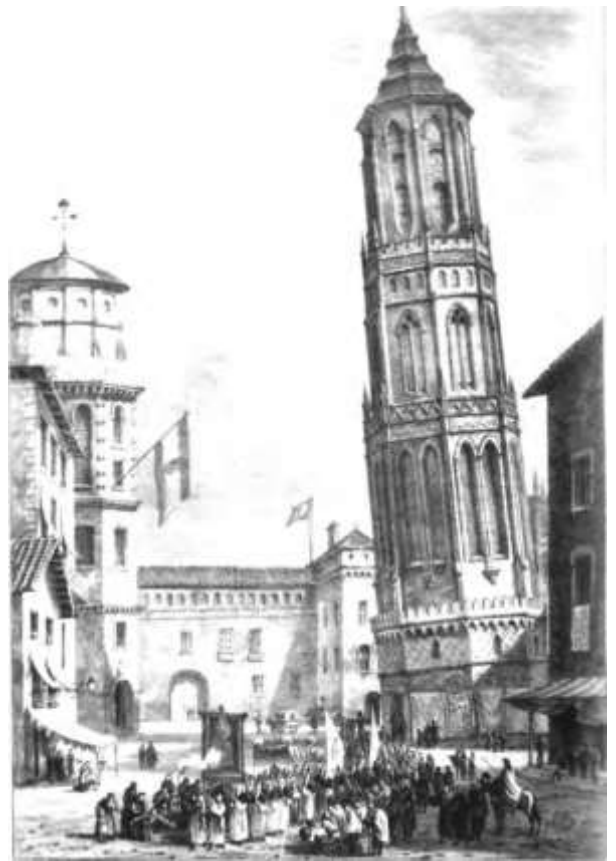


Figure 3. Torre Nueva. E. H. Locker. *Views in Spain*, 1824, p.86.



Figure 4. Torre Inclinada. F. Parcerisa. *Recuerdos: Reino de Aragón*, 1844.



Figure 5. Torre de Zaragoza. C. Clifford. *Album Baleares*, 1860.



Figure 6. Exterior [sic] de la Iglesia de S. Miguel de Lino. F. Parcerisa. *Recuerdos: Asturias y León*, c.1855.



Figure 7. Iglesia de S. Miguel de Lino. C. Clifford, c.1858.



Figure 8. Claustro del Monasterio de Ripoll. F. Parcerisa. *Recuerdos: Cataluña*, Vol. II. 1847.



Figure 9. Abside de San Juan de Amandi. F. Parcerisa. *Recuerdos: Asturias y León*. c.1855.



Figure 10. Montearagón. F. Parcerisa. *Recuerdos: Reino de Aragón*, c.1844.

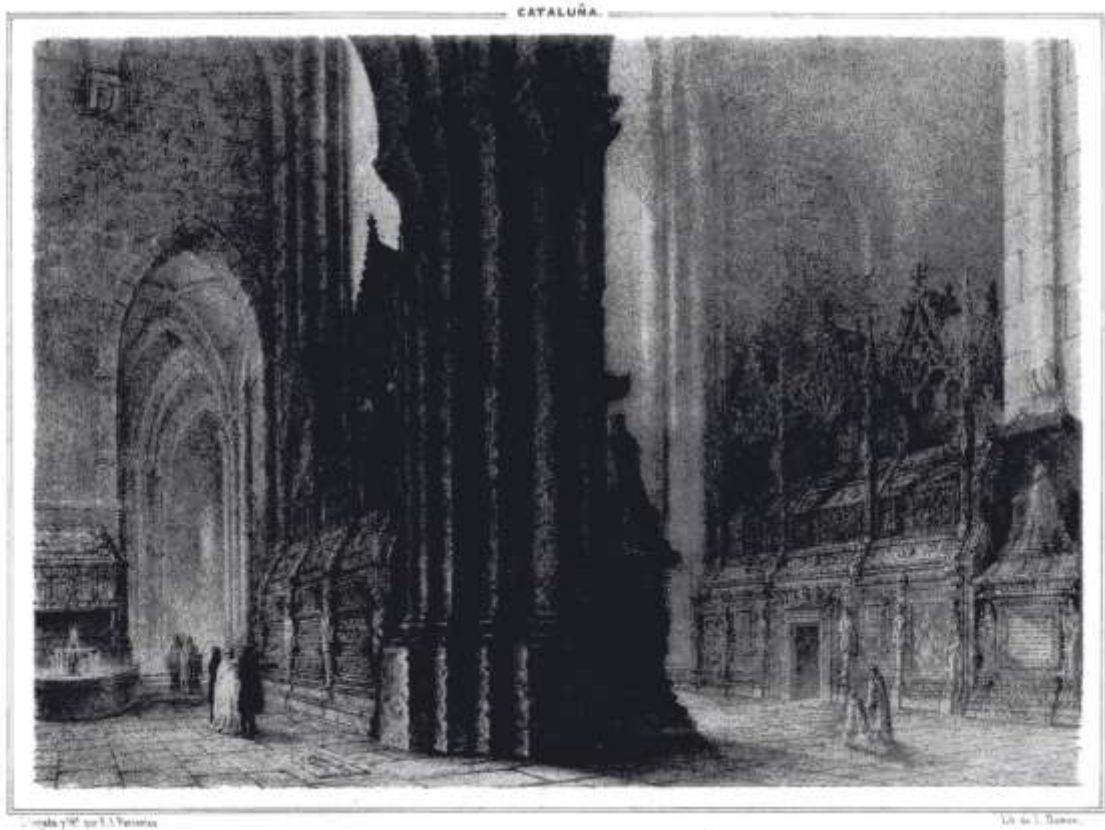


Figure 11. Panteón de Poblet antes de su destrucción. F. Parcerisa. *Recuerdos: Cataluña, Vol. II*, 1844-50.



Figure 12. F. Parcerisa. San Miguel del Fay. *Recuerdos: Principado de Cataluña*, 1839-41.



Figure 13. Vue Generale des Cascades de St. Michel Delfay. A. Laborde (ed.) *Voyage pittoresque et historique de l'Espagne*, 1806-20.



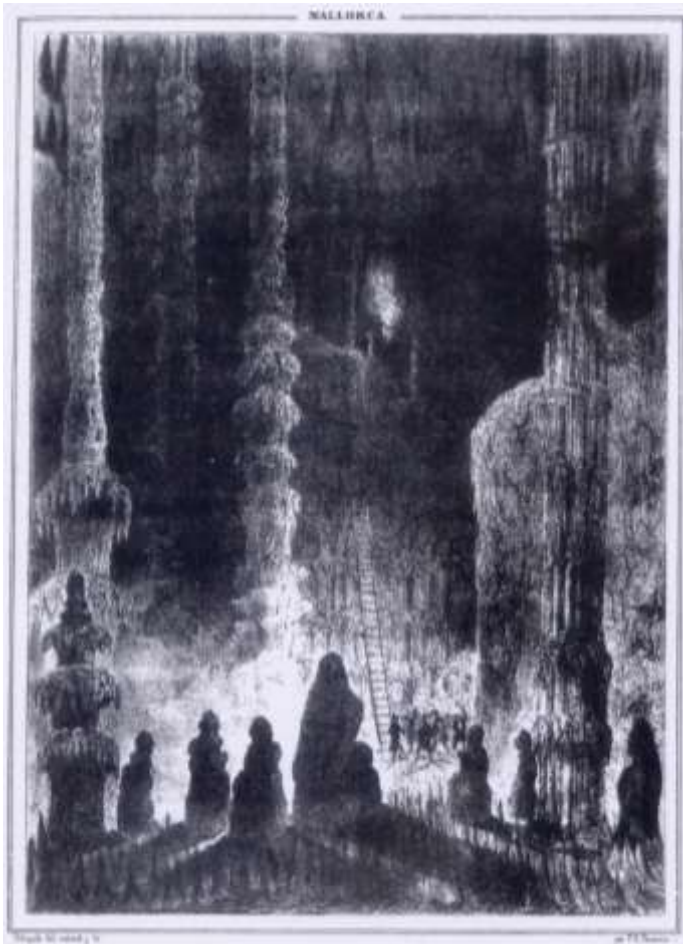


Figure 14. Interior de la segunda cueva de Artá.  
F. Parcerisa. *Recuerdos: Reino de Mallorca*. c.1842.

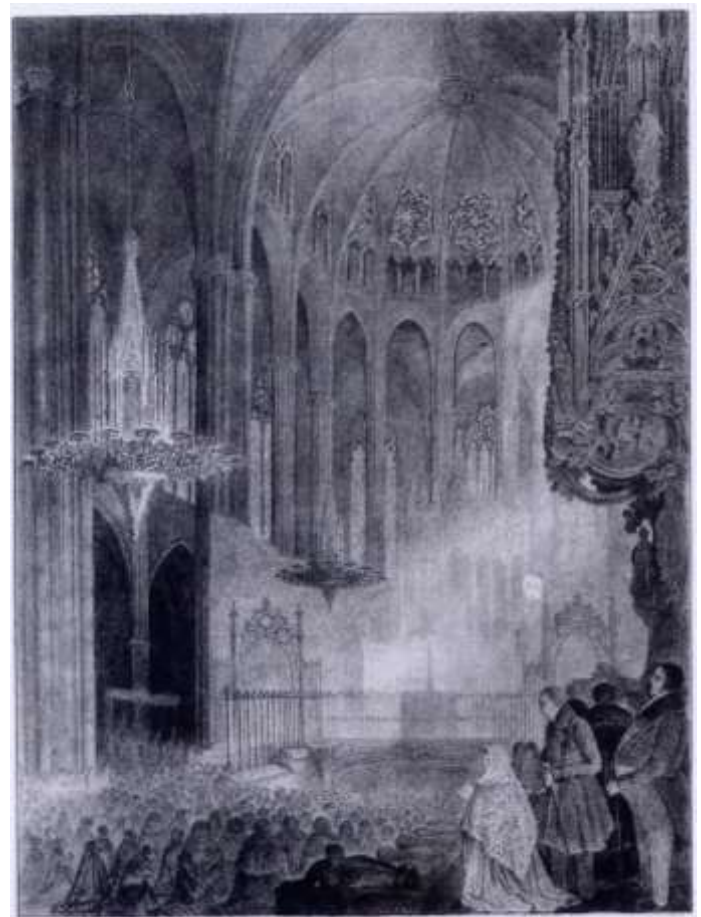


Figure 15. Interior de la Catedral. F. Parcerisa.  
*Recuerdos: Principado de Cataluña*. 1839-41.