

Liberalism Revisited: The Autobiographical Writings of Alberto Jiménez Fraud (1883–1964)

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Abstract. The Residencia de Estudiantes (literally, the “Student Residence”) (1910–1936) was one of the Institución Libre de Enseñanza (the Free Institute for Education) initiatives. Alberto Jiménez Fraud (1883–1964) was director of the Residence. The Civil War brought the Institute of Free Education and its initiatives to an end. Jiménez Fraud went into exile in September 1936 and spent the rest of his life in the universities at Oxford and Cambridge. The reasons for failure are the defining concern of his writings: why the liberal education project espoused at the Institute was rejected by the masses it was intended to reform, and eventually destroyed in the fury and bloodshed of the Civil War. In this regard, therefore, Jiménez Fraud’s writings comprise an eternal return to liberalism.

Palabras clave: 1. Free Institution for Education, 2. Jiménez Fraud, 3. Liberalism, 4. Spain, 5. Second Republic, 6. Civil War, 7. Francoism.

Resumen. La Residencia de Estudiantes de la Institución Libre de Enseñanza (1910–1936), quiso formar las minorías selectas encargadas de liderar la transformación de España. El centro estuvo dirigido por Alberto Jiménez Fraud (1883–1964), que dedicó la vida a este proyecto de renovación. La Guerra Civil acabó con ello. Jiménez Fraud salió de España en septiembre de 1936 y pasó el exilio entre las Universidades de Oxford y Cambridge. Sus escritos plantean una pregunta constante sobre la causa de ese fracaso vital: por qué el proyecto de educación liberal de la Institución fue despreciado por las masas a las que pretendía reformar, y acabó destruido por la furia de la sangre. Una y otra vez propone como solución el ideal ya rechazado: el retorno a la educación de selectos en una época que era ya la de la rebelión de las masas.

Keywords: 1. Institución Libre de Enseñanza, 2. Jiménez Fraud, 3. liberalism, 4. España, 5. Segunda República, 6. Guerra Civil, 7. franquismo.

culturales

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Introduction

THE MOST SIGNIFICANT EVENT IN SPANISH INTELLECTUAL history in the period 1876-1936 was the emergence and activity of the Free Institution for Education (FIE) (Institución Libre de Enseñanza -ILE). The objective of its founders was to bring about the renewal of Spanish society through the education of the select few; the university was to play an important role in that project.

Francisco Giner de los Ríos was the life and soul of the FIE. Neither he nor any of his immediate followers cultivated the art of autobiography. Alberto Jiménez Fraud stands out among them in this regard. Although he was not among the first of those to commit to the project of renewal, he held a privileged position in the cause: he married the daughter of Manuel Bartolomé Cossío, Giner's closest co-worker, and was director of the Student Residence (Residencia de Estudiantes) between 1910 and 1936. This centre, whose centenary will be celebrated in 2010, was one of the most significant initiatives undertaken by the FIE as part of its planned renewal of the Spanish university system.

Alberto Jiménez Fraud's writings are littered with references to the Student Residence and the Free Institution for Education, to which his commitment was vocational and enduring. His first writings comprise a fascinating trilogy about the Spanish university sector; they draw on his teaching work at MacColl Chair in the University of Cambridge (1936-1937), and were published by the Colegio de México. The trilogy is as follows: *La ciudad del estudio: la universidad española medieval* (1944) (City of Study: the medieval Spanish university), *Selección y reforma: ensayo sobre la universidad renacentista española* (1944) (Selection and Reform: an essay on the Renaissance Spanish university) and *Ocaso y restauración: ensayo sobre la universidad española moderna* (1948) (Decline and Restoration: an essay on the modern Spanish

university).¹ A literary essay, *Juan Valera y la generación de 1868* (Juan Valera and the 1868 Generation), likewise based on lectures given at Cambridge, appeared in 1956. Following his death in Geneva in 1964, Fraud's uncollected writings were published in two volumes: *Residentes. Semblanzas y recuerdos* (Residents: Portraits and Memories) and *La Residencia de Estudiantes. Visita a Maquiavelo* (The Student Residence: Visiting Machiavelli). The first focuses on the residents and the illustrious guests at the centre during the inter-war period. The second is a more straightforward text in honour of the Student Residence itself on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary, comprising a chapter from *Decline and Restoration* and a short essay entitled *Visiting Machiavelli*. The latter recounts a meeting between two exiles; although the sorrow of its author in the last years of his life may be traced therein, it is not a purely autobiographical account.

The Student Residence, the mission of the Free Institution for Education, a firm belief in the ongoing validity of its liberal ideals concerning the education of the select few, and deference to those as the solution to Spain's problems are defining characteristics of Alberto Jiménez Fraud's writings. They are recurring themes in his work. The conclusion he drew was unchanging: the need to return to individual, romantic, idealistic and select liberalism as the framing law of life – that is, the liberalism that first emerged in Spain in the mid-nineteenth century through readings of the philosophy of Krause (Jiménez Fraud, 1956:16-25).

The only effect that the violent end to his life's work had on Fraud's ideas was to reaffirm them. First, the outbreak of the Civil War in Spain plunged the very people whom Fraud sought to renew into a bloodbath; it put his own life in danger and brought the work of the Student Residence to an end. Later, the Franco regime sought to attribute intellectual responsibility for

¹ The three books were later published in a single volume: Jiménez Fraud, Alberto (1971), *Historia de la universidad española* (A History of the Spanish University). Madrid. Alianza Editorial. Quotations in the text come from this edition.

the slaughter to the Free Institution for Education. A reading of Alberto Jiménez Fraud's work in autobiographical terms discloses the internal dilemmas this situation caused.

*1. The Free Education Institution
and the Intellectual Renewal of Spain (1876-1936)*

Julián Sanz del Río, a professor at the Universidad Central in Madrid, was awarded a scholarship to study abroad in 1843. He came into contact with the philosophical reflections of Krause at the University of Heidelberg. Krause was a relatively minor German philosopher in the idealist tradition. Sanz del Río returned to Spain and went on to devote his life to the study and further publication of Krause's ideas. In 1860, he translated Krause's two most important works – *System of Philosophy* and *The Ideal of Humanity* – into Spanish. The second book had a significant influence on the generations of students at university between 1860 and 1870, and became a touchstone by which reformers and conservatives might be distinguished from one another. The argument in *The Ideal of Humanity* holds that any conflict between State and society be resolved in favour of the latter; the State is to evolve away from absolutism and towards a greater dependence on the societies that emerge within it. The adaptation of life to science and art lay at the heart of the wellbeing and future of humanity; religion was a philanthropic and humanitarian bond, stripped of any transcendent meaning. The vision of life reflected in *The Ideal of Humanity* was incompatible with Catholic doctrine: the book was condemned in 1865 (Cacho, 1962:61, 72, 74-75, and 88-95).

The government attempted to do away with the Krause school of thought in 1867. Those involved were accused of holding positions that were in open conflict with Catholic faith and morals. Legal proceedings were taken against Julián Sanz del Río, Fernando de Castro, Nicolás Salmerón and Francisco Giner de los Ríos. However, the liberal Revolution of 1868 cut those mea-

suers short and turned the situation on its head: the accused were returned to their university posts and appointed to high-ranking leadership positions, and a process of change in line with the principles articulated by Krause began (VV.AA., 1965:16-21).

Nevertheless, the experiment was not an unqualified success. A few short years later – in 1875 – the young people the university professors had endeavoured to educate accepted the end of the Revolution and the restoration of the Bourbons without qualm. The ‘university question’ arose once more on 26th February, 1875, when compulsory ministerial approval of textbooks and course curricula was established. Nothing that might prejudice Catholic dogma, public morals or the monarchy could be included in classes or textbooks. Giner, Salmerón and Azcárate protested; they were deprived of their teaching posts and placed under arrest (VV.AA., 1965:9-12). This event prompted the foundation of the Free Education Institution (1876), led by the three professors listed above, along with a number of other liberal intellectuals and politicians. Although their aim was to set up a private university, they lacked the material means and human resources to do so. Thus, they set up a college instead.

Francisco Giner de los Ríos was the driving-force behind the Free Institution for Education. A young man – 29 years old – when the 1868 Revolution took place, he was fired by the hope that his generation might be able to transform Spain. His disappointment at his contemporaries’ unqualified acceptance of the counter-revolution may be easily imagined. The conclusion he drew from this experience was that education alone could renew Spain. Hence, convinced that his own – 1868 – generation had failed in this endeavour because of the terribly inadequate education they had received, he devoted himself to the education of the next generation (Castillejo, 1976:79-87; Cacho, 1962:236-238).

The Free Institution for Education project centred on the refinement of character and moral education: to shape strong, individual personalities. The presiding principles at the FIE were tolerance and fairness. Good manners were defined as a combina-

Culturales

tion of freedom, dignity and grace – an indispensable framework for social interaction and mutual respect. The emergence of a “spiritual” aristocracy was the guiding goal of this educational project. With regard to religion, the aim was to give rise to refined minds, independent of any particular religious creed (Castillejo, 1976:87). The influence of the Institution soon spread beyond the confines of the private college. Francisco Giner de los Rios regained his university chair in 1882. From that point onwards, he drew a group of followers to himself, whose role was to spread the ideals of the Institution to other Spanish universities. Moreover, a “spiritual” community of a sort emerged among students, former students, family and friends of the college, which contributed to the bearing the FIE had on Spanish society (Manguini, 2001:72; De la Fuente, 1978:43-50).

The educational ideals of the Institution and the ethos prevalent in the Spanish university system had very little in common. At that time, Spanish universities lacked any research capability, as well as basic means and facilities such as books, laboratories and meeting rooms. The activity of university professors was limited to the deliver of lectures. More than half of all university students were registered externally, so as to complete their third-level education as quickly as possible. Attendance at class was regarded as having little or no value. According to Francisco Giner, the Spanish university student was a young man who frequented theatres, cafes, casinos and bullrings; he knew nothing of sports, excursions or life in the countryside; he read little, and what reading there may have been was confined to newspapers; he lived in poor lodgings and ate badly – in part out of a sense of moderation, and in part due to a general backwardness (Castillejo, 1976:94; Giner, 1916:52). There were no student residences or university halls, or communal life of any sort. University qualifications were regarded as nothing more than a passport to a better professional career.

At the turn of the twentieth century, Giner’s followers set out to lead and guide the renewal of the education provided by the

State. The FIE was to be a model centre in this regard, the heart of national education policy. The freedom afforded by university posts and freedom of conscience were the fundamental principles of the renewal project. The implementation of the project consisted of the administrative reorganization of education along secular lines (Pego: 2006:65-66, and 71-72). From 1907 onwards, a series of corps emerged within the State's educational apparatus under the auspices of the FIE: in 1907, the Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas (Academic Study and Research Expansion Committee); in 1909, the Escuela Superior del Magisterio (Higher School of Teaching); in 1910, the Centro de Estudios Históricos (Centre for Historical Study), and the Instituto de Investigaciones Físicas (Physics Research Institute); in 1911, the Student Residence and the Dirección General de Enseñanza Primaria (General Committee for Primary Education); in 1915, the Residencia de Señoritas (Student Residence for Women); and in 1918, the Instituto-Escuela.

During its thirty-year lifespan, the Academic Study and Research Expansion Committee enabled 1,594 Spanish people – men and women – to study and work at research centres overseas. In addition, the Committee set up research organizations in Spain so that they could continue working on their return. The endeavour was inspired by the Free Institution for Education, but it was also a practical response to a widespread national concern: the need to remedy the complacency in the Spanish university system (De Zulueta, 1984:190-195; Pérez-Villanueva, 1990:15; Laporta, 1987a:22; Laporta, 1987b:10-11). Alberto Jiménez Fraud's professional ambition was captivated by this ideal, and in 1911 he was appointed to the post of director of the Student Residence, an FIE initiative.

2. The Crowning Achievement of the Spanish University

Having left Spain in September 1936, Alberto Jiménez Fraud spent most of his life as an exile in the United Kingdom. A series of

Culturales

lectures given at Cambridge were to be the basis of his most significant written work: his trilogy on the Spanish university. Fraud's purpose in these writings was to invoke the authority of history to justify his life's work. Thus, to his mind, everything of value in the Spanish university system down through the centuries had only one legitimate heir: the Free Institution for Education. The first volume – *City of Study* – looks back to the thirteenth century and the establishment of the *Studia Generalia*. Jiménez Fraud identified the force and vitality of such centres with the moral impetus and aristocracy of the spirit that inspired the Free Education Institution, and went on to argue that the spiritual context in both periods – the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries – was remarkably similar:

If demand for education was one of the factors that gave rise to the emergence of these institutions, that the universities – like all original, powerful inventions – also owe their existence to the deep spiritual needs of the time should also be borne in mind; needs which prompted men to seek out knowledge that could satisfy their intellectual curiosity and respond to the pressure of an enthusiastic vitality [...] (Jiménez Fraud, 1971:11).

Hence, the Free Institution for Education was to be the crowning achievement of the history of the Spanish university. This idea may be more clearly discerned in the second volume of the trilogy – *Selection and Reform: an essay on the Renaissance Spanish university* – wherein Fraud discusses student residences in great detail. Fraud focuses on the St. Clement of Bologna University Hall, founded by Cardinal Gil de Albornoz of Spain in 1367, and whose democratic prerogative the Student Residence sought to emulate. Thereafter, Fraud considers St Bartholomew College in Salamanca, whose graduates – “men eminent in virtue, character and wisdom” – spread throughout the world (Jiménez Fraud, 1971:123). The College was known as the college “of the Seventeen” because that was the number of places it contained. In the beginning, too, those at the Student Residence referred to it as the “College of the Fifteen”, in homage to St Bartholomew College. The objective was the same: to seed Spanish society

with a select few of educated men capable of bringing about a project of social renewal. Following an overview of many other such Colleges in Spain and America, Jiménez Fraud drew the following conclusion with regard to the Student Residence as the last link in a long chain of great institutions:

[...] when they fulfilled their essential function, such College foundations enacted a transcendental mission: the education of a select, exemplary few who, by setting a standard for the university community as a whole, at the same time revitalized the studies in which they were engaged. If the university is to reach the level which is its natural due, such institutions are absolutely indispensable to university life. Only if the idea of the university connotes a belief in the existence of these spiritual values [...] these collegiate university institutions which, on the basis of a shared residential life, have arisen in Spanish society at times of national enthusiasm – in the past and in the present – are required [...]" (Jiménez Fraud, 1971:133-134).

The pressing need to establish residential centres for university students had always been of significant concern to the founders of the FIE. Thus, the Student Residence was modelled on a combination of the classical Spanish college and the English tutorial system established at Oxford and Cambridge, an innovative synthesis of native elements and foreign influence. The impetus of the Student Residence was educational, rather than merely instructional. The refinement of character and manners, politeness in personal dealings, a spirit of tolerance and mutual respect among students were its goals – in many ways, then, a very English project. The challenge was to educate a new model of the Spanish citizen, who might be a forerunner of a renewed society in his own country. For the promoters of the Residence, such men together would comprise a select few whose mission was to take on a leadership role in liberating Spain from its complacency (Pérez-Villanueva, 1990: 9-10, 18-20, 22-25, and 367-368). The Student Residence's similarity to the classical Spanish Colleges was marked by this sense of mission.

Culturales

In the third volume of the trilogy, *Decline and Restoration: an essay on the modern Spanish university*, published in 1948, Jiménez Fraud set out to establish the identification of the preceding, classical colleges and the Free Education Institution in a definitive way. According to Fraud, the FIE had succeeded in synthesising the best of the Medieval and Renaissance university tradition and the scientific spirit of the Enlightenment. This was the great and original project first proposed by Francisco Giner de los Ríos and the other reformers (Jiménez Fraud, 1971:219). The Enlightenment fomented the emergence of the experimental sciences and research in Medicine, Botany, Pharmacy, Natural History and Economics, which were carried out beyond the confines of the university. Public figures such as Charles III facilitated the introduction of such subjects to the university, re-founding the university institution as such. Jiménez Fraud saw these figures and measures as key points of reference for the Free Institution for Education. Indeed, of Jovellanos, one of the most celebrated of enlightenment figures, he remarked:

For Jovellanos, reform of the universities, the establishment of an Institute such as his own in Gijón in every province, would be enough to return Spain to a pre-eminent place among the cultured peoples. This firm belief in the value of education and the possibility of a gradual reform of old teaching institutions [...] exemplifies a confident hope that he saw as the prerogative of 'those who today obey' [the people]. [...]

The sensibility of this reformer from Asturias is markedly modern and is justified by history a century later. Other Spanish reformers (of whom a shrewd, modern writer has described Jovellanos as, to a certain extent, a precursor) would have reacted no differently (Jiménez Fraud, 1971:288-289).

The final university touchstone for the Free Institution for Education was attributed by Jiménez Fraud to Julián Sanz del Río's engagement with the philosophy of Krause in 1857. Sanz del Río believed that the students and professors he saw around

him were to be “the soldiers and champions of the next reformation of the university”(Jiménez Fraud, 1971:330-331). The ambition of the founders of the FIE was to be such soldiers, such champions. Thus, about midway through the text, *Decline and Restoration* becomes peculiarly autobiographical: Jiménez Fraud shares his personal views of Francisco Giner and Manuel Bartolomé Cossío, before going on to give an account of his own life, which was wholly subsumed by the spirit of the Free Institution for Education and the Student Residence.

3. A Justification of the Select Few

Alberto Jiménez Fraud was born in Málaga on 6 February, 1883, the son of a businessman in the textile industry and a young Frenchwoman. His experience of university studies was typical of the time, as he himself recalled in *Decline and Restoration*:

When I look back on my time at university, I see a young man whose mind was intrigued by synthetic truths, and whose study of law was no more than a key to gain entry to a range of professions and State posts. Neither myself nor any of my classmates regarded university as anything other than a dispensary of official qualifications [...] (Jiménez Fraud, 1971:427-428).

As a young man, Fraud participated in cultural activities under the auspices of the Free Institution for Education, such as the Sociedad Malagueña de Ciencias Físicas y Naturales (Málaga Society of Physical and Natural Sciences), which was linked to the Orueta family, and through which he first made contact with Francisco Giner de los Ríos and decided to move to Madrid – in 1905, at the age of 22 – in order to do a doctorate in law (Jiménez Fraud, 1971:428-430). His experience of the Institution astounded him:

I learnt many things there that I had known nothing at all about. My three ‘institutional’ years were an unremitting stream of lectures,

Culturales

friendships, classes, conferences and excursions to the two Castile provinces (Jiménez Fraud, 1971:432).

Jiménez Fraud was appointed director of the Student Residence in 1911; its seat was a house on Fortuny Street in Madrid. After the necessary renovations had been carried out, the Residence comprised fifteen bedrooms, a dining room, a lounge and a study-hall. An anatomy laboratory with microscopes was set up in the basement. Jiménez Fraud committed himself fully to this new educational undertaking from the very first:

What the people of Spain needed more than a series of warnings was a bright North star by which to navigate, and clear paths to follow. The education of a conscious, loyal and well-informed leading class was a matter of great urgency. I felt this work to be fully my vocation, and committed myself to it wholeheartedly. One day, in my third or fourth year at the Residence, in response to some comments of mine he thought too zealous, a young conservative minister, a regular contributor [to Residence life], said to me: 'But do you really think *this* is Spain?' 'No,' I said with natural conviction. 'But it will be' – at which he stood looking at me in a pensive way (Jiménez Fraud, 1971:436).

The Student Residence moved to its definitive location in 1915 in Altos del Hipódromo. The new facility had rooms for over one hundred students and included modern laboratories. Over time, other initiatives promoted by the Academic Study and Research Expansion Committee were established there also, the complex eventually becoming a real “campus”: many people referred to it as the Oxford and Cambridge of Spain. A host of world-renowned figures, writers, scientists, explorers and artists spent time at the Student Residence, including Claudel, Valery, Mauriac, Pardo Bazán, Duhamel, Frobenius, Valle-Inclán, Max Jacob, H. G. Wells, Maynard Keynes, Cendrars, Martín du Gard, Nicolai, Pellito, Starkie, Hackin, Elliot Smith, Iorga, Benda, Nelson, Marinetti, Worringer, Maeztu, Moles, Drinkwater, Pitard, Antonio Machado, Piaget, Obermaier, Berthélemy, Calder,

Chesterton, Carter and Madame Curie. At one time or another, Juan Ramón Jiménez, Salvador Dalí, Luis Buñuel, Moreno Villa, Rafael Alberti and Federico García Lorca were residents there. Eugenio d'Ors and Miguel de Unamuno also lived at the Student Residence. Severo Ochoa, a Nobel Prize winner in 1959, first trained in its laboratories. Led by the Duke of Alba, and through the Hispanic-English Committee set up at the Student Residence, there was a lively tradition of cultural exchange with England.

The inauguration of the Second Republic in 1931 was seen by many as the definitive dawn of the free development of the Institution's ideas. The realisation of its project through state corps and among the people was felt to be imminent. However, as José Ortega y Gasset shrewdly noted, the Second Republic was not the era of the select few; rather, it was the era of the masses. At the outbreak of the Civil War in 1936, the Student Residence felt the heat of proletarian anger. From the very beginning, in Republican Spain, the war was shadowed by a popular revolution: authority was in the hands of every armed individual, not in any institution. In Jiménez Fraud's words, the Student Residence was "abandoned by the talents that had inspired it, left in melancholy contemplation of earlier times" (Jiménez Fraud, 1971:478). Fraud gives no further details of the Residence's bitter end.² Perhaps to remember at all was too painful, or perhaps there was still some slim hope of a future return: when Jiménez Fraud was writing *Decline and Restoration* – between 1944 and 1947 – the fall of the Franco regime was still within the bounds of the imaginable.

² However, further information may be gleaned from other sources; for example, the testimony of José Moreno Villa: "To ensure that unruly elements would not seize control of the Residence someone succeeded in establishing a primary school for poor children and orphans on the premises. Its destruction and uncertain fate may be dated from this point. At the same time, a number of friends to the institution who feared for their lives took refuge there: Ortega y Gasset was one, and Professor Ramón Prieto, who had been under-secretary to Lerroux. They wanted to drag Prieto out to kill him, but he succeeded in escaping [...]. The situation in and around the house became stranger and more violent all the time. The primary school closed down, to be replaced by a motorised division that could barely have protected us from any criminal attack. We heard the sound of shots being fired nearby every night" (VV.AA., 1984:160).

Culturales

An attempt to respond to the criticism repeatedly made against the FIE and the organizations established through it is framed in the final pages of the text: “The purpose of the Residence was to educate a class of leaders. It failed in this effort” (Jiménez Fraud, 1971:479). These words, spoken by a friend, prompted Jiménez Fraud to try to justify the meaning of his intellectual principles and his life’s work, a response that involved a return to the origin: the liberal romantic ideology that had arisen in Germany, was indebted to Krause’s thought, and underlay the ideas of the Free Institution for Education.

The author of *Decline and Restoration* held that reference to “a class of leaders [...] meant to many the rejection of any form of egalitarian education.” Hence, this select few would be set apart from the common people, and have no influence on the masses. Nevertheless, he argued, “the historical school has rendered instinctive and spontaneous national forms, the soul of the people, infallible”. Moreover, nineteenth-century Romanticism “has raised the passive masses to a higher dignity”. So, he concluded:

Historicists and romantics have obliged the masses and the select few to work together: the latter through reflexive action, the former through spontaneous activity – the people generating rules of behaviour at the heart of the masses and moving them to the surface so that they may be engaged by the reflexive action of the select few. Nowadays, therefore, the select few cannot be regarded as anything other than the reflexive moment of the soul of the community (Jiménez Fraud, 1971:481-482).

A reading of *Juan Valera and the 1868 Generation* (1956) also discloses this consuming desire to justify such dedication to the education of the select few. The book drew on the MacColl Chair lectures given at Cambridge in 1953–1954; it is a literary essay providing an overview of great Spanish writers preceding Valera, on whom the text then focuses in some detail. Fraud presents these great Spanish writers as forerunners in the reforming and educational project of the Free Institution for Education. Thus, of Cervantes and the *Quijote* he wrote:

Autobiographical Writings of Alberto Jiménez Fraud

Cervantes's impetus is restoration. But a distinctive restoration, not a rehabilitation of the old noble class [...] the restoration of values unchanging throughout history, forced to adopt new appearances adequate to the purposes of a future noble class capable of imposing and defending them. Hence, every reference to the archaic in *Don Quijote* is comic [...] whereas references to the future in *Don Quijote*, to a new faith in a time to come when the eternal ideals of human goodness and justice will be striven for once more, are tragic – tragic and creative. [...]. The character created by Cervantes is so fully contained within the personality of its creator (no creator is inferior to his creation) that the author is unaware that he is finding a solution to the problem that plagued the dawn of the modern era and continues to trouble the contemporary world: how to create a new type of knight who can inspire the love and loyalty of the masses" (Jiménez Fraud, 1956: 37).

Juan Valera is likewise invoked as a literary model for the purposes of the Free Education Institution:

[...] the reader may observe [...] in his works as a whole that Valera is in search of a golden mean [...] which [...] can only be provided by the limited progress that reasonable men may bring about [...]. The definitive guarantee of the wellbeing and progress of a people is to be found, therefore, in the most reasonable individual members of the community. It should come as no surprise that, in studying 'the problem of Spain', Valera holds that the country's main handicap lies in the deficiency in its class of leaders, the collective spirit and the sense of public duty, two virtues without which no group or party may resist the anarchic impulse of the masses" (Jiménez Fraud, 1956: 103-104).

4. Conclusion: The Eternal Return to Liberalism

Alberto Jiménez Fraud went to the University of Oxford at the invitation of Professor W. J. Entwistle. Between 1950 and 1957, he produced a range of different writings, including portraits of illustrious figures and newspaper articles, mostly with a Hispano-American readership in mind. Many of these texts were collected

Culturales

posthumously and published in a volume entitled *Residents: Portraits and Memories*. As is made plain in the prologue, the Student Residence is the framing principle of the book, its overarching theme, a constant, even dramatic, concern. Sorrow at this lost enterprise, and at a silent and distant homeland, can be read between every line (Jiménez Fraud, 1989:9-10). Nevertheless, Fraud's commitment to his ideals remained intact because, to his mind, the 'problem of Spain' continued to be "the education of select few capable of adhering to the living moral sense of the Spanish people, and of making its originality and power fruitful" (Jiménez Fraud, 1989:91).

Fraud was aware that to speak of a reform movement acting from the top down, in line with the liberal idea that "only the chosen few are to work towards the perfection of humanity", would prompt suspicion in the mid-twentieth century. For Fraud, however, given that their existence and justification were wholly dependent on sharing their faith with the people, such privileged minorities should not live apart from the masses:

In times of profound crisis and change, catastrophe is caused by the divorce between enlightened humanists disdainful of the ignorant public and the masses clinging to their faith in moral truth. The catastrophe cannot be prevented by the intelligence and tolerance of the humanists because such crises call for the restoration of a code of moral honour (of what is good and what is bad) without which human society is demeaned and falls apart (Jiménez Fraud, 1989:92).

According to Fraud, Giner's group had broken free of this limitation; its enthusiasm for intellectual progress was justified solely as a "service to the organic life of the community". These men recognised that "[to break] with the masses would precipitate [...] bloodshed and bestial behaviour" (Jiménez Fraud, 1989:93). These words, written in 1950, shortly after a Civil War that showed the error of the ways they describe, could only cause surprise. Like many of his contemporaries, perhaps, Fraud was unable to acknowledge the fact that Western liberalism was dead: the historical moment of the masses had come, and they had refused to be guided by the select few.

Autobiographical Writings of Alberto Jiménez Fraud

Of all the illustrious figures who passed through the halls of the Student Residence, the only keepsake to survive the Civil War was the autograph album of a young girl, Natalia Jiménez. Leafing through its pages, her father was reminded of many distinguished people. On 10 June 1930, Lord Keynes had written: “To Natalia, to let you know that the Colleges are the greatest thing in the world: thus does the creative nucleus of all that is most noble and desirable in civilization live” (Jiménez Fraud, 1989:32). This entry is preceded and followed by dedications from other residents and visitors: Max Aub, Chesterton, Juan Ramón Jiménez, Federico García Lorca, Salvador Dalí, François Mauriac, Marinetti, Andrés Segovia; Howard Carter, the archaeologist; the architects, Le Corbusier and Gropius; Nobel Prize Winner, Madame Curie; H.G. Wells, Calder, Manuel de Falla and many more (VV. AA., 1984:107-161). The album may be read as a symbol of the reforming enterprise as a whole:

Max Jacob is responsible for the existence of this album. When he first came to the house, in 1926, and got to know my little girl, who was four years old at the time, Max Jacob insisted that it was simply unbelievable that a girl of her age would not already have an album. And since his words appeared to have no effect, he brought the album to the house, filling in the first page himself [...]. Time passed and my daughter was with her parents in the Residence when the civil war broke out. A month later, we sent her – alone – to Alicante, where an English ship was to bring her to France. [...] My daughter travelled very light: a small suitcase in one hand, the album in the other (Jiménez Fraud, 1989:32).

In 1960, the fiftieth anniversary of the Student Residence, Alberto Jiménez Fraud’s convictions remained relatively unchanged. The text he wrote to mark the occasion contains a mild admission of failure, although it closes with an assertion that the line to be followed in the future is the same as always:

If our project cannot be accused of a lack of intensity, it may have lacked range: the absence of a widespread national base cut our work

Culturales

short – that is, deprived it of an essential element of growth. What happened twenty three years ago, when the project had only been in existence for twenty seven short years. Cut short, then, but awaiting better days (Jiménez Fraud, 1972:83-84).

What the future brought however was the 1968 ‘rebellion’ and the categorical rejection of a ‘select’ vision of the world: each individual laid claim to his or her own autonomy, independent of anyone or anything. The slightest possibility of a norm, a ‘moral truth’, proposed by others in any way was to be simply inconceivable in the postmodern era – even if such a rule were to be nothing more than a “liberal emotion” that deferred to no “absolute principles”, which pointed only to “the human needs of freedom and of reason” (Jiménez Fraud, 1972:84) as a norm of behaviour, as Jiménez Fraud himself had done.

Fraud never yielded in his convictions. In his last book, *Visiting Machiavelli*, he reflected on the use of force by the State. In light of the horrendous experience of the world wars and totalitarian systems, the degradation brought about by such violence and disorder, he argued that the way forward continued to be as follows:

[...] we set aside the highest instincts of harmony and order that our conscience may countenance, [...] seek out, seek protection in all those norms whose universal validity is attested to by the values of culture and enlightenment that man has historically discovered. In so far as they are part of our sensibility as civilized beings, they require only our obedience, and no justification whatsoever (Jiménez Fraud, 1972:249).

Jiménez Fraud’s arguments and proposals differ little from those advanced by many of his contemporaries. The trauma of World War I – twenty million victims, half of them dead – caused a profound crisis. The general belief in the human being’s dominion in the world through reason, science and technology was in tatters. The liberal view of the world as clear, precise, exact, ordered and promising was unimaginable. Among those who saw what was happening and proposed new perspectives were the

Autobiographical Writings of Alberto Jiménez Fraud

following: Paul Valery, Chesterton, Malraux, Kafka, Spengler, Ortega, Toynbee, Dawson, Scheller, Hartmann, Husserl, Heidegger, Mann, Proust, Huxley, Eliot, and Maritain – many of whom had spent time in the Student Residence during the 1920s and 1930s, or had had some form of intellectual contact with the Free Institution for Education. Their proposed responses to the crisis were diverse in kind and content, but they had one element in common: a return to a governing norm of human life capable of saving the best in Western culture. Like Fraud, these men set out high standards and values of behaviour, but were unable to communicate the norms of the noble man to the masses on the rise throughout the world: this was the tragedy of all.

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Culturales

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