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Chapter 5

Pageants, Popularity Contests, and Spanish Identities in 1920s New York

Brian D. Bunk

In April 1925 over 1,000 people from all over New York City came to Hunts Point Palace in the Bronx to attend a grand festival hosted by the Galicia Sporting Club. Revelers enjoyed the music of three different bands, competed in dance contests, and perused the 120-page program. One of the evening’s most anticipated events was the crowning of the “Queen of Beauty,” a title that was sure to be “tenaciously contested” by girls and young women of Spanish descent from the United States, Spain, and other countries. The Queen would receive a number of prizes including a crown, pearls, and a perfume case. At 10:30 p.m. the procession of candidates began, and afterwards the winner was proclaimed: an eleven-year-old girl named Mercedes Anca.¹

The young Queen had been born in New York City to Spanish immigrant parents who lived in Greenwich Village, one of several peninsular enclaves in the metropolitan area. During the 1920s numerous Spanish societies such as Galicia Sporting Club thrived in the city, and many families from Spain, including the Ancas, were closely involved with these associations. The organizations, many linked to particular regions of Spain, provided a variety of services for

families and played a significant role in organizing the social and cultural lives of the community. The groups offered mutual aid benefits, built clubhouses, and hosted exhibits of art and literature. The social lives of people of all ages and genders revolved around these centers and the events they sponsored, especially dances, picnics, and soccer games. The societies created spaces for Spanish New Yorkers to move between the social and cultural traditions and practices of both the Old and New Worlds.

The recreational opportunities provided by the clubs were especially important to young female members of the community, since many parents adhered to traditional gender proscriptions and thus limited their daughters' participation in activities outside of the home. As researchers Loretta Baldassar and Donna Gabaccia have argued, events sponsored by voluntary associations should not be seen exclusively as public activities but instead occurred in areas where the domestic and the public combined to create "intermediate spaces."² The activities taking place within this intermediate space often involved or resembled domestic rituals, the "purposive and expressive ceremonialized performances" marking important life events such as births, deaths, and marriages.³ Rituals such as these allowed participants to express continued membership in a traditional community while at the same time acknowledging the changing nature of that community. As a result, the intermediate spaces "become arenas of contestation about wider issues: power, status and boundaries of 'community,' history and identity."⁴ The cultural rituals performed at dances and other events reflected the ways that Spanish immigrants used these public/private gatherings not only to reinforce old customs but also to establish new ones. The belief that a woman's proper role centered almost exclusively on the household sat at the heart of widening circles of affiliation ranging from the domestic to the international. For many, a subnational regional heritage based on place of origin within Spain remained a primary

characteristic. Others celebrated a Spanish national identity, while many young people came to embrace new American traditions. Finally, during the 1920s, as the population of nonpeninsular Spanish speakers increased, the concept of a transnational cultural identity known as *hispano* received widespread attention. It was the notion of a hispano identity that ultimately proved the most elusive to Spanish New Yorkers. Defined not so much as a biological concept, the word instead invoked the shared heritage, language, and culture between people from Spain and Latin America. Fear over the loss of their unique cultural background as a result of population changes, however, ultimately led Spaniards to cling more tightly to regional and national identities even as they espoused a more broadly inclusive one.⁵

In many ways the history of the Anca family was typical of Spanish immigrants to the United States in the first decades of the twentieth century. Juan Anca was born in La Coruña (Galicia, Spain) around 1880.⁶ While still in Spain he married Maria Antonio Diaz Vasquez (born c. 1879) around 1897, and their first daughter, Carmen, was born on January 4, 1899.⁷ At some point Juan traveled to Cuba—the length of his stay is unknown—before continuing on to the United States. His experience reflects a series of common decisions made by Galicians during the period. The region had long been one of Spain’s top producers of immigrants, and Cuba emerged as a leading destination during the early twentieth century as almost 750,000 Spaniards arrived between 1902 and 1925.⁸ Instead of settling in Cuba, like many of his countrymen, Anca sailed from Havana aboard the *S.S. Saratoga* and arrived in New York City on January 2, 1909. The ship’s passenger list cites his occupation as clerk and indicates that he was literate.⁹ His wife and daughter joined him in the city four years later. They had sailed from Spain to Liverpool, England, before arriving in the United States on February 20, 1913, aboard the *S.S. Celtic*. A second daughter, Mercedes, was born in New York City on December 10,

1913, and by 1915 the family was living at 353 West Eleventh Street in Greenwich Village (see figure 5.1). Juan Anca worked in a variety of jobs over the next several years including as a clerk, building superintendent, and ice puller. The census records consistently list Maria's occupation as "none" indicating that she did not work outside the home.

[insert fig. 5.1]

Figure 5.1. Hudson river piers a few blocks south of the Anca residence at 353 West Eleventh Street in Greenwich Village. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Detroit Publishing Company Collection.

The neighborhood, along with areas of Brooklyn and Manhattan's Lower East Side, was one of several Spanish areas in the city, and originally its busy waterfront attracted a mostly transient, male population many from Galicia. The figures compiled by historian Caroline Ware for her 1935 study of the area show that 100 men and only 18 women of Spanish descent lived in the Village before 1910. By 1920 the total population of Spanish-born persons had reached 416 (113 of them women). The movement of families such as the Ancas to the neighborhood resulted in demographic and cultural shifts, as more American-born children helped to create mixed Spanish-American households.¹⁰ Despite the compact size of the colony, only about eight square blocks, the Village contained a variety of businesses and institutions catering to the Spanish population. At 82 Bank Street, for example, less than a quarter mile from the Ancas' home, was the Hotel Santa Lucía. Valentín Aguirre, one of New York's most prominent Spanish residents, owned the hotel and its associated restaurant called Jai-Alai. Aguirre, who grew up in the Basque country, left Spain to work the shipping routes between Europe, Latin America, and the United States when he was just ten years old.¹¹ By 1895 he had settled in New York and established a rooming house that was enormously popular with Basque immigrants, many of whom passed

through the city on to destinations in the American West. Later Aguirre opened the restaurant and an agency that sold tickets for everything from transatlantic voyages to boxing matches.¹²

Just a few more blocks east, a grand terracotta-clad building at 154 West Fourteenth Street housed the Spanish Consul's office, a bookstore, and the Banco de Lago.¹³ Spanish immigrant James (Jaime) V. Lago founded the state-certified private bank in 1917 (see figure 5.2). He also operated a ticketing agency, boardinghouse, and import business and even sold his own patent medicine. On July 3, 1928, just a day before many Spanish residents of New York attended holiday picnics, the state closed the bank citing "irregularities" in its records. As early as 1921 the accounts were in trouble, and eventually Lago admitted to changing a \$211 deposit from a Spanish bank into a \$200,000 one in order to mask the institution's growing indebtedness. He also pled guilty to accepting deposits while knowingly being insolvent and was sentenced to two years in prison. The bank catered to thousands of customers, including many who had invested much of their meager life savings with Lago. A petition filed by a handful of depositors a few days after the bank's closing listed some of the amounts at risk, ranging from a high of \$2,098 to a low of just \$85. Once the case was settled, former customers of the Lago Bank received only about 65 percent of their original funds.¹⁴

[insert fig. 5.2]

Figure 5.2. Showing 154 West Fourteenth Street. Designed by Herman Lee Meader and built in 1912, during the 1910s and 1920s the building was home to the Spanish Consul's office, a Spanish-language bookstore, and the various business interests of Jaime V. Lago, including the bank that closed in 1928. Image by Beyond my Ken, 2011. Wikipedia Commons.

In 1930, when the Spanish presence had declined somewhat, the Village was still home to seven pool rooms, six boardinghouses, three restaurants, three tailors, four barbers, three grocers, two pharmacies, and one speak-easy catering primarily to the Spanish-speaking community.¹⁵ A

Spanish Catholic church named Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe (Our Lady of Guadalupe) served the district, and several voluntary associations had been organized with many of them headquartered in the neighborhood. The oldest of these groups, the Spanish Benevolent Society La Nacional, founded in 1868, still exists today just north of Greenwich Village at 239 West Fourteenth Street. Eventually Spaniards in the United States, like those in other countries, established a number of different voluntary associations, mostly centered on the region of origin in Spain.¹⁶ These societies offered members various services including mutual aid, health care, and insurance. The organizations also sponsored recreational activities in the form of sports, dances, and picnics.

The decade of the 1920s saw a dramatic growth in the number of new organizations, and, within a few years, groups representing several different regions of Spain had appeared. Between 1923 and 1926, for example, supporters from Cataluña, Asturias, Galicia, and Cantabria founded new soccer clubs.¹⁷ The growth of these associations was likely associated with the large numbers of immigrants who had arrived in the previous decade. Between 1911 and 1920, nearly 70,000 Spaniards came to the United States, many of them settling in New York.¹⁸ The Anca family became closely involved with two regional groups: Galicia Sporting Club and the Casa de Galicia. The impetus for the creation of a new organization centered on Galician origin began as early as 1922. According to press reports many immigrants from Galicia felt the universal Spanish associations did little to protect or promote their interests.¹⁹ A year later the athletic club had been organized, and Juan Anca served on the commission that helped form the Casa de Galicia in 1925. Originally both groups were located in Greenwich Village at 108 West Fourteenth Street, but in 1927 they purchased and renovated a building at 109–111 East Fifteenth Street for \$125,000 (about \$1.57 million today).²⁰

Although the voluntary organizations served a number of different functions, one of the most important was to organize what historian Lizabeth Cohen has called “ethnically based leisure.”²¹ Likely, Spanish New Yorkers experienced the same fears as the immigrant groups Cohen studied in Chicago, namely, that the near closure of the United States to new arrivals, combined with the pernicious effects of American popular culture, spelled the end of their native traditions. Spanish New Yorkers also faced an additional challenge as large numbers of nonpeninsular migrants arrived in the city during the 1920s. Estimates indicate that the Spanish-speaking population of New York City more than doubled between 1920 and 1930 despite the limitations placed on arrivals from Spain. As a result, the nature of Spanish culture in the city was changing from one dominated by Spaniards to one more closely associated with Puerto Ricans.²² Immigrants from Spain, like those from other nations, responded by attempting to strengthen the voluntary associations they believed were crucial to preserving traditional identities. In that same decade many organizations began to increase efforts designed to involve women and young people in the groups.²³ The opening of a social center such as the Casa de Galicia seemed a perfect way to organize and direct efforts aimed at preserving and encouraging a sense of both regional and national identity.

The physical space of the Casa de Galicia’s headquarters served as both a tangible expression of community identities and as a site for individuals and groups to perform those identities. The Spanish daily *La Prensa* ran a long front-page story describing the opening of the new center in July 1928. The building, fixtures, and decoration symbolically aimed to support both a Galician regional identity and a Spanish national one. Two lights of “pure Spanish style” with the name Casa de Galicia etched in the glass lit the façade. On the night of the opening, club officials planned to have special electric lights paint the building in the colors of the Spanish

flag. Another Spanish-style lamp hung suspended from the ceiling above the long marble staircase to the interior. After passing by tapestries embroidered with Spain's coat of arms, visitors moved into the vestibule where lamps designed in a manner typical of Seville illuminated the space. The basement housed a restaurant and bar as well as a gymnasium complete with changing rooms and showers. The first floor contained a number of areas including office space and meeting rooms. A library displaying the soccer team's trophies and a ladies lounge were on the second level while the top floor held office space for the club, medical facilities, and a photography studio. At the heart of the building were two great open salons, each festooned with regional and national symbols. Medallions depicting the crests of the four Galician provinces adorned the main floor room, and velvet curtains featuring the crest of the region itself covered its windows. In the second-level hall gold-framed paintings depicting the family emblems of Christopher Columbus and other notable Spanish families lined the fifty-foot-long space. The first floor room was named for Concepción Arenal, a nineteenth-century writer and social reformer from Galicia, and the large space on the second floor honored another Galician woman, the poet Rosalía de Castro.²⁴ The naming of the main gathering areas of the building confirms the notion of them as intermediate spaces between public and private. It was in these rooms, named for distinguished daughters of Galicia, where rituals such as banquets, receptions, and dances took place.

A dance card from an event held at the Casa de Galicia around 1929, much like the decorated space of the building, demonstrates the multiplicity of identities on display. Printed on the small booklet was a poem celebrating the Galicians' love for their homeland. The card also reveals the importance of other identities: of the fifteen dances played, six were classified as Spanish, six as American, and three as both Spanish and American.²⁵ The circumstances of the

dance, such as the location, the poem on the card, and much of the music aimed at perpetuating a sense of Galician and Spanish identity. The inclusion of American songs, however, introduced an element of broader mass culture into the seemingly controlled world of the Casa de Galicia and at least offered the possibility of nontraditional identifications, especially for young people. Evidence suggested a growing distance between generations as many institutions, the neighborhood church, for example, no longer resonated with youths because these institutions had become too closely associated with their parents' culture. Although the Catholic Church did not generally play as central a role in the community as it did in Spain, Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe did function as a place for women to participate in activities outside the home. The adults also tended to cling to heritage traditions, especially regarding language and food, while resisting assimilation into broader American culture. In part this distance was also a result of the children's involvement with influences outside of the Spanish colony. Education, for example, reinforced the growing cultural divide between adults and young people because, as Caroline Ware explained, "the school experience of these children had no continuity with their cultural past or with that of their families."²⁶ Ware's researcher conducted a series of interviews with Spanish residents of the Village that generated detailed information about the attitudes and practices of immigrant families. Researchers only administered a handful of surveys to young people, and all of them were given to women between the ages of fifteen and eighteen—the same age as Mercedes Anca in 1929.²⁷

The questions reveal important details about what practices researchers considered to be important markers of the ways people identified with a particular national heritage. The surveys given to Spanish residents of the Village asked whether the respondent ate and enjoyed Spanish and/or American food. In this context, the answers given could be seen to reflect the

respondents' degree of cultural assimilation. The results showed that unlike the vast majority of the adults, the young women, all born in the United States, enjoyed both Spanish and American food. In some ways, the findings illustrate the ongoing process of Americanization that took place as the respondents became exposed to traditions and practices outside the Spanish colony. Nevertheless, the process of total cultural change had not been completed, and many also retained a sense of Spanish heritage. While the majority answered yes or "I am" to the question "do you wish to become Americanized?" some also expressed a desire to return to Spain, even though they had grown up outside of it. One fifteen-year-old, whose answers were called "typical" of Spanish girls born in the United States, declared herself to be totally Americanized but to enjoy and eat both types of food. She also answered yes to the question "Are you planning to return to your country?"²⁸ Although only a small sample, the results of the survey point to the development of an array of traditions and identities existing simultaneously: Galician-Spanish-American.²⁹

Exposure to American schools, music, and food was not the only way that young people became integrated into the broader mass culture outside the Spanish colony. Images of Spain had achieved widespread popularity and permeated many aspects of American popular culture during the 1920s, including art, music, and fashion. For the children of immigrants the images appearing in magazines, newspapers, and advertisements displayed a limited vision of their parents' homeland. The vogue for Spain began in the late nineteenth century as European and American writers and artists constructed an "Orientalized Spain" that was primitive, sensual, and erotic. Many of the works depicted the characters and cultural practices of Andalusia and involved gypsies, bullfighters, and flamenco dancers. Such imagery was distributed in a variety of forms such as advertising and film. Between 1921 and 1926, for example, Hollywood produced at least

eight major Spanish-themed pictures, many of them based on the work of writer Vicente Blasco Ibáñez. The movies featured some of the era's biggest stars, including Rudolph Valentino (1922, *Blood and Sand*; see figure 5.3), Pola Negri (1921, *Gypsy Blood*; 1923, *The Spanish Dancer*), Mary Pickford (1923, *Rosita*) and Dorothy Gish (1923, *The Bright Shawl*).³⁰

[insert fig. 5.3].

Figure 5.3. Poster for the 1922 movie *Blood and Sand*. The film was one of several made during the 1920s, when Spanish-themed art and literature were popular within the United States. Wikipedia Commons.

How this external vision of Spain merged with representations from inside the Spanish colony can be shown in the response to the 1925 visit of Spanish painter Ignacio Zuloaga. Although he had exhibited in the United States before, his January show at the Reinhardt Galleries in New York was a sensation. The artist quickly became a high-society favorite, and the show proved equally popular, attracting some 75,000 visitors in less than three weeks.³¹ Within the Spanish colony Zuloaga's visit also generated a great deal of attention, especially from *La Prensa*. The newspaper ran a number of front-page stories chronicling the painter's many appearances and activities. The coverage culminated with the publication of large reproductions of six paintings from the exhibit along with an article describing many of the others.³² The popularity of Zuloaga both outside and inside the Spanish colony was partly a result of the style and subjects of his work. Art historian Leigh Roethke describes his paintings as "romanticized simplifications deliberately vague in time frame but realistic in execution." The canvases omit references to contemporary society and instead offer the viewer "nostalgic figures placed amid identifiable landscapes."³³

The paintings satisfied the needs of many upper- and middle-class Americans who longed for a vision of an exotic and slightly dangerous place removed from their ordinary lives. It also

reflected the carefully constructed, mostly idealized vision of a country many Spanish New Yorkers had either left behind or never seen at all. The decoration of the Casa de Galicia, for example, was focused on the region itself but also contained elements similar to those appearing in mainstream popular culture. The decision to name one of the central halls for Rosalía de Castro reflected the poet's tremendous popularity among Galician immigrants. Many of her poems, like Zuloaga's canvases, invoked nostalgic feelings for people or places now absent.³⁴ Nevertheless, the Andalusian lamps in the building's entryway, an upstairs lounge decorated in the style of Philip II and the paintings in the salon honoring aristocratic families all coincided with broadly popular themes including the culture of southern Spain and the nation's Golden Age of discovery and empire.³⁵

Another event showed how Spanish immigrants combined these stereotyped representations of Spain with depictions of their own regional customs. For second-generation Spanish Americans such imagery may have characterized much of their exposure to a broader Spanish culture outside the regional one of their parents. In March 1927 the Ancas attended a costume ball at the Manhattan Casino. By that time the family had grown, as the eldest daughter, Carmen, had married Juan Díaz in 1917. Díaz had come to the United States from Spain in 1907 when he was just seventeen years old. After the marriage the two continued to live in Greenwich Village, just a few doors down from Carmen's parents and sister. The couple had three children, all daughters: Electra was born on April 13, 1917, Maria came about five years later, and Iberia arrived in 1925. Although the Galician society hosted the dance, attendees came dressed in clothing representing a variety of regional and national traditions. Organizers gave prizes for the best costume in both adult and youth categories. While some of the clothing reflected the traditions of particular regions, others appeared almost like collages of elements taken from

popular images of Spain. Several people wore traditional Galician outfits, including one young woman who donned traditional wooden clogs, or *zuecas*. Mercedes Anca, daughter of Galician parents, appeared as a *maja*, customarily an image of lower-class women from Madrid. Another partygoer wore a *mantón de Manila*, the silk shawl often associated with southern Spain, as well as a *boina*, or beret typical of northern Spain.³⁶ While each outfit and item were not exclusive to those geographic regions, they all served as potent symbols of a generalized Spain, much like the people in Zuloaga's paintings.³⁷ Other outfits reflected an emphasis on Spanish national culture, including the prizewinning suit worn by young Electra Díaz. Her clothes were made in the colors of the Spanish flag and had a label pinned to the front reading *¡Viva España!* The identities expressed through the costumes, like the music played at previous dances, also included a nod toward a growing sense of Americanization. One couple arrived dressed as Spain and America, while another appeared as Charlie Chaplin and his wife Lita Gray.³⁸

The events sponsored by associations also demonstrate the ways participants used the intermediate spaces to enforce traditional gender roles and to control female sexuality, things they believed necessary for the preservation of other regional and national identities. Such notions fit the conclusions made by researchers who studied the Spanish population during this period. Caroline Ware described the community as strongly patriarchal and noted that marriages typically involved "the complete subordination of the woman." Parents often arranged unions for their children and tried to control the ethnicity of the partner. Some aimed to make certain that their daughters wed only other Spaniards.³⁹ A later investigation done for a proposed Work Projects Administration Writers' Project, "Spanish Book," claimed that after marriage women rarely appeared in public and that in some homes the wife was not allowed to sit with her husband at the same dinner table.⁴⁰

Other stories in *La Prensa* promoted the idea that uncontrolled women posed a threat to both the community and themselves. In early 1925, the daily published an article titled “The Madness of Jazz.” In it, the author argued that modern music caused young women to crave excitement and led them into lives outside traditional boundaries. Jazz encouraged behaviors inappropriate to women such as sexual promiscuity and violence. The solution, according to the author, was a reliance on Europe’s “many centuries of tradition” to help guide women away from poor choices.⁴¹ Another story published on the front page of *La Prensa* in spring 1926 concerned the disappearance of a young Puerto Rican woman named Regina Quiñones. Her father had contacted the paper to help locate her after she failed to return home after work. Eventually, she read about her family’s pleas in the newspaper and came back to the residence. Along with her parents’ worries about her personal safety, the incident revealed concerns over the increasing independence of young women. Quiñones already had a job outside the home, and the story reported that the reason she had left was so she could live on her own and enjoy more freedom. The newspaper indicated that the danger was not limited to economic autonomy but also involved questions over the control of her sexuality. Evidence of this struggle can be found in *La Prensa*’s declaration that in the neighborhood Quiñones was known for being “too beautiful.” The paper also took care to assure readers that while away from her parents she had been staying with a respectable American family, and the case did not involve a love affair or kidnapping as had been rumored.⁴² In many ways the events became a very public way of restoring parental authority and limiting the freedoms of a young working woman. By asserting her continued virtue, the author of the story also made known that by returning home she had also returned to her proper role and her proper culture.

The dances and pageants performed in Spanish New York during the 1920s show how the colony emphasized and argued particular roles for women. The staging of beauty and popularity contests in particular highlight the values of gender and morality important to a community, and the winner often represents the ideal form of these beliefs.⁴³ The tradition of selecting a queen had long been a feature of May festivals in Europe and the choice of winner could be made on a number of criteria including beauty, likeability, or status. Such activities reinforced community solidarity through shared participation in ritual celebration.⁴⁴ In the United States photographic newspaper contests had become popular by the late nineteenth century, and eventually live pageants were commonplace at beach resorts along the East Coast.⁴⁵ The growing belief that being beautiful was a woman's main goal led to the rapid commercialization of the beauty industry and an increased acceptance of such competitions. The first Miss America pageant, for example, took place in Atlantic City in 1921 and had only eight contestants, but just six years later there were seventy-five.⁴⁶ The developments also related to broader changes in attitudes toward young people, especially women. Fears associated with the growing liberty of youth grew especially intense during these years. For many, this advancing freedom had the potential to lead women into sexual promiscuity and to undermine the existing social order.⁴⁷ As a result, beauty pageants developed into rituals designed to harness and control the "immaterial powers" of young women. The awarding of a title linked the holder to the sponsoring institution and imposed a requirement that she properly represent the community and its values.⁴⁸

Two examples from the 1920s illustrate how competitions centered on beauty and/or popularity functioned to control both the emergent sexuality of girls and the extant but as yet latent potential of young women. The Queen of Beauty competition described at the start of this chapter demonstrated the way the community employed the public ritual of the beauty pageant in

order to establish appropriate roles even before a girl had reached marriageable age. The second contest, a newspaper pageant framed as a popularity contest, aimed to reorient the behavior of young women before they deviated too sharply from appropriate female norms.

As an American-born Spanish girl of Galician parents, Mercedes Anca embodied all of the gender, regional, and national traditions central to the community's sense of itself. The society organized the Queen of Beauty event so as to highlight each of these traditions in different ways, although with a particular emphasis on gender. Since the celebration was held in an intermediate space between the private and the public, it took on the characteristics of a domestic ritual. The ceremony crowning Anca closely resembled a wedding, and the ritual became representative of the bonds connecting the young woman to her broader community. Although too young to be truly married, Anca nonetheless was approaching an age where such a notion was not unrealistic. Given the uneven distribution of men and women in the Village's Spanish colony, competition for female partners was intense. Young women rarely made it to the end of their teens before marrying.⁴⁹ Carmen Díaz, Mercedes's sister, gave birth to her first child just a few months after her eighteenth birthday; she had become pregnant while still only seventeen years old.

The event began with a procession and ended with Anca on display at the center of the ritual surrounded by a "court of honor." Once named, a crown was placed on her head and she received a bouquet of flowers. Many of the gifts awarded to the queen seemed of the sort typically given to a woman by a suitor or spouse: jewelry, perfume, and other objects designed to enhance her physical appearance. As part of her winnings, Anca even earned a honeymoon-like two-week vacation at a Catskills resort called the Glenbrook Hotel.⁴⁰ The Queen of Beauty event also featured dancing with music played by three different orchestras. The selection of bands

reflected the multiple identities on display. A Galician ensemble called Os Novos Trinta allowed for the performance of traditional regional dances while La Regional Española played more widely popular Spanish music. Finally, guests jived to that most American of genres—jazz—thanks to the sounds of the Virginia Six.⁵¹

The symbolic joining of the girl to the community channeled her sexual potential into the service of the patriarchal family. Families needed to produce future generations so that the colony could survive. The belief by Spanish men that motherhood served as the foundation of all cultural tradition can be seen in a letter published by *La Prensa* in 1928. The note also confirmed the inherent power of women and explained why asserting control over procreation was deemed of such vital importance. The author, quoting from an article in the journal *Guide of Galicia*, illustrates how multiple layers of identity all traced back to women. A person's fundamental sense of community, he wrote, came from the mother, who, as the "sacred receptacle of our most pure endearments, is the heart of the *patria* from which radiate our affections for those others, the family, the neighborhood, the province, the region, the nationality . . . with diminishing intensity of feeling in relation to the distance [from the mother]".⁵²

Pageants contain an implicit transaction in which the community places responsibilities and constraints on female behavior in exchange for public recognition and sometimes a platform to speak. Such events generate symbolic inversions where the powerless are given a temporary authority usually denied them.⁵³ The granting of the royal title and other honors elevated Mercedes Anca into a figure of supposed authority. The process of symbolic inversion also played itself out in the physical space of the event hall. Socially important families of the community purchased box seats at the center of the ballroom. Such locations were reserved for those with enough wealth or prominence to afford them. *La Prensa* confirmed the group's status

by publishing the list of families seated in this prominent area, and the Ancas were not among them. Nevertheless, her election as Queen of Beauty allowed Mercedes Anca entry into this socially powerful territory. Following her coronation she was seated next to the president of the association in the box located at the very heart of the physical and social space. Being placed in the middle of the room also put Anca at the center of the community's attention. Her role carried with it some privilege but also put her in a position where the community could scrutinize and evaluate her actions. At another event in 1926, Anca had been tasked to distribute medals to the association's soccer team. Apparently, she had failed to properly do so the year before and as a result was publically chastised in the pages of *La Prensa*.⁵⁴ The incident reveals how even such ostensibly honorific titles carried with them an actual/physical responsibility to the larger community to uphold its values and expectations.

The Galicia Sporting Club was not the only organization to sponsor competitions reflecting the performance of various traditions and revealing how the community sought to impose control over women. One of the most visible events of the decade took place in the spring of 1926 and was co-sponsored by the Pro-Cuba Committee and *La Prensa*. The "Popularity Contest" featured working girls from different Spanish-speaking nations competing to be elected queen of the Festival of Flowers. The goal in this case was not to harness the emerging sexual potential of girls but rather to restrain young adult women who seemed in danger of pursuing lives that did not reflect traditional roles centered on domesticity. In this newspaper pageant all of the contestants worked outside the home, and many lacked a protecting male presence since they lived in homes with absent fathers and none admitted to having a boyfriend or spouse.⁵⁵

To enter *La Prensa*'s Popularity Contest, the young woman herself or a sponsor submitted information about the candidate's family, job, and personality traits. The initial call also asked for a photograph and indicated that the Pro-Cuba committee would contact the women to arrange a personal interview. The all-male committee members decided what candidates would be included in the competition, and it was announced that some applicants had been rejected for unspecified reasons. Each day during the month of April the newspaper published a ballot that readers could fill out with the name of a contestant before returning it to the paper. In a telling gesture, the paper felt it necessary to confirm that women could also cast ballots. The top vote getter of each nationality continued to the final round, where the woman with the highest total was crowned queen.⁵⁶ During the next few weeks *La Prensa* ran front-page profiles and photographs of most of the contestants as well as brief stories containing updates and information about the competition. According to the newspaper, the contest quickly became one of the most popular and talked-about events in the history of the Spanish-speaking colony. Such a claim may not be an exaggeration, since by the end of the competition readers of *La Prensa* had submitted just over 160,000 votes, a figure close to the total of the entire Spanish-speaking population of the city.⁵⁷ Ultimately, twenty-seven women participated in the general competition, and eight became finalists. Spain had the most candidates, with seven; followed by Puerto Rico, with four; and Mexico, with three. Other women came from Cuba, Colombia, Argentina, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic. The winner, Lilly Martínez, was Cuban and the runner-up, Pilar Fuentes, was Spanish.⁵⁸

The profiles and stories published in the newspaper contain important details about the candidates and their lives but also reflect the concerns and interests of the committee who selected them. In many ways the candidates seem to have been chosen to signify ideal types who

would have broad appeal. As in other forms of pageants, the contestants represented qualities the community prized and deemed most worthy of celebrating and preserving. Such values related directly to the contestant's physical appearance but also included personality traits and attitudes. In addition to representing their homeland in the contest, many of the young Spanish women embodied regional identities. The descriptions often praised them for their perceived faithfulness to certain regional characteristics. The paper called Leonor Menéndez y Díaz a "typical Asturian woman" and labeled Manuela Escariz authentically Galician. From Valencia, a region described as being famous for flowers, fruit, and gorgeous women came María Satorres, whom the paper characterized as "very young and much more beautiful than young."⁵⁹

In general, the profiles of the Spanish contestants were longer than those of other countries, and the only other contestant said to fully embody her nationality was Esther Gómez de la Vega from Argentina. This could represent a bias toward European contestants as Argentina, with its large immigrant Spanish and Italian population, was often considered the most European of the Latin American countries.⁶⁰ The contest seemed to reflect the way that Spanish societies negotiated institutions and activities that aimed to link all nationalities into a single Spanish-speaking community. Despite the growing imbalance in the population of peninsular immigrants and those from the Americas, Spanish groups sought to lead and control the unified organizations. The predominance of Spanish contestants and the attention given to them could also illustrate the latent tensions that existed between the peninsular community and those from Latin America. Despite references to an often racialized hispano identity, some members of the Spanish community increasingly came to view Puerto Ricans as nonwhite. Such attitudes often resolved themselves in the discriminatory behavior of some societies and helped prevent the formation of a single common social organization.⁶¹

Many of the descriptions invoked characteristics often linked to proper femininity, such as kindness, modesty, and likeability. At other times *La Prensa* praised a Cuban and Dominican contestant for being especially beautiful. Through participation in such a public competition the young unmarried women were transformed, not only into symbols of community values, but also into commodities themselves. In a sense the contest advertised the sexual availability of the women as the newspaper itself acknowledged by informing readers that if they desired to communicate with a candidate, they should send a request to the committee. At the same time the profiles stressed that though they were unattached, the women remained essentially chaste. A few declared that they did not wish to have a boyfriend or had stayed single because they had not yet met the ideal partner. One even reportedly gave a look of terror when asked if she had a boyfriend. Sometimes the stories emphasized that the women preferred the company of Spanish speakers or liked Americans only as friends.⁶² Such statements indicated that once married they would fulfill their obligation to preserve and perpetuate Spanish-speaking cultures and traditions.⁶³ In the case of Pilar Fuentes, from Salamanca, the descriptions linked a regional and ethnic authenticity to sexual wholesomeness. The paper described Fuentes as “an authentic Spanish girl” whose perfect husband would be of Spanish descent, and because of this attitude she “remained pure from her head to her feet.”⁶⁴

Some articles worked to connect the women to domesticity. The profiles of most candidates described their families including any siblings who were married or still at home. Candidates won praise for their helpfulness and diligence. Other stories subverted the impression of the women as leading lives in the public sphere. On May 4, 1926, for example, *La Prensa* contained an article describing an “intimate gathering” hosted by a widow. Young men and women gathered in honor of Lillian Soneira, who had been chosen to represent Mexico in the

final round of voting. The event brought the women together with men but in a culturally safe place. The home functioned as another intermediate space between the public and private. Since her mother and sister were also in attendance, the party reconnected Soneira with domesticity by locating the performance of national and gendered identities into a familial space.⁶⁵

The majority of candidates announced that dancing was one of their favorite pastimes. For many immigrant parents in the first half of the twentieth century, dancing represented a pernicious and dangerous force corrupting modern youth. Historian Sarah Chinn argues that the combination of economic independence, delayed marriage, and the rapidly expanding commercial amusement industry created the modern adolescent. For these young adults dance halls became “the space of adolescent independence, of fun and heterosociality, of flirting, of asserting a specific kind of urban American identity.”⁶⁶ Since the women in the newspaper contest shared all of the characteristics of the young people Chinn studied, it is possible that many Spanish adults felt such activities threatened not only their sexual honor but also their ethnic heritage. One way to combat the danger was to provide the young women with an opportunity to indulge their passion for dancing while insuring that the venue and the partners could be carefully controlled. A group called Club La Prensa held just such a dance at a Spanish society hall in Brooklyn. Young employees of the paper had formed the organization and likely represented appropriate escorts for the competitors. The event featured poetry as well as exhibitions of traditional dances including flamenco and tango.⁶⁷ In this way the activities directed young women toward both socially and culturally appropriate behaviors and company.

As with the ritual that resulted in the selection of Mercedes Anca as Queen of Beauty, the coronation of Lilly Martínez also had characteristics associated with wedding ceremonies.⁶⁸ The event took place in the Grand Ballroom of the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in Manhattan, and the

decorations included the flags of all Spanish-speaking nations as well as large numbers of flowers. Although the Pro-Cuba committee was all male, a special women's section had been formed to organize different aspects of the ceremony. Once again the selective inclusion of women and the nature of the ritual transformed the public space of the ballroom into an intermediate space. The event began with a procession of important people representing different aspects of the community. First came military personnel from the New York garrison along with trumpeters. Next, the Flowers Committee appeared, each member holding a different bloom symbolizing each of the eight finalists. The six ladies of the Escort Committee came next, wearing pale blue dresses. The flag bearers of the Pro-Cuba committee directly preceded the arrival of Martínez, who was followed by maids of honor carrying bouquets of flowers. As if to further link the coronation to matrimony, the queen wore a specially designed white dress. The male leaders of the Pro-Cuba committee walked next along with consular officials from each of the nations represented in the contest. Members of the various women's committees who organized the ceremony followed, and finally came people selected by each of the finalists.⁶⁹

As in the earlier occasion celebrating Mercedes Anca, the event showcased Lilly Martínez as a symbol of the community, not only of Cuba but also the whole family of Spanish-speaking nations. The music and entertainment too reflected the multiple cultures on display. Performers from Mexico, Spain, and Chile sang songs, and the Hawaiian band that played music from "the land of volcanoes and palm trees" was reportedly a big hit. The long article recapping the event that appeared in *La Prensa* clearly stated how the ceremony had brought all members of the colony together "from the luxuriously dressed lady of the aristocracy to the simple working girl, and from the highest representative officials to the most humble laborers." Such diverse people came to be united not only in a celebration of their shared cultural heritage but

also in a new American context. According to *La Prensa*, the event signified a true “demonstration of democratic fellowship.” Speeches given by men at the ceremony also reinforced the idea of the event as a site for the performance, not only of national and supranational identities, but also gendered ones. Felipe Taboada, the consul general of Cuba, praised the representatives of “the peoples of noble Spain” and other nations by highlighting the stereotypically feminine traits of “charm, likability and virtue.”⁷⁰

During the 1920s Spanish societies such as the Casa de Galicia used the intermediate spaces of the clubhouse and other venues to reflect a multiplicity of emerging identities. Some were traditional ones, rooted in the regional and national origins of first-generation immigrants, while others showed the complex process of assimilation into American culture and a desire to reach out to other Spanish speakers.⁷¹ All of these identities, however, posited the maintenance of proper gender roles for women as central to the perpetuation of traditions. As a result, the associations sponsored a variety of events where all of these identities could be performed. Some of these activities, such as the Queen of Beauty pageant or the Popularity Contest, developed into elaborate rituals but the dances, banquets, and events that took place on a daily or weekly basis were likely far more important. It was here that the community attempted to define and enforce what they believed to be proper feminine actions, attitudes, and traits.

Although the society halls often accommodated events designed to reaffirm existing hierarchies of gendered power, they could also be spaces where authority was contested. Despite the strong patriarchal nature of the community, women could and did assert real agency beyond the symbolic inversion of the pageants and contests. In February 1928 *La Prensa* published a short note describing a visit from the Casa de Galicia’s newly organized “Spanish Ladies Pro-Casa de Galicia Committee.” The group’s governing board included Mercedes Anca and Electra

Díaz, who both served as members at large. The women came to the newspaper to talk about their upcoming projects including plans to offer a variety of classes for girls and to raise money in order to purchase a gift for the Galician society. Since the gift was to be presented to the Casa from the entire Spanish community, the women solicited donations from other societies and from business owners such as Valentín Aguirre, who gave twenty dollars, more than any other person listed. It appears that the colony responded generously—Juan Anca chipped in five dollars—and within a few months the committee had purchased a piano.⁷²

By early summer, however, tensions developed between the leadership of the women's section and the all-male governing board of the Casa de Galicia. The row culminated with the publication in *La Prensa* of a long open letter written by the society's president, Juan Gallego. In the text, the association's board sought to reassert control of the women by publically chastising them. According to the letter, Gallego initiated the formation of the committee by inviting a group of women to meet with the goal of creating a Casa de Galicia Ladies' Section. After he left the building, the women proceeded to organize the group on their own, even choosing a different name. The relationship between the ladies' committee and the leadership of the society quickly deteriorated. Gallego wrote that the board at no time had authorized them to collect money for any purpose. He also claimed that the women had visited *La Prensa* without the knowledge or approval of anyone at the Casa de Galicia. The ladies' section had no power to initiate programs; instead, all activities needed to be submitted to the organization's board for approval. Gallego believed that by prematurely advertising the committee's actions, the women had "sinned by indiscretion." To make matters worse, the ladies had violated other regulations too, including opening a bank account without prior authorization. Gallego seemed especially concerned that only the president and treasurer of the ladies' committee could withdraw money from the

account. To the male leadership of the association such disregard for the rules was “a question of social and moral order and discipline.”⁷³

The usurpation of traditional male authority over the activities and finances of the committee angered the society’s administrators, and they moved quickly to reprimand the women. The board of the Casa de Galicia met with the leadership of the group to present an ultimatum: the committee could submit to the authority of the board, or they could disband. When confronted with this demand, the president, treasurer, and several other women protested “violently” and abruptly left. The remaining members of the committee then voted to depose the current president and treasurer and authorized a statement saying that those women had acted without the support of the majority. They also agreed to send a letter petitioning the board not to dissolve the committee and asking for permission to replace the ousted leaders. Gallego included the names of the eight women who had agreed to these demands but at no point did he specifically identify the dissidents, though they would already have been widely known.⁷⁴ Indeed, the names of the president, Enriqueta de Borines, and treasurer, Concepción de Callejo, had been published in the earlier article describing the visit to the offices of *La Prensa*.⁷⁵ Gallego’s decisions about whom to name and whom to leave out rewarded those who had submitted to the authority of the society and marginalized the women who remained outside its control.

These actions, however, did not end the controversy, because the committee’s ex-officials refused to turn over the collected funds to either the reconstituted ladies’ organization or to the casa itself. In the remainder of the published letter, Gallego described how attempts were made to convince the women to relinquish the funds. He claimed that although the society could have used legal means to compel them, they wished to avoid such unpleasant action. Despite this

“courtesy,” the women who “had declared rebellion” went ahead and purchased a piano. They had even had the nerve to contact the society’s president, asking when the gift could be delivered. As a result, the executive claimed it had no choice but to refuse the piano, since it “would enter into this Casa bringing notes of insubordination and discord.”⁷⁶

For Spanish immigrants in the 1920s the creation of associations centered on regional origin was an important part of efforts aimed at retaining identities, and they believed that without such support their traditional heritage would be lost. The anti-immigrant legislation passed by Congress early in the decade, along with the onset of the Great Depression and the effects of the Spanish Civil War, ended the golden age of the associations.⁷⁷ The twin blows of economic hardship and military conflict damaged the stability of many Spanish associations as membership levels declined and several, including the Centro Catalán and the Centro Valenciano, were forced to close.⁷⁸ A similar fate seems to have befallen the Casa de Galicia, as it sold its clubhouse building in 1932 for just \$77,000.⁷⁹ Eventually a new Centro Galicia would be formed but only after the Spanish Civil War, and its new headquarters was located outside of Greenwich Village. It is unclear what, if any, role the Anca family played in the new organization. In a history of the centro hosted on the society’s website, Juan Zapata relates that the list of founding members has been lost and does not appear in the organization’s archives.⁸⁰

The lives of the Anca and Díaz families again reflected some of these broader trends within the Spanish colony. By the end of the decade, they had left Manhattan and purchased a home together in South Brooklyn valued at \$12,000 (about \$159,000 today). Over the course of the decade, Greenwich Village had undergone a dramatic transformation. Dozens of large concrete and steel buildings had been constructed largely to house the neighborhood’s growing graphic arts industry.⁸¹ Such changes directly affected the area’s Spanish colony. Road

construction along Seventh Avenue and the opening of the Holland Tunnel greatly increased the amount of traffic into the Village. The needs of the expanding transportation network forcibly broke up the Spanish community by destroying the tenements where many had lived.⁸² Such disruptions might have influenced the Anca family's decision to abandon the city. The building of an elevated railroad on West Street, about a block from where they lived, was completed only in 1927. Other projects, including the construction of a freight terminal and warehouse as well as a gas station and garage, happened right on the street where both families lived.⁸³

The family's decision to relocate could also be seen as part of what has been described as "a tremendous working-class exodus" out of Manhattan during these years. Many of the former residents of the Village cited "a search for better living conditions" as the main impetus for the move. Indeed, a study conducted in 1942–43 called the western portion of the Ancas' new Brooklyn neighborhood "one of New York's choicest residential areas."⁸⁴ Although a Spanish community had long existed in Brooklyn, the Anca-Díaz residence was located in South Brooklyn and not within this traditional area. Despite remaining connected to the Spanish colony and attending society events, the family's neighbors were now mostly Italians, Scandinavians, and native-born Americans. The 1930 United States Census showed that only one other Spanish family lived within several blocks of the Ancas.⁸⁵ As a result, the Anca family, whose experiences closely mirrored that of other Spanish immigrants, slowly began to withdraw from that traditional world. They had moved out of the Village, and by 1940 Juan Anca had died. Mercedes Anca, who had once symbolized the ideal of Spanish-American girlhood, married a man of Italian, not Spanish, descent. She along with her niece Electra Díaz, who also married outside the Spanish community, had grown up to join a new ethnic American community.

Notes

1. “El festival del Galicia Sporting C.,” *La Prensa*, April 11, 1925; “Sociedades Hispanas,” *La Prensa*, April 14, 1925.
2. Loretta Baldassar and Donna R. Gabaccia, “Home, Family, and the Italian Nation in a Mobile World,” in *Intimacy and Italian Migration: Gender and Domestic Lives in a Mobile World*, ed. Loretta Baldassar and Donna R. Gabaccia (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 3, 17.
3. Katy Gardner and Ralph Grillo, “Transnational Households and Ritual: An Overview,” *Global Networks* 2, no. 3 (2002): 185–186, 187.
4. Gardner and Grillo, “Transnational Households and Ritual,” 183.
5. Brian D. Bunk, “Boxer in New York: Spaniards, Puerto Ricans and Attempts to Construct a Hispano Race,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 35, no. 4 (Summer 2016): 34, 36.
6. It is unclear whether he came from the city or the province of La Coruña. Unless otherwise noted biographical information on the Anca family in this article comes from the following: Ancestry.com, *1920 United States Federal Census* [database online] (Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2010); Ancestry.com, *1930 United States Federal Census* [database online] (Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2010); Ancestry.com, *1940 United States Federal Census* [database online] (Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2012); Ancestry.com, *New York State Census, 1915* [database online] (Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2012); Ancestry.com, *New York, Passenger Lists, 1820–1957* [database online] (Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2010); Ancestry.com, *U.S. City Directories, 1821–1989* [database online] (Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2011); “United States Social Security Death Index,” *FamilySearch*, <https://familysearch.org/> (accessed May 24, 2013).
7. The name Maria Antonio Diaz Vasquez is recorded on the passenger list, but it is likely an Anglicized version of María Antonia Díaz Vázquez.
8. The exact figure was 743,597. Moisés Llordén Miñambres, “Las asociaciones españolas de emigrantes,” in *Arte, cultura y sociedad en la emigración española a America*, eds. María Cruz Morales Saro and Moisés Llordén Miñambres (Oviedo, Spain: Universidad de Oviedo, 1992), 14.
9. Anca once again fit the profile of a Galician immigrant to the United States. About one in three Spanish immigrants to New York were from Galicia, and many of them came from towns and regions in the province of Coruña. The vast majority, 89 percent, were literate.

Nancy Pérez Rey, “Unha achega á emigración galega a Nova York,” *Estudos Migratorios* 1, 2 (2008): 34, 38, 40.

10. Caroline F. Ware, *Greenwich Village 1920–1930: A Comment on American Civilization in the Post-War Years* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1935), 40, 227, 228.

11. Jerónima Echeverría, *Home Away from Home: A History of Basque Boardinghouses* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1999), 45–47.

12. Gloria Totoricagüena, *The Basques of New York* (Reno: University of Nevada Center for Basque Studies, 2004), 73–74, 76.

13. Landmarks Preservation Commission, “Designation List 444 LP-2419” (2011), 7, www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/downloads/pdf/reports/2419.pdf (accessed May 30, 2013).

14. “Lago’s Private Bank is closed by State,” *New York Times*, July 4, 1928; “Mancuso on Bench . . .,” “Business Records,” *New York Times*, July 8, 1928.

15. Interview notes, P. Meléndez, folder: Spanish Section, Caroline F. Ware Papers, Box 54: Ethnic Studies, Greenwich Village Study, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York (hereafter, Caroline F. Ware Papers).

16. Studies have been made on Spanish immigrant communities in Argentina, Cuba, Mexico, and the United States: José C. Moya, *Cousins and Strangers: Spanish Immigrants in Buenos Aires* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Michael Kenny, “Twentieth-Century Spanish Expatriates in Cuba: A Sub-Culture?” *Anthropological Quarterly* 34, no. 2 (April 1961): 85–93; Michael Kenny, “Twentieth-Century Expatriates in Mexico: An Urban Sub-Culture” *Anthropological Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (October 1962): 169–80; Ana María Varela-Lago, “Conquerors, Immigrants, Exiles: The Spanish Diaspora in the United States (1848–1948)” (PhD diss., University of California, San Diego, 2008).

17. In 1925 many of the clubs organized the Liga Hispano Americana de Balompié (Spanish American Soccer League). See Brian D. Bunk, “Sardinero and Not a Can of Sardines: Soccer and Spanish Ethnic Identities in New York City during the 1920s,” *Journal of Urban History* 41, no. 3 (May 2015): 444–59.

18. Varela-Lago, “Conquerors, Immigrants, Exiles,” table 3, p. 136. By 1930, more Spaniards lived in New York than in any other American state. Varela-Lago, “Conquerors, Immigrants, Exiles,” table 5, p. 138.

19. “Tribuna Libre,” *La Prensa*, January 2, 1923.

20. “Galicia Buys Clubhouse,” *New York Times*, October 20, 1927. Contemporary value computation from www.measuringworth.com (accessed June 26, 2013).

21. Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919–1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 55.

22. Gabriel Haslip-Viera, "The Evolution of the Latino Community in New York City: Early Nineteenth Century to the Present," in *Latinos in New York: Communities in Transition*, eds. Gabriel Haslip-Viera and Sherrie L. Baver (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996), 8.
23. Cohen, *Making a New Deal*, 54, 71–72.
24. "Hoy inaugura la Casa de Galicia su nuevo y espléndido edificio social," *La Prensa*, July 7, 1928.
25. Caroline F. Ware Papers.
26. Ware, *Greenwich Village*, 140, 141, 318, 439.
27. A Panamanian graduate student named Próspero Meléndez completed most of the interviews using a form with a set group of questions. From his written notes, the majority seem to have been conducted in Spanish. Ware refers to fifty interviews in her book but the research files contain sixty-three records, though some are only partially complete and a few others were with non-Spaniards. Ware, *Greenwich Village*, appendix A, p. 434; Caroline F. Ware Papers.
28. Caroline F. Ware Papers.
29. The term was inspired by Jaine Beswick, who identified something similar in contemporary Britain. Jaine Beswick, "Galician-Spanish-British? Migrant Identification Practices, Transnationalism and Invisibility in Guildford, England," in *Contemporary Galician Cultural Studies: Between the Local and the Global*, ed. Kirsty Hooper and Manuel Puga Moruxa (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2011), 127.
30. Leigh S. Roethke, "The Spanish Hour: Imagining and Selling Spain in 1920s America" (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 2009), 3–4, 7, 32–42, 130. See also James D. Fernández, "The Discovery of Spain in New York, circa 1930," in *Nueva York, 1613–1945*, ed. Edward J. Sullivan (London: Scala, 2010), 217–33.
31. Roethke, "The Spanish Hour," 119, 124–25.
32. "El arte glorioso de Ignacio Zuloaga triunfa por su regio vigor, su colorido y sobriedad," *La Prensa*, January 22, 1925. Other stories appeared on January 20, 21, and 23.
33. Roethke, "The Spanish Hour," 145.
34. The Galician word *saudade* captures this feeling. John P. Dever and Aileen Dever, *The Poetry and Prose of Rosalía de Castro* (Lewiston, ME: Edwin Mellen Press, 2010), iii.
35. "Hoy inaugura la Casa de Galicia su nuevo y espléndido edificio social," *La Prensa*, July 7, 1928. On the popularity of such imagery to Spanish immigrants in the United States see Varela-Lago, "Conquerors, Immigrants, Exiles," especially ch. 2.
36. "Sociedades Hispanas," *La Prensa*, March 1, 1927.

37. Roethke writes extensively on the popularity of the mantón de Manila, “The Spanish Hour,” 54–62 and 190–212.
38. “Sociedades Hispanas,” *La Prensa*, March 1, 1927. Díaz’s suit was probably a hand-me-down from her aunt Mercedes, who had worn a similar outfit to an event in 1925. On that night, however, another girl took the prize for a costume featuring the Spanish coat of arms. “Sociedades Hispanas,” *La Prensa*, April 14, 1925.
39. Ware, *Greenwich Village*, 404, 409.
40. Gerald Fitzgerald, “Spanish Customs Preserved in New York,” August 14, 1939, WPA Federal Writers’ Project, NYC Unit, Spanish Book, Municipal Archives, New York City, New York. Fitzgerald may have been influenced by popular stereotypes as he wrote that such attitudes came from Spain’s “Moors.”
41. Amarilis, “La locura del jazz,” *La Prensa*, January 20, 1925.
42. “Regina Quiñones, desaparecida ocho días, oye la llamada de ‘La Prensa,’” *La Prensa*, March 16, 1926.
43. Coleen Ballerino Cohen and Richard Wilk with Beverly Stoeltje, “Introduction: Beauty Queens on the Global Stage,” in *Beauty Queens on the Global Stage*, eds. Coleen Ballerino Cohen and Richard Wilk with Beverly Stoeltje (New York: Routledge, 1996), 2.
44. Lois W. Banner, *American Beauty* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1983), 250, 254.
45. Cohen and Wilk, “Introduction,” 4.
46. Banner, *American Beauty*, 249.
47. Paula Fass, *The Damned and the Beautiful: American Youth in the 1920s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 23, 24.
48. Beverly Stoeltje, “The Snake Charmer Queen: Ritual Competition and Signification in American Festival,” in *Beauty Queens on the Global Stage*, eds. Coleen Ballerino Cohen and Richard Wilk with Beverly Stoeltje (New York: Routledge, 1996), 14, 26.
49. Ware, *Greenwich Village*, 41–42.
50. The Glenbrook, located in Shandakan, New York, was one of many Spanish-owned or -operated resorts in the area. The hotel had been built in 1888 and had room for 150 guests. “Summer Hotel Brings \$17,000 at Auction,” *Catskill Mountain News*, February 11, 1944. Thanks to Laura Miller for the reference.
51. “El festival del Galicia Sporting C.,” *La Prensa*, April 11, 1925; “Sociedades Hispanas,” *La Prensa*, April 14, 1925.
52. Letter of José M. Gil, “De nuestros lectores,” *La Prensa*, December 25, 1928. Ellipsis in the original.
53. Stoeltje, “The Snake Charmer Queen,” 14, 15, 27, 28.

54. “Sociedades Hispanas,” *La Prensa*, September 21, 1926.

55. For example, “La segunda candidata al Certamen de Simpatía de Obreritas, española,” *La Prensa*, March 9, 1926; “Vizcaya presenta una candidata al Certamen de Simpatía de Obreritas,” *La Prensa*, March 18, 1926; “Dos candidatas colombianas en el Certamen de Simpatía de Obreritas,” *La Prensa*, March 31, 1926; Lorrin Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen: History and Political Identity in Twentieth-Century New York City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 34.

56. “La coronación de la triunfadora en el Concurso de Simpatía sera el 15 de Mayo,” *La Prensa*, March 4, 1926; “Un gran entusiasmo popular acoge al Concurso de Simpatía iniciado,” *La Prensa*, March 2, 1926; “La segunda candidata al Certamen de Simpatía de Obreritas, española,” *La Prensa*, March 9, 1928.

57. In comparison, a poll from the year before to determine the most popular soccer player born in a Spanish-speaking country drew only 31,172 votes. “El jugador F. González quedó clasificado en 1er. lugar entre los once jugadores más populares,” *La Prensa*, July 20, 1925. Exact population figures are open to debate. Lawrence R. Chenault, *The Puerto Rican Migrant in New York City* (1938; repr., New York: Russell and Russell, 1970) gives a figure of 136,615 by 1930, while Virginia E. Sánchez Korrol, *From Colonia to Community: The History of Puerto Ricans in New York City* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994) cites (page 59) contemporary surveys indicating that 100,000 Puerto Ricans alone resided in the city by 1926. See also Haslip-Viera, “The Evolution of the Latino Community in New York City,” 4, 5.

58. I was unable to locate profiles of all the candidates, including one for Lilly Martínez. In part this was due to missing issues in the newspaper archives, but it also had to do with inconsistencies in *La Prensa*’s reporting. Some names on early lists of candidates are not included on the final vote tally and vice versa. “Aumenta por días el entusiasmo por el Certamen de Simpatía para obreritas,” *La Prensa*, March 6, 1926; “Ocho candidatas al Certamen de Simpatía elegidas en el escrutario,” *La Prensa*, April 17, 1926; “La cubanita Lilly Martínez está al frente en el Certamen de Simpatía,” *La Prensa*, April 27, 1926.

59. “Asturias da su candidata para al Certamen de Simpatía de Obreritas,” *La Prensa*, March 16, 1926; “Galicia da su candidata para el Certamen de Simpatía de Obreritas,” *La Prensa*, March 20, 1926; “Valencia da su candidata para el Certamen de Simpatía de Obreritas,” *La Prensa*, April 1, 1926.

60. It could also be a consequence of the lack of sources; see note 59. “La Argentina da su candidata al Certamen de Simpatía de Obreritas,” *La Prensa*, March 23, 1926; “Aumenta por días el entusiasmo por el Certamen de Simpatía para obreritas,” *La Prensa*, March 6, 1926 and “La capital mejicana da candidata al certamen de simpatía de obreritas,” *La Prensa*, March 13, 1926; “Dos candidatas colombianas en el Certamen de Simpatía de Obreritas,” *La Prensa*,

March 31, 1926; “Valencia da su candidata para el Certamen de Simpatía de Obreritas,” *La Prensa*, April 1, 1926.

61. Bunk, “Boxer in New York,” 36, 49–50.

62. “Vizcaya presenta una candidata al Certamen de Simpatía de Obreritas,” *La Prensa*, March 18, 1926; “La capital mejicana da candidata al certamen de simpatía de obreritas,” *La Prensa*, March 13, 1926; “Méjico da una candidata para el Certamen de Simpatía,” *La Prensa*, March 11, 1926.

63. Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen*, 34.

64. “La segunda candidata al Certamen de Simpatía de Obreritas, española,” *La Prensa*, March 9, 1928.

65. “La coronación de la reina del Certamen de Simpatía tendrá brillante sin rival,” *La Prensa*, May 4, 1926.

66. Sarah Chinn, *Inventing Modern Adolescence: The Children of Immigrants in Turn-of-the-Century America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2009), 5, 103–4.

67. “Las candidatas al Certamen de Simpatía asistirán al baile del Club ‘La Prensa,’” *La Prensa*, March 20, 1926.

68. The festivities actually included a number of different events. The announcement of the winner took place at the Sixty-Second Street Armory, but the coronation ceremony itself was held at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel. The committee also scheduled a garden party and river excursion for future dates. “Mañana se cierra la admisión de votos del Certamen de Simpatía,” *La Prensa*, April 13, 1926.

69. “La coronación de la reina del Certamen de Simpatía tendrá brillante sin rival,” *La Prensa*, May 4, 1926; “La reina y las damas del Certamen de Simpatía presidirán el festival,” *La Prensa*, May 6, 1926.

70. “Una nutridísima concurrencia aplaudió delirante y disfrutó sin res . . . [newspaper damaged], *La Prensa*, May 11, 1926. The article begins on the front page although in the copy on microfilm I consulted, most of the first section had been torn away. The article continues and is intact on a subsequent page. All of the quotations and most of the information cited here came from the interior story.

71. On the relationships between Spaniards and other Spanish speakers, especially Puerto Ricans, see Bunk, “Boxer in New York.”

72. “Sociedades Hispanas,” *La Prensa*, February 13, 1928; “Sociedades Hispanas,” *La Prensa*, March 28, 1928.

73. “El piano regalado a la ‘Casa de Galicia’ crea un conflicto,” *La Prensa*, July 5, 1928.

74. “El piano regalado a la ‘Casa de Galicia’.”

75. The names of Mercedes Anca and Electra Díaz appear in the February article but not in the letter published in July. As girls of just fourteen and ten years old, they probably had little to do with the events. “Sociedades Hispanas,” *La Prensa*, February 13, 1928.

76. “El piano regalado a la ‘Casa de Galicia.’” Apparently, the piano remained with one of the rebellious women until just over a year later, when the affair flared up once again. In July 1929 a group of twenty-eight men signed an open letter protesting the pending donation of the piano to another Spanish society. The letter ran in the newspaper *Gráfico* because *La Prensa* had refused to publish it. The passage of time and a change in leadership at the Casa de Galicia seem to have encouraged a more conciliatory tone. They argued that the society’s governing board and general membership had never officially rejected the gift. Instead they claimed that the now ex-president had exceeded his authority by refusing the piano. The letter continued by acknowledging that both sides had been at fault for creating the atmosphere of tension. The former president had been wrong to snub the women, but they did not own the piano and should have consulted those who donated money about its final disposition. Eventually they concluded that if an agreement could not be reached, the piano should be donated to charity. It is not clear what happened to the piano. “Se protesta contra la donación del piano de Casa de Galicia al Centro Hispano,” *Gráfico*, July 27, 1929.

77. Legislation passed in 1921 set Spanish annual quotas at 912. In 1924 it was revised downward to 131 before being altered again to 252 in 1929. Varela-Lago, “Conquerors, Immigrants, Exiles,” note 12, p. 135.

78. Gerald Fitzgerald and Barney Conal, “Spanish Clubs and Societies in New York,” WPA Federal Writers’ Project, NYC Unit, Spanish Book, Municipal Archives, New York City, New York.

79. “Manhattan Plans Filed,” *New York Times*, October 29, 1932.

80. Manuel Zapata, “La Historia de Casa Galicia” unpublished article, n.d., n.p., available at <https://www.casagaliciany.com/historia.htm> (accessed June 20, 2013). Despite Zapata’s account, Fitzgerald and Conal, “Spanish Clubs and Societies in New York,” wrote in 1939 that a Centro Gallego had been formed in 1933 and was headquartered at 153 Sixty-Fourth Street. According to Zapata, however, the society only acquired that building in the 1950s.

81. Stuart Waldman, *Maritime Mile: The Story of the Greenwich Village Waterfront* (New York: Mikaya Press / Greenwich Village Community Task Force, 2002), 50.

82. Ware, *Greenwich Village*, 15, 230.

83. Waldman, *Maritime Mile*, 51; Regina M. Kellerman, ed., *The Architecture of the Greenwich Village Waterfront* (New York: New York University Press, 1989), 65, 66.

84. Ware interviewed mostly Italians who had left the area, but it is likely the motives were equally true for Spanish families. Ware, *Greenwich Village*, 23, 29; *New York City Market*

Analysis (New York: The New York Times Co., Daily Mirror Inc., Hearst Consolidated Publications Inc., 1943), www.1940snewyork.com (accessed May 5, 2013).

85. *1930 United States Federal Census* [database online] (Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2010).