



**Project Title:** “Racialismo e identidades étnicas en la literatura de emigración gallega a Hispanoamérica” presented at the XI Congreso de la Asociación Internacional de Estudios Galegos, Buenos Aires, Argentina

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## **B. Restatement of problem researched or creative activity**

I presented a paper entitled “*Racialismo e identidades étnicas en la literatura de emigración gallega a Hispanoamérica*” at the XI Congreso de la Asociación Internacional de Estudios Galegos in Buenos Aires, Argentina. This project examined and compared the literary production of Galician novelists who emigrated to the Southern Cone by the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The impact of massive numbers of people migrating is undoubtedly felt differently in the economic, political, and social life of the sending and receiving societies, as well as it can generate an environment of tension and antagonism, sometimes bluntly, but mostly subtly expressed on a discourse charged of xenophobic innuendos. Racism is a social system of power reproduced by social practices of discrimination and by prejudiced attitudes and ideologies. Discourse, as one of the major social practices, not only reproduces, but is also the source of the acquisition of racist attitudes and ideologies (Van Dijk n/p). Since prejudice and racism are not innate, of great importance is the influence of novelists and journalists on their societies and cultures, reproducing either on purpose or instinctively, such discourse.

While it is quite common to find xenophobic and spiteful sentiments and attitudes against immigrants among Argentinean writers, it is interesting to find Galician authors reproducing this discriminatory and xenophobic sentiment towards the inhabitants of their former colony. In their work, José Costa Figueiras and Nicasio Pajares discriminate against certain portions of the population, including the Argentinian creoles, reproducing the euro-racism discourse prevalent at a time in which racial supremacy was accepted as an anthropological theory.

### **C. Brief review of the research procedure utilized**

I have been working on the literary production of Spanish authors, from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>, on the topic of emigration for more than a year. Nicasio Pajares was the second Galician author I worked; José Costa Figueiras was the first one. Since then, I have added Jaime Solá to the group. There is only one Spanish researcher that had published a general overview of Nicasio Pajares work, but my research is a detailed study of three of the Galician author's books from an ethnic and racial point of view. In the last month, I found several articles in the Galician magazine *Vida Gallega*, which critically deal with the Costa Figueiras' work, and its reception at the time.

### **D. Summary of findings**

I would like to note that there is no comprehensive research on the topic. Consequently, my findings (names of authors and their production dealing with the topic of emigration) are literally taken from footnotes, mentions of traveler's writings, as well as from the research from historians, economists, anthropologists, and my personal research in archives and libraries. Finding the Galician magazine *Vida Gallega* online has opened up a new venue for my research.

### **E. Conclusions and recommendations**

Participating at this conference has been one of last semesters highlight for my research. As I stated in my grant application, I was going to meet the authorities on Galician Studies, many of whom I cited or I read for my projects. In fact, the distinguished writer and historian María Rosa Lojo (Keynote speaker for the conference) attended my presentation, and expressed her interest on my research, underscoring at the novelty of finding xenophobic and spiteful sentiments and attitudes from the Galician authors towards the inhabitants of their former colony. Some of Lojo's articles, in fact, have dealt with the other side of the story, in other words, the xenophobic and spiteful sentiments and attitudes against immigrants among Argentinean writers. She gave me her business car, unusual in Argentina society, and we are in contact, sharing research material.

***Cited Work***

Van Dijk, Teun A. *Racism and Discourse in Spain and Latin America*. Barcelona: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2005.