

CATALUNYA NO ES ESPANYA?: EXAMINING CATALAN NATIONALISM

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by
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Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for completion
of the Bachelor of Arts degree in International Studies
Croft Institute for International Studies
Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College
The University of Mississippi

University, MS
May 2015

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ABSTRACT

Catalonia is one of a few European separatist movements that have real significance in the European political sphere. Separatism is new to Catalonia, however Catalan nationalism is not. Through the analysis of primary and secondary sources, this thesis explains that the reason the Catalan nationalist movement is so strong and demands the attention it is receiving in the Spanish national and international communities is the long-standing political, economic, and cultural foundations that have been building even before Catalonia was formed. Likewise, these foundations combined with the triggering events of the recession of the late 2000s and the Spanish constitutional court ruling on the revised Catalan Statute of Autonomy caused a shift in the movement towards separatism.

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Acknowledgements

I would first like to thank my advisor Dr. Alice Cooper who has helped me throughout every stage of this thesis. Her incredible support and advice has helped me to create a thesis that I am proud of and I am forever grateful for all of her assistance. Additionally, I would like to thank my 2nd and 3rd readers, Dr. William Schenck and Dr. Luanne Buchanan, for their commentary and advice throughout this process.

I would also like to thank my friends and family for their unwavering support and encouragement. I could not have persevered through the tough moments without knowing I had such a strong group of friends and family behind me.

Finally, I am incredibly grateful to be a part of the Croft Institute for International Studies and the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College. Both organizations prepared me to conduct my own research and provided me with the skills to complete this thesis.

Part I: Introduction

In 2014, three European regions held referendums regarding their independence from their host country: Veneto, Scotland, and Catalonia. In Venice, almost 89% of voters in the non-binding straw poll said they wanted Veneto to become an independent state (Ford 2014). Scotland held a legal and binding referendum in September 2014 that asked ‘Should Scotland be an independent country?’ in which the majority (55%) voted against independence (scotreferendum.com). Finally, in Catalonia, a non-binding referendum was held in November. The Catalan people were asked two questions: “Do you want Catalonia to become a state?” and “Do you want this State to be independent?” Even though an official vote was declared illegal by the courts in Madrid, the vote proceeded as an unofficial straw poll with 2.3 million out of 5 million eligible voters turning out and 80% voting “Yes” to both questions (Minder, 2014).

The formation of states in Europe has for centuries consisted of the integration of different groups and cultures under a single flag. France for example now encompasses the former distinct regions of Brittany, Aquitaine, the French Basque Country, Occitania, and Corsica among others. Most of these regions maintain a sense of regional identity, yet separatism is either non-existent or not powerful enough to warrant significant political attention. Likewise, the French national identity transcends the regional identities, delegating regional identities to be expressed through cultural differences (language, traditions, food etc.). Many European countries are in similar situations; Spain, however, is an exception. Though Spain has a similar history of combining cultures, Catalonia has maintained

its strong regional identity and has established one of the few regionalist movements in Europe that has real political significance within the EU (the others being Scotland and perhaps Flanders). Catalan nationalist parties are in power within Catalonia and hold 16 seats in the Spanish national parliament (Congreso de los Diputados). Demands for Catalan autonomy have been present since the official establishment of a Catalan nationalist movement in the 19th century; however a Catalan identity has arguably been in place since the early middle ages. Today, Catalan nationalism is even more significant as the movement has recently made the shift to separatism, further increasing its significance within Europe.

Though separatism in Catalonia is new, nationalism is not. Tensions between Spain and Catalonia have been notoriously strained since Catalonia came under Spanish rule in 1714 during the War of Spanish Succession. In the 19th century, the nationalist movement emerged and called for greater autonomy for Catalonia. The movement later dealt with the problems Catalonia faced throughout the 19th and 20th centuries including the dictatorships of Miguel Primo de Rivera and Francisco Franco. After the death of Franco in 1975, the nationalist movement began moving in a different direction. As the first decade of the 21st century came to a close, the movement developed further as nationalists began demanding independence.

It is obvious that there are factors involved with Catalonia that allow it to remain not only a strong region within Spain, but also allow it to develop a nationalist movement that is a significant political force within the EU. This thesis seeks to understand this strength as well as the movement's shift to separatism.

Why is Catalonia's nationalist movement so strong? And why has the movement now shifted to separatism?

In this thesis, I argue that cultural, economic, and political factors explain the exceptional strength of Catalan nationalism throughout history and in the present. These factors also explain the movement's shift to separatism in combination with economic and political triggers. As we will see below, previous literature explains separatism through these cultural, economic, and political factors. I use these three to explain not only the shift to separatism, but also the long term strength of Catalan nationalism.

Culturally, the idea of a distinct Catalan identity has been in place since the middle ages. Catalan, a Romance language similar to Spanish and French, developed during this time and is still spoken by almost 90% of the population with many in rural areas using it as their primary language (IDESCAT). Spanish leaders, from the Castilian monarchs to Primo de Rivera and eventually Franco have attempted to subdue this identity and instead promote the traditional Castilian ideals in Catalan society. Yet the failures of these leaders is evident in Catalan cities. The classic Spanish symbol of the bull is rarely found in Catalonia and traditional Catalan festivals take the place of Spanish ones celebrated in other parts of the country. The Catalan identity remains and sets the basic foundation for all nationalist and separatist ideas. Furthermore, the rise in awareness of Catalan culture post-Franco has strengthened this foundation. Education reforms, promotion of the Catalan language, success of Catalan filmmakers and authors, as well as the observance of

Catalan traditions and holidays also built up this foundation for those living in post-Franco society.

Political factors have shaped Catalan national experience and identity historically as well as in the present era. In earlier periods, political factors determined the territory considered to be Catalonia and the varying levels of autonomy Catalonia experienced over time. Since the death of Franco and Spain's transition to democracy, the political structure of Spain and Catalonia, specifically the decentralized state, the large level of autonomy of Catalonia, the presence and success of Catalan nationalist political parties, as well as the presence of international organizations like the EU and NATO created a foundation that strengthened the Catalan nationalist movement and eventually led to separatism. The *Generalitat*, the official name for the Catalan parliamentary government is one of the most powerful regional governments in Spain, with Catalonia having more autonomy than most of the other 17 autonomous communities within Spain. These communities have the ability to choose their own level of autonomy, as long as it is within the guidelines of the Spanish constitution ("History of the Government of Catalonia"). This decentralization, coupled with other factors, contributes to the formation of a Catalan identity rather than a Spanish identity as it puts more power in the hands of local governments versus national governments. Along this line, the presence and popularity of Catalan-only political parties contributes to this idea of Catalan nationality. It creates an easy path for the Catalan politicians to participate in the separatist movement without disrupting any ties to political parties outside of Catalonia. For example, the current president, Artur Más, head of the Catalan

Convergence and Union party, is also the head of the Catalan separatist movement (“History of the Government of Catalonia”). Likewise, the presence of the EU and NATO are also important to Catalan nationalism. The EU is very supportive of regional rights, as evidenced by the Maastricht Treaty and other programs which protect linguistic and cultural rights of regions (Connolly, 2013: 3). The EU legitimizes Catalan claims to regional identity and provides an outlet for Catalan nationalists to interact with other European nations and regions. Likewise, the mere presence of NATO and the EU strengthen separatist claims that Catalonia will be able to survive outside of Spain as the two organizations provide many of the competencies that could cause difficulty to a small, newly independent state such as formation of a new currency, foreign policy, and security (Bieri 2014: 3).

Catalonia’s economic history also plays a huge role in the development of Catalan nationalism. Catalonia’s economy has almost always been more prosperous than Spain. That is to say, Catalonia has almost always been one step ahead of Spain in regards to industry, trade, and tourism. From Roman times to present day, Barcelona has been a hub of trade, immigration, industry, and tourism, propelling Catalonia’s GDP per capita past Spain’s and into the top of the EU rankings. Barcelona is home to 5 million of Catalonia’s 7.5 million citizens and a diverse collection of businesses ranging from investment banks like Caixabank to candy company Chupa Chups. Inland provinces of Catalonia are home to wineries that rival southern France and much of the olive oil exported from Spain originates in Catalonia (“Politics and Economy”). All of these factors make Catalonia’s economy one of the strongest in a weak Spanish system. Catalan GDP represents 19% of

Spain's economy, the highest of any of the autonomous communities (OECD 2015). Therefore, Catalonia, as one of the most successful and most autonomous regions in Spain, pays higher taxes yet receives a lower percentage in return of that money because of its success and high level autonomy ("Politics and Economy"). These issues come together to create a solid foundation for separatism.

The political, cultural, and economic foundations strengthen the nationalist movement. However, for the movement to adopt the demand of separatism, there must be a triggering event (or two) to cause that shift. For Catalonia, these events were the court ruling on the revisions on the Statute of Autonomy in 2006 and the recession of the late 2000s. The details of the ruling and the consequences of the recession will be discussed in full later, however, it is important to note that both events were significant in that they signaled the Spanish government's unwillingness to negotiate with Catalan demands for higher autonomy and both parties' inability to cooperate in times of economic crisis. The court ruling caused an immediate public response setting off a chain of events that would lead to the Catalan nationalist movement to take on the new goal of independence. Likewise, the recession served to amplify the economic grievances already present between Catalonia and Spain, eventually pushing both the Spanish and Catalan governments to a gridlock. These events would not have had the same effect, however, without the solid political, cultural, and economic foundations that had been building throughout history and specifically since the death of Franco as well as the political actors who were vital in helping the movement grow.

Literature Review

Before examining the Catalan separatist movement, it is important to note previous literature on why separatist movements emerge. There are three main theories as to why separatist movements arise. Some authors claim that separatist movements emerge due to cultural factors in a region. Others state that economic factors are the driving force behind separatist movements. Finally, some scholars believe separatist movements emerge due to political factors.

Anthony Smith is one of the most prominent proponents of the “culture” theory of why separatist movements arise. Smith argues that an ethnic movement “presuppose[s] a definite historic community based upon shared memories and culture, in whose name the separation of the unit is claimed,” (Smith, 1979: 22). Such movements seek to recover a cultural identity that has been lost and/or corrupted by outside influences. Thus, nationalist movements seek to reestablish their culture apart from the state. Finally, Smith notes that culturally based separatisms, because they are a distinct ethnic community, hold the same rights as other communities to run their own internal and external affairs without outside influence (Smith, 1979: 22).

Unlike other authors, Smith states that, although economic factors are relevant in the separatism discussion, the theory that separatism arises due to regional neglect from government officials and programs causing underdevelopment is inadequate. The theory is inapplicable to Catalonia, the Basque country, Flanders, Scotland etc. as they are all highly developed with varying levels of government participation and assistance. Despite this fact, Smith does say

that neglect from a government could influence the movement after it has emerged. In this case, the level of neglect could influence whether the movement searches for separation from the state, or simply more autonomy. Instead, Smith states, the emergence of a separatist movement can be explained by a revival in literature and a greater interest in the past. According to Smith, the Enlightenment of the 18th century brought about the emergence of nationalism and historicism, which is the emphasis on the past to relate to issues of the day. The revival of literature and other cultural markers by an ethnic group helps to solidify an identity unique to the one of the large scale state under which they live; it provides a sense of unity to the ethnic group and a feeling of being separate from different ethnic groups. This historicism was brought about by the disillusionment and frustration with bureaucracy by intellectuals, who then turned to the past in search of a rationale for their current situation (Smith, 1979: 23-30).

Moreno, Arriba and Serrano (1998) are also proponents of the culture theory, and they argue ethno-territorialism leads to regionalism and separatism using the examples of Catalonia, the Basque Country, Asturias and Galicia in Spain. The strong dual identity amongst Spaniards, stemming from strong cultural ties to their region as well as ties to Spain as a whole, has led to the emergence of nationalist and secessionist movements. Strong ties to each other and their own culture along with weaker ties to the state could transform the nationalist movement into a more drastic separatist one. In Spain, stronger ties to regions (the Basque Country, Catalonia and Galicia) strengthen regionalism while feebler ties to Spain weaken Spanish nationalism. The lack of a strong central government in

Madrid, long lasting ties to ethnic regions and the acknowledgment of these regions' unique culture by Madrid creates this dual identity for many Spaniards (Moreno et. al., 1998: 70).

Stanley Payne also discusses the potential causes of cultural nationalism and regionalism in Spain from the 19th century to 1991. He theorizes that specific characteristics of Spain itself play a role in the emergence of micro-nationalism and regionalism in Catalonia and the Basque Country. Payne argues that the decentralized nature of the Spanish monarchy along with the lack of major participation of Spain in the World Wars, the slower pace of modernization, and the lack of an external threat to Spanish society after Napoleon's defeat have inhibited the growth of a true Spanish identity (Payne, 1991: 479). This lack of Spanish nationalism has paved the way for regionalism and micro-nationalism. Payne argues that the micro-nationalism that was developed in mid-19th century Catalonia was a protest against the frustrations of the process of modernization and a reaction against the relative failure of liberalism in Spain. Using the Basque Country and Catalonia as examples, Payne states that even though there is no agreement on the cause of modern nationalism, he theorizes that appearance of nationalism is influenced by "foreign oppression, menace or military defeat on the one hand, and/or the beginning of cultural and economic modernization which threaten the traditional values or way of life on the other" (Payne, 1991: 484-85).

Donald Horowitz (1981) explains that an ethnic group's desire to secede stems not from cultural influences but rather economic influences. He begins by

stating that “whether a secessionist movement will emerge at all is determined by domestic politics, by the relations of groups and regions within the state” (Horowitz 1981, 167). Yet, whether a secessionist movement will actually achieve its aims, is determined by international politics and forces at work beyond the state. To examine this, he categorizes certain ethnic groups as being either backward in a backward regional economy, backward in an advanced regional economy, advanced in a backward regional economy, or advanced in an advanced regional economy (such as the cases of Catalonia and the Basque Country). Backwards groups are defined by average levels of education, income and professional employment whereas advanced groups have higher than average levels in the same categories. Backwards regional economies are defined as those that are performing poorly as compared to the surrounding economies and advanced regional economies are those that are performing better than the surrounding economies. Horowitz finds that, although the majority of secessionist movements are those of backwards groups with backwards regional economies, advanced groups with advanced regional economies, such as the Catalans, would be more likely to form a separatist movement because of an economic grievance such as the belief that their tax dollars are subsidizing poorer regions of the state. Horowitz concludes that backwards groups are more likely to develop a separatist movement, but that does not mean that advanced groups won’t also have separatism emerge. Economic factors are the main political claims in advanced groups, and although separatism is rare, it still occurs (Horowitz, 1981: 167-92). This can be explained by the presence of other factors, including cultural and political .

Evan Osborne (2010) takes a similar approach. He argues that the economy is an important factor in regards to ethnic separatism movements. More specifically, he argues that “when economic freedom is greater people cooperate more, fight less and trust one another more,” (Osborne, 2010: 378). Basically, when ethnic groups have rights to assert their own economic policies and strategies they are less likely to engage in ethnic conflict and separatist movements.

Ryan D. Griffiths and Ivan Savic (2009) agree that the economy is one of the most important factors in a separatist movement. They state that economic interdependence within the state can increase the likelihood for conflict but also has an effect on the goals of separatist movements set for themselves. The authors argue that the economic calculus of separatism, “How will the movement be funded? What will be the economic consequences of a particular strategy or action? What will the economic future look like if greater autonomy or independence is achieved,” along with the effect of two-dimensional interdependence and the push and pull of globalization are three main factors influencing separatist movements (Griffiths and Savic, 2009: 430-31).

Michael Freeman is a proponent of the third theory of why separatist movements emerge. He states in his article “The Priority of Function over Structure: A New Approach to Secession.” that secessionism may be brought about by the switch from an authoritarian rule to that of a democracy. He says “The deconstruction of authoritarian rule can leave communal groups politically, economically, and culturally insecure, and consequently tempted to fight for

statehood,” (Freeman, 1998: 15). The sudden relief of oppression brought on by authoritarian rule can spark a new desire in ethnic groups to begin or restart separatist movements that have been oppressed under the dictatorship.

Toni Rodon is in agreement with this theory. Under authoritarian rule, any movements that could be seen as dissent from the dictatorship in power are quickly suppressed often under threat of violence. This hampers the growth of a nationalist movement as the movement then has to go underground or resort to violent methods in order to continue. But, when the authoritarian rule lifts, the movement is suddenly revitalized and often transforms from a nationalist movement to a separatist movement with new goals to become independent and, ideally, stay free from similar oppression like the one just endured (Rodon, 2012: 136).

To summarize, separatism emerges because of political, economic, or cultural factors. In the case of Catalonia, these factors created a strong nationalist movement that developed into separatism because of *all* these factors as well as specific triggering events which caused the direct shift to separatism. The presence of a dual identity as well as economic and political grievances caused the Catalan nationalist movement to evolve into a separatist movement because of the combination of these foundations and the triggering events of the late 2000s. In this thesis I will attempt to demonstrate that the economic, political, and cultural foundations which developed through Catalan history not only contributed to the strength of Catalan nationalism, but eventually caused separatism to emerge.

Part II: Historical Foundations of Catalan Nationalism

To better contextualize the Catalan nationalist movement, it is first necessary to understand the origins of Catalonia and the beginnings of political, economic, and cultural foundations. Though it may seem extreme to begin this study thousands of years before separatism became a reality in Catalonia, it is necessary to truly see how early the foundations begin to form. The history of Catalonia is rich and complicated. From the early days of its formation, before the concept of separate Catalan and Spanish identities even existed, political, economic, and cultural patterns developed.

The Golden Age of Catalonia

Catalonia and the rest of Spain were originally populated by the native Iberians from whom the name Iberian Peninsula is derived. The Iberians were soon joined by other groups who migrated into the peninsula during the 14th century BCE (Smith 4). In The Phoenicians arrived in the 11th century followed soon after by the Carthaginians, whose greatest contribution to the formation of Catalonia was the establishment the bustling port city of Barcino, (now Barcelona) (R. Smith, 1965: 5).

The Romans invaded the Iberian peninsula in the 1st century B.C.E. Northeastern Spain became the first region conquered by the Romans, who made Tarraco, (modern day Tarragona), the capital of the northern province of Roman Hispania (Chaytor, 1933¹). The Romans Latinized the peninsula, integrating Roman ideals and traditions with the existing culture. Hispania adapted well to the Roman

¹ Chaytor's book was accessed through an online portal and there for page numbers were unavailable

conquest and the beginnings of a Spanish identity was born. The influence of Latin on Hispania was unparalleled in the Roman Empire. The beginning of many of the Romance languages, Catalan included, began on the Iberian Peninsula. Latin began to mix with tribal languages forming very primitive versions of Spanish, Galician, and Catalan. Poets and authors from Spain became well known throughout the Empire and future Roman leaders like Marcus Aurelius and Hadrian were Spaniards themselves (R. Smith 1965, 6). Like many other European nations, the Roman Empire brought Christianity to Hispania which quickly gained a foothold in Hispanic society as well (Chaytor, 1933).

The economic roots of Catalonia and Spain began in this time period. Trade and commerce were especially prevalent in port cities like Barcino while agriculture and mining were the main economies of the inland provinces (Chaytor, 1933). Hispania was a relatively wealthy province under Roman rule and remained that way even after the Romans were replaced by the Visigoths in the 4th century C.E. (R. Smith, 1965: 6). Specifically, the region which would become Catalonia was especially viable as it was the main port of entry into the rest of Hispania from the Mediterranean (Chaytor, 1933). Tarragona as well became an important agricultural center for the peninsula.

Though there was no distinction between Catalonia and Spain at this time, it could be argued that the economic and political importance of the cities of Tarragona and Barcino sets the stage for further development of the separate cultures of Catalonia and Spain. As the seat of the Roman rule was in modern-day

Catalonia, it became an important location for politics and governance. Even after the Roman presence was gone from Spain, the Visigoths continued to rely on Barcinona for trade and commerce up until the conquest of the peninsula by the Moors from North Africa in 718. (Chaytor, 1933)

The Muslim Conquest is seen as one of the most important events in Spanish, Catalan, and European history. The Moors ruled over the Iberian Peninsula for over 700 years, one of the longest reigns of any group in Iberia. However, Catalonia did not remain under Moorish control for long. In 732, the region surrounding Barcinona won its independence from the Al-Andalus Empire after a few bloody battles. The non-Moor residents, consisting mainly of Visigoths, took control of the region and decided to align with their northern neighbors, the Franks, to help protect themselves from invaders (R. Smith, 1965: 20-25). Under this agreement, Catalonia obtained a semi-autonomous rule that enjoyed certain freedoms, but still required payment for the protection of the Franks (Chaytor, 1933). For decades Catalonia thrived under this system and was protected from the Muslim empire to the south. However, in the mid-8th century, after the Reconquista of the Iberian Peninsula began, Charlemagne conquered Barcinona (renaming it to Barcelona) and surrounding areas, stripping the Catalans of whatever autonomy they had possessed and incorporating the area under Frankish control (Chaytor, 1933). He called the region *Hispanica Marca*, or Spanish March, using the region as a battle ground for the Reconquista.

In Spain, language, customs, social and legal codes, religion, and even architecture were heavily influenced by the Muslim rulers. Catalonia's culture however was less influenced by the Moors and more influenced by the alliance with the Franks. At this time, there was already a distinction beginning between the dialects of Vulgar Latin spoken in the northern regions of Spain and in the southern regions of Spain (Chaytor, 1933). This northern dialect of Latin was less influenced by the Arabic of the Moors, and took more of the Latin dialects and Occitan in southern France. From these dialects formed the ancestor of the Catalan language, which became an official language in the 10th century. Furthermore, the divide between Muslim Spain and Frankish Catalonia grew stronger because of lack of contact between the two regions. The constant battles led to less trade and commerce between the two, decreasing the amount of contact and influence that citizens of both regions had on each other (R. Smith, 1965).

To help control the region, Charlemagne appointed a count to govern and report back to him. This helped to define the boundaries of Barcelona, further implying a divide between this region and those around it. This divide became so great that eventually the weakening power of the Carolingian Empire could not hold on to the province of Barcelona any more. Under the leadership of the uniquely named Count Wilfred the Hairy, the provinces of Urgell, Cerdanya, Girona, and Barcelona became independent from the Carolingian Empire and Catalonia was created. For over 100 years Catalonia was an independent nation with their own laws called *los fueros*. These laws and codes protected Catalan citizens and formed order within Catalan borders. (Chaytor, 1933)

Wilfred expanded the new nation of Catalonia, with borders eventually stretching south to Muslim Valencia and north to the Pyrenees. In the 11th and 12th centuries, Wilfred's successor, Ramon Berenguer III further expanded Catalonia all the way into Southern France, Aragon, and the Balearic Islands in the Mediterranean Sea. Convenient marriages and an alliance with the Kingdom of Aragon helped Berenguer's successor to expand Catalonia even farther to include much of northwestern Spain and parts of Italy and southern France (Chaytor, 1933).

Catalonia benefitted from the alliance with Aragon greatly because it provided not only a new market for trade of Catalan goods, but also allowed for the transportation and trade of agricultural goods from the fertile grasslands of Aragon to the Port of Barcelona and on to other parts of the Mediterranean. As Catalonia and Aragon expanded, so did the opportunity for trade. Catalan goods were traded across the Mediterranean as well as more inland in Europe. Catalonia remained prosperous and thus was able to dominate the Aragon political sphere. The rulers of Aragon were Catalan, not Aragonese and thus gave priority to Catalan interests when making political decisions. (Chaytor, 1933)

Likewise, this economic and political dominance helped to keep Aragon and Catalan culture relatively separate. Catalan traditions spread across the eastern portion of the kingdom while Aragon culture and language spread along the west. The two entities had separate legal codes as well. The *Cortes de Catalonia* or Catalan legal codes were in place at this time, creating a system of government that maintained relative order and peace throughout Catalan territories (Chaytor, 1933).

The codes maintained order allowing for the political, economic, and cultural expansion of Catalonia throughout the 12th and 13th centuries. The 12th century brought an alliance with the Kingdom of Castile, coordinated by the famous King Alfonso II in an attempt to present a unified front against the Muslim kingdom to the south (R. Smith, 1965). The alliance was successful in pushing back the Moors and expanding the Christian kingdoms until they possessed much of the north and parts of the south. This time period is often called the “golden age” of Catalonia and later became the topic of Romantic writings in the 19th century. Though shifts in alliances, minor invasions, and loss and gain of territories occurred during this time, Catalonia maintained its power in the Iberian Peninsula and beyond. (Chaytor, 1933)

Yet as the 14th century approached, Catalonia began to weaken. Lack of heirs, familial conflict, and powerful neighbors weakened Catalonia’s power within the Kingdom of Aragon. The loss of key provinces in Spain and Italy weakened the faith in the Catalan kings who had ruled over Aragon for the past 200 years. Frustration mounted with the lack of attention to the Aragon region as the kingdom was repeatedly attacked by outside forces. The alliance with Castile faltered until the two kingdoms were enemies again. Incidents of Aragon counts refusing to send troops to help defend the kingdom at the request of their Catalan king made fending off intruders even more difficult. This pattern of invasion and dissent continued into the 15th century as the Black Plague hit Catalonia especially hard. By the mid-15th century the Kingdom of Aragon was weak and divided. Catalonia and Aragon were united only on paper; their differences outweighing their similarities. This provided ample opportunity for the Kingdom of Castile made the most damage. In order to

salvage his power, Ferdinand of Aragon married Isabella of Castile in 1462, combining the two largest powers in Spain and beginning an era of reformation, inquisition, exploration and unification. (Chaytor, 1933, Edwards, 2000)

Catalonia's Place in Unified Spain

The infamous reign of Ferdinand and Isabella became a pivotal point in Spanish history. The unified kingdom they created with their marriage became the base of Spain as it is known today. The so called Catholic monarchs brought about the end of the Reconquista and the start of the Spanish Inquisition. The Muslim kingdom was completely driven out of Spain in 1492 by the unified armies of Aragon and Castile. Their reign is characterized by the Inquisition and the beginning of the Spanish empire overseas (Edwards, 2000).

In order to maintain their power over such a vast area, they tried to centralize their power. They removed lords, counts, and governors who had the power to incite a revolution or threatened their monarchy in any way. Their efforts were successful in most areas except for Catalonia. Technically, Aragon and Castile were still two separate kingdoms that had separate governing systems even after the unification. Catalonia became a principate of the kingdom of Aragon, still under control of the monarchs, but not completely. Catalonia caused trouble for the crown with the Catalan government refusing to pay interest on taxes to the crown and Catalan peasants revolting. (Edwards, 2000) Noblemen in the cities turned against Ferdinand especially when he attempted to control the region by appointing a new Castilian governor and dissolving the *Generalitat* (Chaytor, 1933). He eventually

reinstated the power of the Catalan regional government though his support from noblemen in Catalonia was almost completely diminished (Edwards, 2000).

The political resistance of Catalonia contributed to the difficulty of the monarchs in their attempt to unite the country under a unified Castilian culture and language. The influence of the Castilian language (also known as Old Spanish) and traditions was spreading throughout Aragon, but Catalonia resisted these attempts. Catalan remained the primary language of the region even as the growth of Castilian stretched across the majority of the country and replaced other languages (Edwards, 2000). This created tension between the Catalan government and the monarchy which was frustrated with Catalan refusal to conform and worried of the implications a strong distinction in culture could cause. Catalonia, meanwhile, was frustrated with the growing encroachment on Catalan autonomy by Castilian tax and government representatives sent there by the monarchs (Chaytor, 1933).

The tensions between Catalonia and Castile were exacerbated by Catalonia's struggling economy. For the first time, the economic relevancy of Catalonia was dwindling. The Castilian government sent little help to the Barcelona ports that were overrun by piracy and the Catalan government refused to accept any interference from the monarchy. Competition increased from ports around the Mediterranean, specifically Naples and Valencia whose ports were much calmer than Barcelona's. It took decades and many reforms from the *Generalitat* for Catalonia's economy to recover, but by 1500, Catalonia again had a viable economy. Specifically, the 16th century expansion of Spain into the New World brought

prosperity. The Port of Barcelona became a popular port for the arrival of ships that had just crossed the Atlantic. (Chaytor, 1933)

The end of the reign of the Catholic Monarchs in 1516 would bring political upheaval and huge changes for Catalan autonomy and Catalonia's relationship with Spain. The 200 years following the death of the Ferdinand and Isabella, culminating in the complete loss of autonomy for Catalonia in 1714, laid the foundation for future Catalan/Spanish relations. Tensions were high as King Phillip III used Catalan resources, gold and manpower to fight off the French in the name of the Holy Roman Empire (Kern, 1990: 545). Catalonia's border with France also meant Catalan citizens were forced to accommodate Castilian soldiers as they fought the French along the border. The destruction of crops, ill treatment from soldiers, forced quartering, and reallocation of resources along with the high taxes and declaration of the invalidity of the Catalan government by the Count-Duke of Olivares led to a revolt called the Reaper's War that lasted almost 19 years (R. Smith, 1965: 230-3). In 1640 a riot was successful in killing the Castilian viceroy of Catalonia which led to attacks of the Castilian soldiers stationed in Catalonia (Kern, 1990: 545-7). Catalonia declared independence from the Crown of Spain while pronouncing Louis XIII, King of France, the Count of Barcelona. The French joined the Catalans in the fight against the Spanish until 1659 when the revolt was finally quashed and France received the Roussillon. Catalonia after the Reaper's War was able to maintain the Generalitat and their rights under the Spanish Crown. However, Catalonia was significantly weakened from the Thirty Years War, the Reaper's War, and the two Spanish wars with France that followed. (Kern, 1990: 545-550)

In 1700, the last Hapsburg king of Spain, Charles II, died without an heir, starting off a European wide conflict called the War of Spanish Succession. The war, lasting from 1700-1714 saw fighting from the Spanish Monarchy led by Bourbon Phillip V, grandson of the King of France, against Hapsburgs and their allies. The conflict lasted 14 years with fighting all over Europe and even into Spanish America (R. Smith, 1965: 234-7). In 1714, the Treaty of Utrecht was forced upon Phillip V and the Spanish, ceding much of Spanish territory to the Holy Roman Emperor, significantly reducing Spain's influence along its eastern border (Kern, 1990: 543-51, 485-7). The War of Spanish Succession also brought a huge change for the Catalans. During the war, Catalonia supported Phillip V in hopes that his reign would bring more autonomy. However, as the war came to a close, it became obvious that Phillip V only wanted to subdue the Catalans further. Peace negotiations during the war stated that Catalonia would enjoy the same amnesty and rights of other Spaniards but would lose their autonomy. This dissatisfied the Catalans who then declared war in 1713. The rebellion was quickly squashed in 1714 and the Nueva Planta decrees were put in place, effectively ending Catalan autonomy and incorporating it fully under the Spanish Crown based in Castile. (R. Smith, 1965: 234-7).

As the 18th century progressed, Catalonia continued to be governed completely by the reign of the Bourbon kings. More restriction of rights continued under the rule of Charles IV as he tried to avoid "revolutionary fever" from France. For Charles and the Spanish nobility, the French Revolution brought fear not only of revolution spilling over into Spain, but of war with France as well. Their fears came

true in 1793 when Spain yet again found itself at war with France. Catalonia was once more used as the frontier between France and Spain. Catalan soldiers won great victories around the Pyrenees, helping secure peace between the two nations. This peace did not last long, however, as Napoleon, after many trials and tribulations with the Spanish Royal Family, took over the Spanish Crown, ceding it to his brother Joseph Bonaparte. Spain was now under Napoleonic control (R. Smith, 1965: 258-273).

Joseph Bonaparte's rule over Spain was not lengthy, but was important in shaping the landscape of 19th century Spain. Napoleonic ideas stemming from the French Revolution began to take hold in many Spanish households, making some Spaniards question the previous Bourbon absolutism. On March 19, 1812, after two years of discussion and debate, the Constitution of Cadiz was drafted. At this point in time, Spain was still under the control of Napoleon and France so the document was more of a statement than a legally binding constitution. However, the implications of the document, like the obvious change in ideology of many Spaniards, are evident. The Constitution called for popular sovereignty and election of government leaders, division of power, creation of social classes, and equal rights for all men. Unfortunately for Catalonia, however, the constitution also called for the centralization of the government, effectively removing any power the Catalan government had possessed (Kern, 1990: 164). On April 11, 1814, Napoleon abdicated the throne in Paris, thus ending his brother's time as leader in Spain and his rule over half of Europe (R. Smith, 1965: 276).

Originally supported as a leader in the campaign against Napoleon, Ferdinand VII saw this support dissipate quickly after the French threat disappeared. During his short reign which ended in 1833, he divided Spain further and seemed to create more issues than he solved. In 1823, after years of fighting for absolutism and quelling a revolution, Ferdinand was forced to accept the Constitution of 1812 by his subjects, appeasing many Spaniards except the Basques and Catalans who now found themselves without much autonomy (R. Smith, 1965: 312, Kern, 1990: 567). This led to revolts and uprisings all over Catalonia and the eventual support of the Catalans for Don Carlos in the upcoming Carlist wars (Kern, 1990: 567).

Perhaps the most significant part of Ferdinand's short reign was the birth of his daughter Isabel and the political turmoil that her birth brought (Kern, 1990: 569). Due to a proclamation by Ferdinand, Isabel was to inherit the throne when Ferdinand finally succumbed to his disease (R. Smith, 1965: 311). Ferdinand's younger brother, Carlos, unhappy with his brother's ruling style launched a campaign against Ferdinand to become King when he died (Kern, 1990: 569). Supporters for Prince Carlos, called Carlists, came mainly from Catalonia and the Basque Country (R. Smith, 1965: 314). The Basques and Catalans had lost their autonomy with the acceptance of the Constitution of 1812, and, though neither the majority of Basques or the Catalans really supported an absolute monarchy like Carlos dreamed of, many followed him for his promise to reintroduce autonomy for the regions. Though the majority of fighting took place in the Basque Country, Catalonia was also active in the Carlist front ("The Carlist Wars"). Unfortunately for

the Catalans, however, their hopes of autonomy diminished with the defeat of the Carlists, the exile of María Cristina to France, and a new regent in power (Kern, 1990: 196, R. Smith, 1965: 314-28). Throughout all the political changes in the following years, Catalonia remained on the outskirts of policy. Though Barcelona was an important site for many revolts and battles, Catalonia was not well-represented in Madrid during this time, leading to the rise of Catalan nationalism.

Catalonia in the Modern Era

The political turmoil that plagued Spain in the 19th century had devastating consequences on the Spanish economy. The war with Napoleon ruined the landscape and the loss of colonial conquests in the New World meant the loss of trade partners and raw good suppliers. This meant that Spain was completely bankrupt and a few steps behind the rest of Europe in matters of industry. Catalonia suffered just as the rest of the country did, however their entrance into the Industrial Revolution was swifter and more successful than the rest of Spain because of their strategic location and resources (“The cultural 'Renaixença' ...”). As political and royal leaders fought for the Crown in Madrid, middle and upper class Catalans turned Barcelona and other Catalan cities into centers of production and trade. Soon, Catalonia was once again the most economically successful region in the country. Even after the cotton crisis after the American Civil War could not subdue the Catalan textile market completely. However, Catalonia still could not grow to its full potential without political policies to protect the region. The constantly changing and ineffective government in Madrid did hardly anything to protect

Catalan imports and exports, angering the industrial bourgeoisie Catalans were becoming frustrated with their lack of influence in the government and the constant infighting that occurred in Madrid. These frustrations coupled with the growing nationalism in other parts of Europe in the mid 1800 caused a renaissance of Catalan identity. (“The cultural 'Renaixença' ...”)

The *renaixença* was the Catalan response to European romanticism. A complete revival of Catalan literature and language took place with emphasis on the “glory days” of Catalan history. Authors and artists romanticized Catalonia’s early history with the Greeks and reminded the public of when the Kingdom of Catalonia was the most powerful in the Mediterranean (“The cultural 'Renaixença' ...”). Originally just a cultural movement of the intelligentsia and elite, it quickly spread to the middle classes and spawned the Catalan nationalist movement. Catalanism as a political ideology formed from the *renaixença*. It called for the self-governing and autonomy of Catalonia. Leaders of the movement (mainly the industrial bourgeoisie) campaigned for an autonomous Catalonia but not an independent state. They knew that Catalonia could not survive without Spain nor Spain without Catalonia. However, Catalonia could also not survive without any say in government policies, thus Catalanism was born. (“The cultural 'Renaixença' ...”)

Catalan leaders in Madrid campaigned for a federal state in which Catalonia, along with other regions like Galicia, the Basque Country and Aragon, would remain a part of Spain, but be self-governing (“The cultural 'Renaixença' ...”). Catalan federalism was the most popular political ideology in Catalonia during the mid-19th

century though Carlism and other ideologies remained as minorities during the last third of the 19th century under King Alfonso's rule. The loss of Cuba frustrated the Catalan bourgeoisie who relied on Cuban trade and raw goods to support their businesses causing Catalanism to develop further ("América y Cataluña"). The movement was subdivided into different factions such as the Carlists, who favored Catalan autonomy under an absolutist monarchy and the Republicans, who favored a self-governing Catalonia under a federal Spain. Other smaller factions include anarchists and far left leaning groups. Despite the varying ideologies within these factions, the most important goal was to gain Catalan influence in Madrid. With this in mind, the *Lliga Regionalista* (the Regionalist League) was formed as a sort of umbrella organization designed to combine all factions under a common cause ("Political Catalanism..."). The idea of a unified league of different political ideologies coming together under the common goal of autonomy serves as an important basis for the nationalist movement today.

La *Lliga* campaigned for more rights for Catalonia but Alfonso XIII was not receptive to the demands. The landscape of Spain and Catalonia in the early 20th century was tumultuous to say the least. The first two decades of the 1900s in Catalonia were characterized by constant protests against the Spanish government and harsh retaliation for these protests. Uprisings against the regime occurred all over Spain, but especially in Catalonia. A particular set of protests against Spanish territorial losses in Morocco set off a string of counter attacks by the monarchy in what was called the "Tragic Week" in Barcelona ("Political Catalanism..."). Hundreds were jailed or killed in an attempt to subdue angry Catalans.

The Spanish monarchy was crumbling and revolution was seemingly inevitable. In a last ditch attempt to consolidate his power, Alfonso XIII supported a successful military coup by Primo de Rivera. Primo de Rivera was an intelligent, well-spoken military genius who, after gaining power, successfully managed the military campaigns in Morocco, encouraged industrial development and, to Catalonia's delight, interacted with socialist labor unions ("La crisis de la restauración ..."). Eventually, due to intense pressure from Spanish citizens and the economic effects of the Great Depression in 1929, Alfonso removed Primo de Rivera from power. Primo de Rivera's replacements were much less successful than Primo de Rivera, so, after almost two years of chaos, Alfonso surprisingly relinquished his crown and fled Spain. With the end of the monarchy in Spain, the Second Spanish Republic was officially declared in 1931. ("La crisis de la restauración ...")

The Second Spanish Republic brought a new era for Catalan nationalism. After the abdication of Alfonso XIII and Spain officially became a republic, Catalonia declared itself a Catalan Republic *under* the Spanish Republic (Colomines i Companys, 2008: 67). The new Catalan republic reinstalled the *Generalitat*, which had been absent for decades, led by the *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya*, or Left Republicans of Catalonia. This political party controlled the *Generalitat* and thus the new autonomous Catalonia. The leader of the *Esquerra*, Francisco Macía was, personally, a proponent of Catalan independence. However, most Catalan political leaders, even many in his own party, stressed the idea of a Catalan republic within the Spanish state. (Colomines i Companys, 2008: 67-8)

In complete contrast to past (and future) interactions, the Catalan and Spanish leaders worked together surprisingly well during the transition to the republic. Macía worked with Spanish officials in the task of creating a statute of autonomy for Catalonia in order to define its place in the Second Republic. The Catalan government (which had not held elections yet and consisted of Macía and a few other political officials) drafted a preliminary statute called the Statute of Núria. The statute called for a federal Spain, self government of all Catalan lands (including Valencia, the Balearic Islands and parts of Aragon), Catalan being the only official language of Catalonia, Catalan control of taxes, establishment of a Catalan parliament, justice system, and council, and Catalan control of various aspects of their economy, including industry and agriculture. This statute was too extreme for the government in Madrid, which required many amendments before ratification. (Colomines i Companys, 2008: 68-9)

The Constitution of 1931 put a stop to many of the autonomous aspirations of Catalonia, and after a lengthy debate in Spanish parliament; the statute was approved with extreme modifications. The revised statute allowed for the creation and promotion of the Catalan parliament and granted it the right to control certain aspects of Catalonia's economy. The document restricted Catalan calls for a monolingual state but instead approved a bilingual society with Spanish and Catalan being the co-official languages. The new statute also severely reduced Catalan competencies in the field of education and contained a provision that allowed for the unilateral interference of the Spanish government whenever it deemed necessary (Colomines i Companys, 2008: 69-70).

Though the statute was diminished significantly, it was still seen as a success by many Catalans as it reinvigorated Catalan culture and brought back Catalan self-government. The *Esquerra Republicana* remained in power from 1931-1934 with relatively little competition, though the *Lliga* was still influential in Catalonia. The liberal *Generalitat* and the liberal Spanish parliament worked together frequently for two years with relatively few issues. In 1934, however, power switched from a liberal government in Madrid to a conservative one. The advancement of the conservative Spanish government allowed more radical conservatives access to the government, paving the way for the end of the Republic (Colomines i Companys, 2008: 70). The anti-autonomy right wing parties in the Spanish government gained more power due to the economic instability. The economy also affected confidence in the *Esquerra* as protests by anarchists, conservatives, and pro-Spanish nationalists began to pop up. In 1934, Lluís Companys, president of Catalonia, announced that he, along with the rest of the Catalan parliament, would work toward making the *Generalitat* the only power in Catalonia. He stressed, however, that he was not searching for independence for Catalonia, rather, he wanted the *Generalitat* to have as much power as possible. This reality was never achieved however, as the political landscape of Spain took a sharp turn in 1936. (Colomines i Companys, 2008: 70-7)

The military coup of 1936 brought the beginning of the end for the Second Spanish Republic. The Nationalists, consisting of Carlists, fascists, monarchists, and far right-leaning conservatives had control of Spanish Morocco and much of the mid-western portions of Spain (R. Smith 1965). Their goal was to overthrow the

Republicans and replace the democratic system with an absolutist ruler. The Nationalists were led by General Francisco Franco, the infamous military leader turned dictator. Though originally not a fascist himself, Franco incorporated fascism into the Nationalist agenda due to pressure from the Falange, an organization based on Italian fascism founded by Primo de Rivera's son, José Antonio Primo de Rivera. Franco saw success early on, capturing most of the western border of Spain from the Republicans in the first year of the war. With help from Germany and Italy, Franco continued his successful campaign. German dictator Adolf Hitler came to Franco's aid as his *Luftwaffe* bombed the Basque city of Guernica in 1937, completely destroying the town and the Basque resistance (R. Smith 1965).

As the war advanced on, the Catalan leadership began to work closer together with the state leadership in Madrid. Tensions were high between the two entities, though, because of Companys' declaration of Catalan sovereignty a just a couple of years before, and the failure of the Republican military to stop Franco's quick advance closer and closer to Catalonia. Eventually, in 1938, Companys repealed the sovereignty statute and Catalonia once again became an autonomous entity within the Spanish state. However, this gesture was insignificant as Franco had already advanced his troops capturing most of Catalonia and setting the stage for his eventual rule over all of Spain. (Colomines i Companys, 2008: 82-4)

1939 brought about the final crushing defeat of the Republicans and any hope for Catalan autonomy. As the last Republicans fell, Franco began his persecution of anyone who opposed his regime. Catalan leaders fled to France or

England fearing for their lives. Former Catalan soldiers were sent to labor camps or forced into manual labor in Catalan cities. Any Catalan leaders that remained in Spain were captured and “tried” by military tribunals that were notoriously biased and often only took 10 minutes to hear each case. From these trials, over 3,500 rebels, including Companys, were sentenced to execution by firing squad from 1939-1953 (“La Guerra Civil...”).

Franco had a plan to Castilianize all of Spain, despite the diversity that existed in all corners of the state. This meant a complete cleanse of all things Catalan. Firstly, Franco dissolved the Statute of Autonomy effectively ridding Catalonia of any political say within the Franco government (“La Guerra Civil...”). Catalonia and other “culturally different” regions like the Basque Country, Galicia, and Valencia suffered similar fates as the lines dividing these communities were basically eradicated and they were incorporated into Franco’s “unified Spain” (R. Smith, 1965: 477). In an effort to maintain his power and diminish opposition, Franco criminalized all non-Castilian languages, traditions, and culture (“El franquismo en Cataluña”). Until 1951, it was illegal to create any cultural works, such as literary works and art, which were “Catalan” (or Basque or Galician) (“El franquismo en Cataluña”). Catalan was also prohibited in public life, including in all schools and workplaces. If a Spanish soldier or officer heard it spoken outside the home, the speaker was chastised or even jailed for insubordination. A common phrase was ‘If you are Spanish, speak the language of the Empire’. Franco even went so far as to change the names of streets, buildings, and public areas from their original Catalan to a more “appropriate” Castilian Spanish name. Catalan traditions

like the *sardana*, a Catalan dance, and *castilos de humanos*, (human acrobatic towers) were banned from the public sphere while “traditional” Spanish cultural activities were promoted like *flamenco* dancing and bull-fighting. All church services were performed in Latin or Spanish, not Catalan, and Catholicism became the mandatory religion for the entire nation. Traditional Catalan names were prohibited for newborns as each new child was required to have a Christian, Spanish name (“El franquismo en Cataluña”). Using the Catalan (or Basque) version of someone’s name was frowned upon in the public sphere and potentially punishable by Franco’s police.

Despite the repression of Catalan cultural institutions and the destruction of Catalonia’s political institutions, Catalan nationalism survived in various forms. Exiled after the Republican loss in the Civil War, Catalan political leaders continued to meet in France (“The occupation of Catalonia.”). The *Generalitat* resumed after the end of World War II in 1944 with Josep Irla leading as President, though this government was short lived. In 1954, a new figure stepped forth for the Catalonians in exile. Josep Tarradellas was elected president of the *Generalitat* by Catalans in exile in Mexico. Though his election was controversial and relatively unknown to the Catalans back in Spain, the mere existence of the *Generalitat* was significant in the Catalans’ fight to save their culture from Franco’s attempts at extinction. While Catalans in exile pondered strategies for their return to Spain, the Catalans in Barcelona and other cities began small steps against Franco’s regime. In 1951, Catalans boycotted the use of the state-run tram system when fares were raised only in Catalonia while they remained the same in the rest of the provinces.

Syndicates and organizations formed and held illegal meetings with the purpose of voicing their discontent with Franco's regime. Protestors singing Catalan songs and waving the flag of Catalonia frequented Barcelona's plazas. The film industry was surprisingly successful in Catalonia, despite the extreme censorship laws in place. Anti-Franco themes were frequently hidden in films and music produced in Catalonia. Wealthy Catalans supported the movement by sending funds to the government in exile and funding secret meetings to the local Catalan nationalists ("The occupation of Catalonia.")

In 1971, Catalan nationalism under Franco came to a head. Around 300 leaders from all sectors of Catalan life met in Barcelona with the goal of creating a unified front against Franco (Guibernau, 2004: 66). Under the motto "Freedom, Amnesty and Statute of Autonomy," the gathering attempted to put into words the goals of the Catalan nationalist movement since the establishment of Franco's regime. According to official documents from the event, Catalan demands included the upholding of the democratic rights of freedom of speech, assembly and association, the right to trade unions, strikes and demonstration, amnesty for political prisoners, and the re-establishment of the Catalan institutions embodied in the Statute of Autonomy which guaranteed the right of self-determination. This event was momentous for many reasons. Firstly, it gathered leaders from different ends of the political spectrum and economic classes. Originally started by Catalan communist and socialist leaders, eventually center and right leaning leaders joined. This set the stage for future collaboration between political parties of opposite ideals for the common goal of furthering the nationalist agenda. Secondly, the

movement solidified the goals of Catalonia under the Franco regime. The assembly attendees clearly stated that Catalonia had the right to express their cultural identity while maintaining their place in Spain. Thirdly, the assembly itself became an organization that spearheaded campaigns for Catalan nationalism in the years that followed. (Guibernau, 2004: 64-5)

Part III: Strengthening Nationalism Post-Franco

On November 20, 1975, Spain's fascist dictatorship came to an end as General Francisco Franco died. As he had decreed years earlier, the new leader of Spain was a monarch, specifically King Juan Carlos ("The restored *Generalitat*"). The new king descended directly from the Bourbon royal line in power before the Second Spanish Republic and Franco's reign. It is in this time period that we see the establishment of the foundation for separatism. In the years before Franco, economic, political, and cultural trends developed, shaping Catalonia and its nationalist movement. However, it wasn't until after Franco's dictatorship had ended that these forces began to establish and re-establish themselves, strengthening the movement further and providing a solid foundation for which separatism could eventually thrive.

Political Foundations

A de-centralized state system such as Spain's, can contribute to the emergence of separatism. It is during this period that Spain developed this system of governance. The main goal of the Crown and politicians after Franco's death was to reform Spain into a constitutional monarchy while trying to satisfy multiple political parties and agendas ("The restored *Generalitat*"). In Catalonia, the momentum gained from the National Assembly meetings powered demands for the new national government to make accommodations for Catalonia. The first president of the new Spain, Adolfo Suárez, made an effort to hear Catalan and Basque demands. He was aware of the growing regionalism throughout Spain and therefore was open

to Catalan demands to reinstate their political, cultural, and economic autonomy. In 1977, the *Generalitat* was reinstated and Josep Tarradellas, in exile until this point, returned to reclaim his position as President of Catalonia. (“The restored *Generalitat*”)

The next step after the first democratic elections was the drafting of a constitution. The Constitution of 1978 is an extraordinary effort of multiple political parties, including anti-Francoists, reformist Francoists, conservative pro-Spain nationalists, and left-leaning regionalist leaders (Guibernau, 2004: 72). With the ratification of the constitution, Spain became a constitutional monarchy, reestablishing the *Cortes Generales* and making the King of Spain the Head of State (Span. Constitution). For Catalonia, the constitution was a great success in the campaign for autonomy. Section 2 of the document states that: “The Constitution is based on the indissoluble unity of the Spanish Nation, the common and indivisible homeland of all Spaniards; it recognizes and guarantees the right to self-government of the nationalities and regions of which it is composed and the solidarity among them all” (Span. Constitution). According to Section 143 of the document, “bordering provinces with common historic, cultural and economic characteristics, insular territories and provinces with a historic regional status,” may form self-governing autonomous communities. Thus, seventeen autonomous communities were established, including Catalonia, the Basque Country, and Galicia. In addition, the constitution guaranteed the right to use not only Castilian Spanish, but other languages native to Spain, including Catalan, Basque, Galician, and Aranese. Section 3 of the document states: “The wealth of the different linguistic forms of Spain is a

cultural heritage which shall be especially respected and protected”. After forty plus years of persecution and repression, Catalan citizens were finally able to practice their culture, speak their language, and govern themselves.

This distinction recognizing the existence of a separate Catalan identity was highly significant. In the years before (especially under Franco’s rule), the acceptance of Catalan culture as distinct from Spanish culture was impossible to imagine. Now, not only was Catalan culture recognized, but it was *protected* by the constitution. Perhaps most significant is the implication that Catalonia is inherently different from the other regions of Spain, thus laying the foundation for separatist claims of “Catalonia is not Spain”. Likewise, the recognition of the Catalan nationality provided legitimacy to Catalan claims of nationhood which would appear later in the 21st century (although the constitution never actually states Catalonia is a *nation* and this fact is debated later on in the revision of the Statute of Autonomy of 2006 discussed later).

An additional provision in the constitution allowed for the autonomous communities to decide on the specific competencies each community would be responsible for and which it would delegate back to the Spanish state (Sections 142, 148-9). This provision had the potential to lead to the de-centralization of the Spanish state. Each community was required to present a Statute of Autonomy which outlined the community’s competencies, official languages, and borders (Sections 143-5). Catalonia’s Statute of Autonomy was officially ratified by Catalan voters and accepted by the Spanish parliament in 1979 (“History of the

Generalitat”). Unlike other Spanish autonomous communities, Catalonia’s Statute called for the highest extent of self-governing allowed by the national constitution (Statute of Autonomy 1979). For example, Catalonia created a Catalan police force, the *Mossos d’Esquadra*. In most other autonomous communities, the *Guardia Civil*, or Spanish National Police, are the only police force (“History of the *Generalitat*”). A separate healthcare system for Catalan citizens, management of Spanish prisons in Catalonia, and, of course, the use of Catalan as the main language in the public sphere also separated Catalonia from its fellow communities (Statute of Autonomy, title IX).

Under this statute, Catalonia became (along with the Basque Country) the most autonomous community in Spain. This level of autonomy is also important in regards to separatism. With the exception of a few areas such as immigration, national security, and taxes, Catalonia controls and regulates most of what occurs in its own region. Though Catalonia is not entirely self-sufficient, its level of autonomy provides a foundation for claims that Catalonia will be able to support itself after it separates from Spain. Pro-separatist leaders claim the region is functioning successfully with its current level of control and will be able to thrive if Catalonia was in complete control of its own affairs. Though the accuracy of this theory is questioned by anti-separatists, it is still considered a key argument in the separatist movement. To separatists, Catalonia has thrived *despite* Spanish interference; to anti-separatists, Catalonia has thrived *because of* Spanish interference. Whatever the true answer, the level of autonomy Catalonia obtained with the Statute of Autonomy of 1978 strengthened the political foundation for separatism if only because it

provided Catalonia with an opportunity to show it can control and be governed by itself successfully.

Likewise, the presence of Catalan nationalist political parties is another building block in the political foundation of Catalonia. After the death of Franco, Josep Tarradellas was named interim president until power was successfully transferred to Jordi Pujol. Pujol was the leader of the center-right, Catalan nationalist party the Democratic Convergence of Catalonia. This party is still alive and functioning today as part of a federation with the Democratic Union of Catalonia. Together, the two form the Convergence and Union Federation. What is significant about this political party, as well as about three other Catalan political parties, is that they are unique to Catalonia. There are not national branches of these parties in other autonomous communities. Though they may share similar platforms to the Catalan branches of the Popular Party or the Socialist Party, they operate only in Catalonia, for Catalonia. Furthermore, the Catalan nationalist parties have been successful in Catalonia, with nationalist parties being in power for 33 of the past 40 years the Catalan parliament has been reinstated (“History of the *Generalitat*”). These nationalist parties have been vital in promoting not only Catalan nationalist interests, but separatist interests as well. Current Catalan president and CiU leader Artur Más is the head of the separatist movement and has been pushing for legislation and decrees that would make separatism possible and more likely. In January 2015 he even called for early parliamentary elections to try to gain more seats in parliament that were pro-separatism (Moffett and Román 2015). These parties represent Catalan interests instead of Spanish interests within Catalonia like

the Catalan branches of the PP and PSOE. Their mere presence strengthens Catalan nationalism because they put political power in the hands of Catalan nationalists as opposed to those campaigning for Spanish priorities. Their popularity shows exactly how strong the Catalan nationalist movement actually is as well. They also provide a solid foundation for separatism because they show that the loss of the national Spanish political parties after a potential split from Spain will be inconsequential as the governing body of Catalonia has its own parties from which it can rule.

The relationship between Catalonia and Spain is an issue as well.

Traditionally, Catalan and Spanish leaders have butted heads over multiple issues, especially regarding Catalonia's autonomy. Under Franco, Catalan leaders were executed, jailed, and exiled as most were in opposition to Franco. However, after his death Catalan and Spanish leaders began to work together to form solutions to Catalan issues and successfully transition to democracy. As time passed, though, the leaders of both groups began to clash more frequently, often over economic issues. By the end of the first decade of the new millennium, as the economic recession took its toll on the Spanish and Catalan economies, cooperation between the two sank to a new low and tensions ran high. Both sides claim the other is being unreasonable and accuse them of acting unconstitutionally. As recently as January 2015, the Spanish government announced that they may seek the arrest of Artur Más after he continued to hold the independence referendum in November 2014, even after it was declared illegal. The uncooperative attitudes between the two entities lengthens the divide between them, furthering the distrust of Spanish politicians and strengthening Catalan nationalism.

In addition, the presence of the EU and NATO is significant in strengthening the foundations for Catalan nationalism. Multiple authors argue that the European Union has made separatism in Europe more attainable than it has been in the past. Christopher Connolly cites the Maastricht Treaty and its additional amendments as important steps in the creation of a region-friendly EU (Connolly, 2013: 2). The treaty allowed for the participation of regions within the EU by creating the Committee of Regions, establishing the Principle of Subsidiarity, and promoting the idea of an over-arching European citizenship beyond simply the national and regional identities. He also cites the cultural and linguistic protection for regions in the form of funds from the “rights regime” as well as the ability for regions to participate in para-diplomacy outside of their state (Conolly, 2013: 79). Mattias Bieri (2014) reiterates this and also points out that the EU provides many of the competencies that could cause difficulty to a small, newly independent state such as formation of a new currency, foreign policy, and security. If Catalonia becomes independent and joins NATO, then the issue of small-state security will be solved. Likewise, the common market of the EU also provides the promise of economic security and a continuation of current trade without much disruption (Bieri, 2014: 3). The EU, by promoting regional protections, strengthens Catalonia’s arguments for greater autonomy and recognition of Catalan issues. Likewise, the participation of Catalonia by itself with other regions and states of the EU strengthens the argument that Catalonia is able to function in European society without the “help” of Spain and will continue to do this if they become independent.

Economic foundations

Perhaps the most well-known facet of Catalan nationalism is the economic relationship between Spain and Catalonia. As shown in the previous chapters, Catalonia has almost always been one step ahead of the Spanish economy. From Roman times to present day, Catalonia has been a hub for agriculture, trade, industry, and tourism. Spain has also been economically successful yet there has been a gap between the two entities for a while. After Franco's death and Catalonia's re-emergence, this gap became even wider.

The OPEC oil crisis along with the transition to democracy in the 1970s was almost catastrophic for Catalonia and the rest of Spain. However, when the oil crisis finally ended and the world began to recover, Catalonia bounced back quickly (McRoberts, 2001: 95). Spain's membership in the European Economic Community, approved in 1986, brought easy access to European markets for Catalonia and the rest of Spain. The late 1980s brought more and more tourists to Barcelona and the *Costa Brava*, creating thousands of jobs and prompting an increase in immigration. In 1992, Barcelona hosted the Summer Olympic Games. The event was a great success for Catalonia and Spain. Though the event was 400% over budget, the games brought a host of improvements to Catalan infrastructures that remain to this day. The games brought Catalonia and Spain together under the common cause of promoting a successful Olympic experience. Unemployment shrunk, tourism boomed, and miles of beaches were created by demolishing hundreds of industrial buildings along the coastline. Additionally, millions of dollars were invested in

sports facilities, teams and programs across the region in order to further the success of Catalan and Spanish athletes (McRoberts, 2001: 96-97). All of these investments, though costly, changed the landscape of Barcelona, and with it, Catalonia. Tourists came for the Olympics but stayed for the beaches and warm weather. The success of the Olympics brought a renewed confidence in Spain, proving to the world that Spain was no longer Franco's domain. Catalonia benefitted from the direct investment in the region and increased tourism, solidifying its place in the world economy.

The economic and political effects of the Olympics lasted throughout the 1990s and into the 2000s. Barcelona became one of the most popular spots for international and Spanish vacationers alike. Throughout the beginning of the 2000s, Catalonia maintained an unemployment rate hovering in the 4-6% range and a GDP per capita comparable to the top earning European countries (IDESCAT, Eurostat). From 2005-2007, Spain saw a GDP growth rate of 4% and an unemployment rate hovering around a reasonable 9% (Eurostat). GDP per inhabitant was nearly \$24,000 in 2006 and decently ranked in the top 15 of EU countries. Tourism was thriving and the housing market was booming. Catalonia was thriving as well. From 2005-2007 Catalonia maintained a GDP growth similar to Spain's at around 3.5% and a low unemployment rate averaging 6.6% (World Bank, IDESCAT). GDP per capita in Catalonia was \$30,000, meaning that, if Catalonia was an independent member of the EU, it would be ranked 4th in highest GDP per capita in the EU. Spain's ranking at this time was 13th (Eurostat).

These numbers indicate the massive success Catalonia was having in comparison to the rest of Spain and further show how the economy of Catalonia strengthens Catalan nationalism. Just as separate Catalan political parties imply an ability to survive without Spain, this disparity shows that Catalonia could not only survive, but also thrive without the economic safety net of Spain. Furthermore, it creates a superiority complex within Catalonia that Catalonia *is* and *would be* even better without the poorer regions of Spain weighing them down. This thought was further enhanced by the realization of a tax deficit with Spain. The 20% difference in GDP per capita between Catalonia and Spain caused Spain to take a higher percent of taxes from Catalonia than other autonomous regions. In 2009, Catalonia contributed around 13 million Euros to the “community pot” or the fund that the Spanish government uses to distribute funding to each community (IDESCAT). However, since Catalonia is less reliant on Spanish funds because they control more competencies than other communities, Catalonia only received around 3 million Euros in funding, which, according to the Catalan government, is still not sufficient. The deficit this created was part of the motivation for the introduction of the revised Statute of Autonomy (which will be discussed later on) and remains a main economic grievance in the separatist movement to this day.

Cultural foundations

Though the politics and economy of Catalonia are important factors in Catalan nationalism, neither would have any meaning without the presence of a separate Catalan culture. This identity which developed in the middle ages has

remained the most important issue of Catalan nationalism. Without this distinct identity, separatism would be much less likely to occur and Catalan nationalism would be practically non-existent. As it stands, there is a distinct Catalan culture which is the driving force behind the nationalist movement. Despite numerous attempts to eradicate Catalan traditions and culture beginning in the 18th century and especially under Franco, the Catalan culture has survived and thrived.

The growing sense of nationalism in the post-Franco era could be contributed to a similar phenomenon that occurred in the mid-19th century when Catalan nationalism first arose. The new Catalan renaissance that occurred after Franco's death reflects the one that occurred in the mid-1800s. Historicism, the admiration of past Catalan glory, as well as a sense of martyrdom could be the causes for an increased interest in Catalan culture. During the time of Franco, all forms of Catalan identity were hidden under threat of jail. After forty years of persecution, the culture was almost lost entirely. An entire generation never learned the language or traditions. So, when Franco died, Catalan culture was promoted to an extreme. The Language Normalization Act of 1983 brought about a change in education. This act, which passed unanimously through Catalan parliament, attempted to revive the use of Catalan and promote it within the public sphere ("The democratic transition and..."). Specifics of the act called for the mandatory use of Catalan in all state-run media outlets, the use of Catalan as the primary language in elementary-high schools, and the subsidizing of language classes for teachers in public schools who were "strongly recommended" to learn Catalan. The effects of these laws were noticeable within the next few years. In 1975, only 14.5% of

Catalans were able to write and read in Catalan. However, by 1986, that number had increased to 31.5% and in 1996 that number was 45.8% (“The democratic transition and...”).

The significance of these figures must be noted. The first Catalans to receive their education in Catalan and be exposed to the culture after Franco were those born in the final years of Franco’s reign and after 1975. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that these Catalans in their twenties and thirties, common ages for political involvement and activism, are marching in the streets demanding independence. These Catalans identify more with Catalonia than they do Spain, because they were raised as Catalans and not Spaniards. It would make sense for them to desire a country of their own as they seemingly don’t relate to Spaniards of their age. This thought is not limited to youth. In 2007, 41.2% of those surveyed by the Catalan government described themselves as equally Spanish and Catalan, 29.4% said they were more Catalan than Spanish, and 17.1% said they only identified as Catalan (Baròmetre d’Opinió Política: Oct. 2007). In November of 2010, the percentage of those surveyed that identified as only Catalan had risen to 20.3% with 42.5% identifying as equally Spanish and Catalan and 25.5% identifying as more Catalan than Spanish (Baròmetre d’Opinió Política: Nov. 2010). By January 2015, 35.8% identified as equally Spanish and Catalan, 23.4% identified as more Catalan than Spanish and 26.0% identified as only Catalan (Baròmetre d’Opinió Política: Jan. 2015). It is also important to note a similar upward trend in the number of Catalans supporting an independent Catalan state. In July 2009 19% of Catalans surveyed believed Catalonia should be an independent state. By July of

2010, this number had risen to 24.3% (Baròmetre d'Opinió Política: July 2009, July 2010). As of January 2015, this percentage was around 39% (Baròmetre d'Opinió Política: Jan. 2015). It is apparent that there is a connection between the growing number of Catalans who do not identify as Spanish and those who think Catalonia should be an independent state.

Part IV: Triggering the Shift to Separatism

Up until the late 2000s Catalan nationalist demands focused on greater autonomy for Catalonia. As the 2000s came to a close, however, a few events triggered a shift in the movement. The economic, political and cultural factors which strengthened the nationalist movement and caused it to be a formidable political force in Spanish politics would combine and create a strong foundation for separatism that would be triggered by political and economic events. This shift to separatism would be vital in the development of Catalan nationalism and would force Spain and Europe to pay attention to Catalan demands.

The Recession

The economic downturn in the late 2000s had disastrous effects on the already strained economic relations between Spain and Catalonia. Catalonia's economic grievances were exacerbated during the recession. Both Catalonia and Spain suffered greatly during the economic crisis. By 2010, Catalonia's GDP growth was at .3% and unemployment was at 17.7% (IDESCAT). The economic downturn increased the already strained relations between Catalonia and Spain. Spain set a goal for each of its 17 autonomous communities to decrease its public deficit to 2.4% by the end of 2010; however Catalonia ended the year with a deficit of 3.86% (Fidalgo 2011). In order to relieve some of the pressure on Spanish citizens, the government in Madrid began creating policies that directly affected Catalan citizens such as lowering the ticket price of trains and metros in Catalonia. However, this act, seemingly helpful to Catalan citizens, angered Catalan officials as it is the Catalan

regional government which operates the train systems in Catalonia and therefore receives the revenue from ticket sales. Lowering the price of tickets had a direct effect on the Catalan government but not the Spanish government which called for the decrease in price. Another grievance put forth by Catalonia was Spain's decision to not add money to the Competitiveness Fund, an account which was formed to close the tax deficit between the state and the wealthier autonomous communities. Because of this decision, the Spanish government owed Catalonia over 1.35 million Euros in 2010 (Fidalgo 2011). These examples, along with others, caused frustration in the Catalan government. Francesc Homs, spokesman for the Catalan parliament, said in an interview with the Catalan News Agency in March of 2011 "The Spanish Government cannot be adopting decisions which represent more expenditure for the Catalan Government and afterwards criticizing us for spending too much money without compensating us for this extra expenditure."

The recession had extreme consequences but in Catalonia it may have had the most impact. It surely contributed to the already present economic grievances and strained relationship with Spain. The tax deficit and Catalonia's "subsidizing" of poorer regions of Spain, which were issues present even before the recession, were suddenly in the spotlight as, according to separatists, major causes to Catalonia's economic woes. Likewise, the austerity measures made by the Spanish government directly affected its autonomous communities. The conservative government in Madrid made decisions, like the choice to lower public transport fees, which were to benefit the country as a whole rather than the individual communities (Fidalgo 2011). The recession also removed any hope of fiscal reform for Catalonia and Spain

as both regions sunk deeper into the recession. Spain could not afford a new fiscal agreement with Catalonia regarding its tax system that would potentially take away extra funds from Catalonia. Catalonia, however, needed a tax reform to improve their economic situation. As a result, tensions continued to grow as the recession worsened. In 2010, tensions came to a head when Spain's unwillingness to negotiate was confirmed when the Spanish Supreme Court made a ruling on Catalonia's revised Statute of Autonomy.

The Statute of Autonomy Ruling

In 2005, the Catalan parliament began drafting a revision to the Statute of Autonomy ratified in 1979. The *Estatut* was controversial in nature mainly because it defines Catalonia as a nation within Spain. The document states "In reflection of the feelings and wishes of the citizens of Catalonia, the Parliament of Catalonia has defined Catalonia as a nation by an ample majority (Preamble of the Statute of Autonomy). The Statute also revises Catalonia's economic agreement with the government in Madrid, instead suggesting an economic system modeled after the Economic Agreement the Basque Country has with Madrid (Statute of Autonomy 2006: art. 223). Specifically, article 223 sought to practically cease Spanish taxation on Catalan citizens by instead giving Catalonia power over their own tax systems. Other small, yet important, changes were included in the revision as well. Catalonia will receive more control over their airports and prison, more say in immigration matters relevant to the region, and greater legal jurisdiction (BBC). The Statute also specifies that Catalan will be the primary language of schools, government, and in

the public sphere (Article 6). While the first statute also included provisions stating Catalonia's right to use Catalan as an official language, the 2006 version implies the eventual disappearance of Spanish in the public sphere and encourages the use of Catalan as the only language in the region (with the exception of Occitan in the region of Aran in Catalonia) (Article 6, preamble).

The document passed through the *Generalitat* very easily and was ratified by Catalan voters with 73.9% in favor of the document, though only 49% of the electorate voted ("Els detalls de la sentència"). Despite the strong statements made in the document, the Spanish government was supportive of the referendum. Then Spanish Prime Minister José Luis Zapatero, a member of the PSOE or People's Socialist party supported the referendum stating it would give Catalonia "greater recognition of the [Catalan] identity" ("Els detalls de la sentència"). Though the document was ratified by the Catalan people, the policies would not go into effect until the revisions were reviewed by the Spanish High Courts.

After four years, in July of 2010 the Spanish Constitutional Court released their ruling on the constitutionality of the revised Catalan Statute of Autonomy of 2006. The review of the revised Statute of Autonomy produced a controversy that would set the tone for Catalan/Spanish relations for the years ahead. The most significant changes the Spanish Constitutional Court made were in regards to Catalan claims of being a nation. According to the ruling, "The interpretation of the references to 'Catalonia as a nation' and to 'the national reality of Catalonia' in the preamble of the Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia have no legal effect," ("Els detalls

de la sentència”). The court also ruled that the Catalan plans for a new financial agreement were unacceptable according to the constitution. According to the court, since there was no historical precedent for a Catalan financial agreement, like there was in the Basque Country, the new agreement was unconstitutional. Other minor articles were disputed, though none as important as Catalonia’s status as a nation or their financial agreement. After the constitutional court removed the unconstitutional sections from the 2006 Statute of Autonomy, it began to look very similar to the 1978 Statute of Autonomy. In short, nothing much was changed in regards to Catalonia’s status within Spain.

The release of Spain’s ruling on Catalonia came as a shock to Catalans and Spaniards alike. While many had predicted the courts to dispute Catalan claims, the sheer amount of drastic changes was a surprise to those in office as well as Catalan citizens. It became apparent that Spain was unwilling to negotiate with Catalonia on changing the definition of Catalans in Spain. Although Zapatero supported the revised statute, the opposition party, the conservative People’s Party, opposed the revised statute, worrying that it gave too much power to Catalonia and threatened the unity of Spain. The constitutional court was thus divided between the progressive judges and the conservative judges, with a compromise eventually being reached 6-4. (“Un millón de personas...”)

The full report of the ruling was released on July 9, 2010. Almost immediately, *Òmnium Cultura*, a group promoting Catalan culture and language, began organizing a protest of the ruling to take place in Barcelona “Un millón de

personas...”). Through social media platforms, the event was organized within 24 hours. The event was originally planned for three days after the ruling yet Catalan citizens began to gather the next afternoon at the corner of the two busiest streets in Barcelona. From the intersection of Las Ramblas and Passeig de Gràcia, Catalan citizens began to march, shouting "*Libertad, Amnistía y Estatuto de Autonomía*", or Liberty, Amnesty and Statute of Autonomy, the same phrase uttered years before at demonstrations during the democratic transition. The march was led by the then president of Catalonia, José Montilla, alongside political leaders from his party and four others, including future Catalan president Artur Más. Other Catalan institutions sent representatives as well, including the ex-president of the most popular Catalan institution, the FC Barcelona soccer team. Reports vary on exactly how many people attended the event. The *Òmnium Cultural* claims over 1.5 million people were a part of the march, though the Barcelona police claim just over 1.1 million, and the Spanish government claims fewer than 1 million attended (“Un millón de personas...”).

This ruling provided the push that the Catalan nationalist movement needed to make the transition into separatism. The struggling economy and the tensions it created between the Catalan and Spanish governments frustrated the Catalan people. Then, when the Spanish government, through the constitutional courts, effectively rescinded their promise for more Catalan autonomy as a solution to Catalonia’s economic woes, it was “the straw that broke the camel’s back”. Not surprisingly, as public opinion leaned more towards the prospect of independence, the political parties’ position of independence shifted as well. Though it was claimed

to be unrelated, the Catalan nationalist CiU party sponsored a bill that banned bullfighting in Catalonia beginning in 2011 (Noguer, Geli & Roger 2010). Bullfighting was a popular Spanish past time but has never been a significant part of Catalan culture. The supporters of the bill claimed it was a way to promote tourism and respond to the growing trend of anti-bullfight mentality in Spain and the rest of the world. However, some opponents claimed the bill was anti-Spanish propaganda a way to further widen the divide between Catalonia and Spain (Noguer, Geli & Roger 2010). Nevertheless, the bill passed and in 2011 bullfighting was banned in all of Catalonia. The party that sponsored the bill was the same to win the absolute majority of seats in the regional elections in November of 2010.

The ruling PSOE were replaced by the nationalist CiU party in December 2010 with Artur Más at the head (“Elecciones autonómicas 2012 en Cataluña”). Más was one of the political party leaders present at the independence march in July and had repeatedly reiterated his party’s anger at the ruling (Noguer, Geli & Roger 2010). Though the CiU was not officially a separatist party (yet), it promised to protect the rights of Catalans and to seek a new fiscal agreement with Madrid (Noguer, Geli & Roger 2010). In September of 2012, Más followed through on his promise to negotiate an updated economic agreement with Spain. However, the meeting with Mariano Rajoy, the conservative Spanish PM was unsuccessful. Rajoy refused to budge on creating a system similar to the Basque system and Más would not alter his plan to fall under Rajoy’s guidelines (“La Reunión Rajoy-Más...”). Más is quoted as saying that Rajoy’s response was “a no without nuances.” (Minder 2012). Only a few days after the meeting, Más and the CiU officially announced their

support for independence and, surprisingly, their alliances with the ERC and SI, left leaning Catalan nationalist political parties that also support independence. With the successful alliance between the parties, Más was able to push through parliament a bill that stated the Catalan people had the right to decide whether or not they would remain a part of Spain (Noguer & Piñol 2012).

Though the separatist movement may not have been directly caused by the actions of Catalan politicians, the CiU's support of the movement facilitated its growth. Más's main agenda since 2012 has been openly supporting Catalonia's right to decide and promoting an independent Catalan state. Likewise, the *Òmnium Cultural*, originally just an NGO supporting the promotion of Catalan traditions, became a Catalan independence organization, coordinating independence marches and protests since 2010. Even the actions of Rajoy and the PP politicians in Catalonia have influenced the movement. Through their strong disapproval of the movement and their refusal to negotiate with separatist leaders, the PP has contributed to the anti-Spanish sentiment that it tries so hard to combat.

Part V: Conclusions and the Future of the Movement

It is difficult to predict whether the pro-separatists will achieve their goal of an independent Catalan state. They face many obstacles before Catalonia could be seen as “a new European state”. Más has used his executive power to call for early elections in September 2015 in order to maintain the momentum of the movement and fill the parliament with representatives from his own party and the separatist ERC (del Olmo and Ríos 2015). According to Más, the vote will serve as a pseudo-referendum in which Catalans have the opportunity to vote for leaders that are specifically dedicated to breaking with Spain. If the pro-separatists gain the majority in parliament, Más has a plan for Catalonia to become independent in 18 months (Moffett and Román 2015). According to this plan, the separatist parties, called “Yes” parties by Más, will begin the process of drafting a new constitution and planning the transition to an independent democratic state (“Agreement to declare independence...”). The *Generalitat* will then draft a declaration of sovereignty that will establish Catalonia’s position outside of Spanish control and therefore not subject to Spanish constitutional codes regarding separatism (“Agreement to declare independence...”).

To some, these claims seem ambitious as support for Catalan independence outside of Catalonia is hardly overwhelming. Rajoy has been adamant in his disapproval of Más and the entire movement. Support from outside of Spain has been slim, with many European countries wary of supporting a separatist movement for fear of setting a precedent for their own separatist regions. Support for independence has even dwindled within Catalonia as opinion polls have Más’s

party and other “Yes” parties failing to receive the majority vote in parliament if the elections were held today. Likewise, the number of supporters of Catalan independence has diminished to 39% of the population, comparable to 49% in 2012 (Baròmetre d’Opinió Política: Jan. 2015). Yet Más and his allies vow to achieve their goal of an independent Catalan state,

Likewise, even if the separatists complete their 18 month plan for separation, would Catalonia remain in the EU? Would other countries, recognize its sovereignty? Would corporations and citizens boycott Catalonia as has been promised? Would the economic transition be successful? These questions are being asked by both parties in an attempt to understand what an independent Catalonia would look like. Now that Scotland’s referendum failed, Catalonia is at the fore-front of European separatist politics. The case of Catalonia will set a precedent for the dozens of separatist movements popping up all over Europe. If Catalonia declares independence from Spain, the European and world community will have to make a decision whether or not to recognize the new state as legitimate. If they do, then the EU must decide the next course of action in regards to admitting Catalonia into the organization.

Yet, even despite these obstacles, it could be possible for the movement to succeed. The factors that strengthen Catalan nationalism are the same factors that could eventually lead to the success of separatism. Though public support seems to be wavering, continued hostility from the Spanish government could lead to a greater distrust of national politicians. Similarly, the economy in Spain continues to

struggle despite the recovery of most of the rest of Europe. Support for Más and the CiU could rise again if Spain's economy continues to flounder as more and more Catalans seek a different option. Likewise, Rajoy's austerity measures are unpopular in Spain and it is likely the PP will lose many seats (if not their entire majority) during the national election in December 2015. If the PSOE defeats the PP, an independent Catalan state may have a chance of being recognized. The PSOE has been known to be more receptive to Catalan demands for autonomy and could be more willing to negotiate a legal independence referendum. Though PSOE leaders are not supportive of Catalonia leaving Spain, they might be more willing to negotiate reforms to satisfy separatists. Furthermore, if the Catalan nationalist parties gain more seats in parliament during the national elections, they could influence politics at the national level by encouraging a more amicable split with Spain and thus increasing the likelihood of EU recognition and acceptance. Just as the recession and the court ruling triggered the shift to separatism, a similar event occurring in the next few months could cause a shift in either direction. Public support for separatism could fall rapidly or rise quickly in response to a hypothetical triggering event.

In reality, the exact future of the movement is unknown. However it cannot be denied that Catalan nationalism is no longer simply a Catalan issue. Thousands of years of political, economic, and cultural foundation building have elevated Catalan nationalism to a global scale, forcing Catalonia's neighbors to recognize its demands for autonomy. The movement is truly unique with even the closest comparable movement, the Scottish nationalist movement, showing distinct differences.

Catalonia is in the position to set a precedent not only for the other regions of Spain, but for other regions of Europe. Actions taken by Catalonia, Spain, and the EU will determine the course of action for Flanders, the Basque Country, and even Veneto in the future. The formation of an independent Catalonia will finally bring truth to the statement so many Catalans have been saying for decades “Catalunya no es Espanya.”

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