

Catalanism and national emancipation movements in the rest of Europe between 1885 and 1939

Albert Balcells*

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Received 28 September 2011 · Accepted 20 January 2012

ABSTRACT

Catalans' demands for self-government were always attuned to the national emancipation movements in the rest of Europe. This was one way of projecting the movement abroad and seeking strategic models and international support, even though only occasionally and with no lasting ties except Catalonia's participation in the Congress of European Nationalities starting in 1926. This organisation encompassed the national minorities which were theoretically safeguarded by the League of Nations. The time span of this article ranges from 1885 to 1939. The Irish and Czech national movements were the most influential ones outside the sphere of Marxist ideology. In the 1930s, curiosity about and admiration for the status of the nationalities within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was based on an idealised image which the circumstances of the 1936 Spanish Civil War contributed to feeding.

KEYWORDS: nationality, stateless nations, national self-determination, patriotism, Catalonia, Catalanism

From its inception, political Catalanism sought to frame its claims for Catalonia's self-governance within the framework of the European nationalities without a state of their own. It viewed this as a form of international solidarity, a means of projecting the movement abroad and a way of seeking strategic models, and it embodied the conscious internationalisation of Catalan nationalism. In this article, we shall not examine Catalanism's relations with other national movements within Spain, such as the Basque and Galician movements; rather we shall limit ourselves to its relations with movements outside the borders of the Spanish state.

We should distinguish four periods on this subject which reflect the internal evolution of political Catalanism. The first ranges from 1880 to 1901, that is, from the first Catalanist Congress to the first election victory in Barcelona of a Catalanist political party worthy of this name, the Lliga Regionalista de Catalunya (Regionalist League of Catalonia). The second spans from 1901 to 1919. It began with the widespread campaign for Catalan autonomy which came in the wake of World War I and ended in failure by the majority opposition in the Spanish Parliament during the reign of Alphonse XIII. This was also when the first Catalan pro-independence political or-

ganisation was formed, with Francesc Macià at the helm, which won a striking minority of votes in the elections. The third period runs from 1919 until 1931, with the change of regime in Spain after the fall of the dictatorship of General Primo de Rivera (1923-1930) and the creation of the first autonomous government of Catalonia, the Generalitat (1931), presided over by Francesc Macià, who achieved the 1932 Charter of Self-Government under Spain's Second Republic. The fourth period spans from 1931 to 1939 and encompasses the Spanish Civil War from 1936 until 1939. The Franco dictatorship, World War II and the post-war period fall outside the scope of analysis of this article, although they signalled a profound rupture from which Catalonia was just beginning to emerge starting in 1976-1977, after the death of General Francisco Franco.

The first united platform for political Catalanism was the Centre Català (Catalan Centre) founded in 1882 by Valentí Almirall, a federal republican who was disenchanted, like other Catalans, by the failure of Spain's short-lived First Republic of 1873 and opposed to the return to absorbing centralism through the monarchic restoration of the Bourbons in 1875. Political Catalanism aimed to be a transversal, autonomist – not separatist – movement. It aimed to be organised apart from all the Spanish political parties – both monarchic and republican – and to search for a pragmatic political way without subordinating Catalonia's autonomy to regime change in Spain, which was called accidentalism in politics. It also

* **Contact address:** Albert Balcells. Departament d'Història Moderna i Contemporània. Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Edifici B. 08193 Bellaterra, Cerdanyola del Vallès. Tel. +34 935 811 241.
E-mail: albert.balcells@uab.cat



Figure 1. Valentí Almirall. His models included the Swiss Confederation and the United States of America, but he accepted the solution of the Catalan claims within a composite monarchy in the style of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

aimed to overcome the struggle between Catholic fanaticism and anti-clericalism after three civil wars, the Carlist wars. The last one had just ended in Catalonia in 1875 with the military defeat of the anti-liberal traditionalists who had risen up in 1872.

The earliest strands of propaganda from the Centre Català were claims for the official use of Catalan in all situations, especially at schools and in the administration of justice, and the defence of Catalan civil law, which was threatened with extinction by the Castile-based codification of the Spanish Civil Code in 1889. The goal was to develop the consciousness of a collective identity through knowledge of the country's history, folklore and natural heritage and by encouraging excursionism and choral singing.

The fact that political Catalanism emerged when Catalan literature was already reaching its early degree of maturity and modernity explains the feeling of fraternity that Catalanists felt towards the regionalism emanating from Occitanian literature with the *Félibrige*. The poet Frederic Mistral was admired and known in Catalonia. The misconception that Limousin – a synonym of Occitanian – was the same language as Catalan or its initial source still persisted. However, the quest for explicitly political nationalist models meant that soon the interest in the Provençal *Félibriges* waned given their exclusive literary nature. The hegemonic pretensions of the Occitanian writers were rejected in Catalonia, while Mistral's affiliation with the *Ligue de la Patrie Française* (League of the French Fatherland) was disconcerting. However, the Catalan press' attention to regionalism in the French Republic persisted, with a tendency to blow it out of proportion despite its scant political influence. Beyond conservative

Catalanism, in the late 19th century the influence of the oeuvre of Hippolyte Taine and the French positivist revisionism towards the mark of Jacobinism and the legacy of the French Revolution were considerable.

THE FLEETING INTEREST IN THE HUNGARIAN MODEL AND THE MORE LASTING ADMIRATION OF THE CZECH MODEL

As noted, there were uniformist, centralist republics like France and federal or confederal monarchies like the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Germany. For this reason, the possibility that the Spanish monarchy could follow a model similar to the composite monarchy was not discarded, as stated in the so-called "*Memorial de Greuges*" – the *Memòria en defensa dels interessos morals i materials de Catalunya* (Report in Defence of the Moral and Material Interests of Catalonia) – submitted to King Alphonse XII in 1885 by a broad, heterogeneous set of industrial protectionists, *Renaixença* literati, jurists defending Catalan law and Catalan politicians critical within the regime.

After the 1866 defeat to Prussia, Austria had recognised Hungary's national rights in a dual monarchy, which drew the Catalanists' attention. The autonomist message that the *Lliga de Catalunya* (League of Catalonia) addressed to the reigning Queen of Spain, Maria Cristina – an Austrian – in 1888 mentioned the example of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The difference in the importance of Catalonia within the Spanish monarchy compared to the importance of Hungary within the Austro-Hungarian Empire partly invalidated the model, but the Catalanists' admiration waned less for this reason than for the fact that in Hungary the rights of the Slavic minorities like the Croats and Slovenians and the Romanians of Transylvania were not recognised. What is more, the Hungarian oligarchy's effective reluctance to implement universal suffrage, introduced in the western part of the empire in 1907, stripped the political regime of Hungary of democratic prestige in the eyes of the Catalans.

They then set their sights on Czech nationalism, which fought for autonomy from Vienna despite opposition from the Germanic minority in Bohemia. The Czech literary and cultural renaissance was similar to the one taking place in Catalonia, and in fact the adoption of the term "nationalism" to identify Catalanism was due to the Czech influence. Likewise, poet Jacint Verdaguer's relations with Sigmund Bouska symbolise the literary facet of the parallelism between the Catalan and Czech movements. In 1911, Czech socialism became organised into a party independent of its Austrian counterpart, which would have been inconceivable for Spanish socialism. National sentiment was spread equally among all the social echelons in Bohemia, and this impressed the Catalans.

In 1906, an article which appeared in the Catalanist magazine *Juventut* signed by Benet R. Barrios declared the author's admiration of the fact that the Czechs, against all

odds, had managed to educate 100,000 children in their language and were successfully resisting Germanisation. Prague had one Czech and one German university and two public polytechnics for the two communities, while in Spain the government would not allow education in Catalan and refused to create free professorships in Catalan literature, history and law at the state-run University of Barcelona. Its rationale was that education was not bilingual anywhere, a statement that the Czech example belied, as the Catalanists knew.

The Sokol movement was also admired in Catalonia; it was a gymnastic and cultural organisation which was also patriotic, inter-class and non-partisan. This organisation, which was popular among women and adolescents, had been founded by Miroslav Tyrš and Jindřich Fügner in 1862; there were around 5,000 Slavic Sokols in 1891 and 12,000 by 1907. Before World War I, the Sokols were in charge of the social democratic gymnastic clubs. In Catalonia, regardless of how important the excursionist centres' role was in spreading national Catalan consciousness, they were a far cry from representing anything as sweeping as the Czech Sokol ("Falcon") movement. The dissemination of the music by the famous Czech composers like Smetana and Dvořák also served to boost Czech prestige. Until 1914, claims for autonomy prevailed over claims for independence in the Czech national movement, and this enhanced its parallelism with the Catalans' claims. Between the world wars, with the independence of Czechoslovakia, the Catalanists' admiration would only grow.¹ However, we must now return to the 19th century.

THE IRISH AUTONOMIST AND PARLIAMENTARY MODEL AND THE CATALANS' MESSAGE TO PARNELL IN 1886

In 1886, Charles Stewart Parnell seemed to be on the verge of achieving Home Rule for Ireland from the British Parliament through the decision of liberal Prime Minister Gladstone. To the Catalanists who wanted to build a parliamentary party, the Irish model was extremely relevant. For the more traditional Catholic Catalanists, the importance of Catholicism in the Irish national identity was appealing, just as it was in the Polish movement. For the leftist Catalanists like Josep Narcís Roca i Farreras, the Irish nationalist movement was exemplary because it associated agrarian reform – promoted by the Land League – and popular social interests with the national cause, a factor regarded as basic to the future success of political Catalanism yet which was missing at that time.

The Catalanist newspaper *L'Arc de Sant Martí* issued an appeal to sign a congratulatory message for Parnell in 1886, and in 1887 it published an extraordinary issue entitled *Catalunya a Irlanda* (Catalonia to Ireland). A total of 2,886 individuals signed it, which surged to 6,000 by 1887.² The broad swath of society that they represented is surprising: 272 signatories identified themselves as blue-

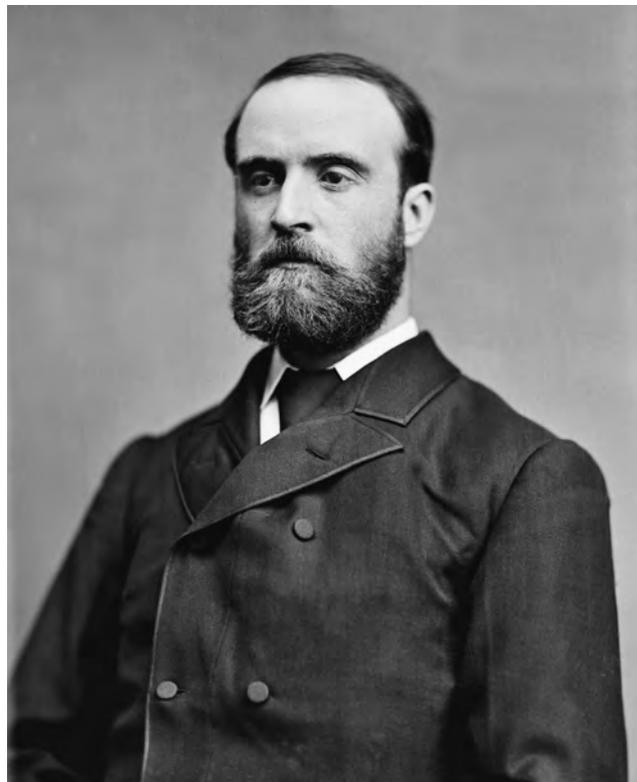


Figure 2. Charles Stewart Parnell, the Irish nationalist leader who was sent a message of solidarity and homage from Barcelona.

collar workers, while salaried workers and freelance artisans accounted for 38% of the total.

Ireland's Home Rule was not approved at that time because of opposition not only from English conservatives and Orange unionists from Ulster but also from certain sectors in the governing liberal party itself. However, interest in Ireland did not wane in Catalonia. Irish nationalism was more deeply rooted and widespread than Catalan nationalism, yet its language, Gaelic, was losing ground to English without a literary renaissance as sweeping as the one taking place in Catalan. Ireland was an economically somewhat underdeveloped country with significant emigration, the opposite of Catalonia, which had developed industry and attracted immigrants.

THE MESSAGE TO GEORGE, KING OF THE HELLENES, IN 1897, AND THE MESSAGE TO THE FINNISH PEOPLE IN 1899

In 1897, the King of Greece sent an expedition to aid the Greeks on Crete, who had risen up against Turkish rule. He found himself isolated by the attitude of the major powers. Thirty-four prominent Catalan intellectuals and politicians signed a manifesto of solidarity with Greek irredemptionism and the message was delivered to the Greek consul in Barcelona. The initiative was promoted by the *Unió Catalanista* (Catalanist Union). The most



Figure 3. Flag of the Unió Catalanista featuring Saint George, the patron saint of Catalonia, slaying the dragon portrayed in a *Modernista* aesthetic.

subversive paragraph of the message said that if Catalonia had a vote in the concert of peoples, it would take Greece's side because "we know all too well, to our own misfortune, what foreign domination is, to never countenance it again wherever it is, regardless of whether it affects Turks or Christians". The Orfeó Català and the Catalunya Nova choir closed the event with their singing. Eighteen magazines and 28 Catalanist organisations joined the affair, and several European newspapers reported on it.³

The second Cuban insurrection against Spanish domination had gotten underway in 1895, followed the next year by the first Philippine uprising. At the same time, the atmosphere was tense because of the anarchist bombs that were set off in Barcelona between 1893 and 1896 in a process that culminated with the 1897 execution of five anarchist workers and numerous rulings of prison and banishment. In this context, the Spanish government's tolerance of Catalanism vanished, and the first repression against it was waged. The Catalanist newspapers *La Renaixença* and *Lo Regionalista* were suspended, as was an event put on by the Centre Català of Sabadell on the situation in Crete. Only the federal republicans, led by Vallès i Ribot, declared their solidarity with the Catalanists, stressing their similar objectives.

We should also note the critical vantage point held by the Catalanist spokesmen – just like the majority of feder-

al republicans – on the war with Cuba and their reluctance to let themselves be convinced by Spanish obfuscation which was unable to avoid a war with the United States, which ended disastrously for Spain in 1898. One year earlier, in 1897, when the Spanish government granted Cuba autonomy, the Catalanists viewed this as an encouraging precedent for their cause, but it was too late and Cuba's separation came with American intervention.

Poland, martyred and torn apart by three powers, inspired the sympathy of the Catalanist press, which censured Germany's Germanisation policy. In the opinion of the Catholic Catalan regionalists, Polish patriotism had the added value of its religious component. However, Poland was too dissimilar to the circumstances in Catalonia to serve as a useful referent.

The message to the Finnish people was the last one that the Unió Catalanista sent in June 1899 to support the cause of a European people prior to the new century. Twenty associations and 15 newspapers belonging to the Unió Catalanista signed it. The message was translated into Finnish by a Swede living in Barcelona so it could be published in the Finnish press, although we do not know whether it actually was.

The Catalan message to the Finnish people in 1899 contained a passage similar to the one sent to the King of Greece: "The Catalans, who live as you do, subjugated under the yoke of foreign domination, who like Finland are different from the state to which we have been chosen to be associated, when we hear your complaints we have shuddered, when we think that your fatherland is also enslaved, that it also lives under the power of a stronger state, always the most barbarous one, never the most advanced."

Finland had shifted from Swedish to Russian hands in 1809, but it had managed to conserve broad autonomy. Finnish cultural identity had gained ground during the 19th century over Swedish cultural influence, which had predominated until then. However, in 1899 Tsar Nicholas II deprived the Finnish Diet of its legislative power, dissolved the Finnish army and imposed Russian as the official language. Taking advantage of the Russian Revolution of 1905, upon the defeat to Japan, the Finnish won back their rights lost in 1899 and the Finnish Diet voted on a constitution with a single chamber instead of the one that had existed until then, which was divided into four parts. It also implemented universal suffrage for men, which was extended to women in 1906. Once tsarism recovered from its concessions to the revolutionary movement in 1905, the Finnish were stripped of their freedoms. With the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, Finland won its independence, although this was accompanied by a civil war in which the Russian Bolsheviks supported the "Reds" and the Germans the "Whites", who ultimately won. The 1918 armistice led to Finland's definitive independence in the midst of harsh rightist repression after three months of civil war. However, in 1919 Finland instated a liberal republican regime which the social democrats started to govern in 1926.

The Unió Catalanista sent yet another message of solidarity to the President of the Republic of Transvaal, Kruger, during the Boer War against the English (1899-1902). This message was presented in November 1900 by delegates from the Unió Catalanista in Paris. The Boers of South Africa did not serve as a model for the Catalanists in the way that the historical European nationalities could, but the *Voortrekkers*, the descendants of the Dutch, did earn the sympathy of a certain swath of public opinion in Catalonia, as they did in other parts of Europe. British imperialism perceived its isolation and the disapproval emanating from Europe. Its victory came at a much higher cost than it had imagined. Later, some Catalanists stressed Britain's caution in its dealings on autonomy with the white victors despite the racial segregation that characterised the South African Union, and later the Republic, for many years.

The messages of support to the Irish, the Greeks of Crete, the Finnish people and the Boers did not give rise to formal relations with these movements; rather they were more internal to Catalonia. The attention paid in Catalonia to concurrent national movements was meant to demonstrate that Catalanism was situated within a European context that was associated with modernity more than with the memory of the past.⁴

ADMIRATION FOR THE BLOODLESS SEPARATION OF NORWAY IN 1905

Catalanism was poised to become a mass movement before the sweeping victory of the electoral coalition of Solidaritat Catalana (Catalan Solidarity) in 1907, when the bloodless separation of Norway and Sweden, which was far from Catalonia in all senses, took place in 1905. Norway had belonged to the Kingdom of Sweden since 1815 after having been dependent on Denmark. In fact, it was a dual monarchy. Only the person of the sovereign and foreign policy were shared. Norway had broad autonomy, while its merchant marine and industry were growing apace with the political rights of its citizens, who secured universal male suffrage in 1898, which came to include women in 1907.

The Swedish government tried to get Sweden's interests to prevail over those of Norway, and in June 1905 the Storting or Parliament of Norway proclaimed its separation from Sweden. Prince Charles of Denmark became the King of Norway, and Sweden did not attempt to regain sovereignty over it utilising weapons. This exceptional Scandinavian example of independence with no war jolted Catalan public opinion, which was already predisposed to feel sympathy towards Norway because the Catalans admired the theatre of Ibsen and Björnson and were familiar with Grieg's music. The prestige of a small country's culture abroad, albeit a country so different to Catalonia, with a literary renaissance in the vernacular during the 19th century accompanied by the economic

push and development of democracy, served as a point of reflection, even though the context bore no similarity with Catalonia's.

This time no manifesto of solidarity with the triumphant Norwegians was necessary. In July 1905, Eugeni d'Ors, the intellectual who would become the most influential figure in the new Catalan cultural current which he dubbed Noucentisme, published a paradoxical article entitled "Noruega imperialista" (Imperialist Norway) in the nationalist republican newspaper *El Poble Català*. At that time, European imperialism had not yet been impugned as it would increasingly be after World War I. Even the Third French Republic, the democratic model for Catalanist leftists, was colonialist and would further boost its overseas holdings with the protectorate of Morocco in 1911.

Some Catalanist intellectuals wanted to articulate Catalan nationalism with imperialism as a form of ideological universalisation. Imperialism was synonymous with political intervention abroad and with overcoming liberal individualism. The goal was to avoid the danger of localism even though Catalanism had always represented Europeanisation more than closure to the outside world. Norway was merely a pretext for countering the separatist tendencies within Catalanism. As Ors said: "The small peoples whose awareness of a mission to be accomplished makes their spirit grand – Norway, Catalonia – also aspire to Imperialism. All of them work for the Reconstruction of the City, trying to become the heirs to the opulent legacy of Mother Rome." There was criticism of nationalism as a form of desegregating regionalism, and Eugeni d'Ors ended up blurring the reality by saying that the ideal of Norway was not "a happy Norway but a strong Scandinavia. Norway's independence is a step towards the reconstruction of Scandinavia [...] Prussia created today's Germanic Empire; Norway will be the Prussia of the future Scandinavia."⁵

Enric Prat de la Riba, who defined Catalan nationalism in his 1906 book *La Nacionalitat Catalana* (The Catalan Nationality), tried to paint imperialism as the peak of any nationalism. However, the practical translation that he extracted from this concession to the spirit of the times was Catalan interventionism in Spanish politics.⁶ To this he added the old Iberian ideal, yet in a dysfunctional guise because it was not accompanied by political relations with Portugal in this direction. It was the myth of Iberian unification set forth by Castilian Spain to offset the autonomy of Catalonia, yet without including Portugal because of the unlikely hypothesis that it would join the Iberian federation voluntarily with the guarantee of Catalonia and the Basque Country as autonomous entities. Prat de la Riba ended his book with a paragraph brimming with fantasy in which he momentarily departed from the realism that was perennially his hallmark: "Then it would be the time to work to reunite the Iberian peoples, from Lisbon to the Rhône, within a single state, a single empire; and if the reborn Spanish nationalities were capable of bringing

this ideal to fruition, if they were capable of imposing it the way Bismarck's Prussia imposed the ideal of Germanic imperialism, the new Iberia would be able to be held up to the supreme degree of imperialism: it would be able to actively intervene in the governance of the world with the other world powers; it would be able to extend yet again over barbarous lands and serve the high interests of humanity by guiding the backwards, uncultivated peoples towards civilisation."

Prat de la Riba became the President of the Provincial Council of Barcelona through Solidaritat Catalana's election victory in 1907, and seven years later he was elected the founding President of the Mancomunitat de Catalunya, a federation of the four Catalan provincial councils of Barcelona, Girona, Lleida and Tarragona. However, this regional organisation never managed to achieve autonomy for Catalonia. Prat de la Riba died in 1917, and his early death fostered unanimous praise of his figure, which in his lifetime had been criticised by the Catalanist left.

THE IDEAL OF AN INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY OF SUBJUGATED EUROPEAN NATIONALITIES: DOMÈNEC MARTÍ I JULIÀ

The antithesis between a national freedom movement and imperialism was crystal clear in the eyes of one radical Catalan nationalist, Domènec Martí i Julià, the President of the Unió Catalanista since 1903. This confederation of patriotic organisations founded in 1891 had remained a cross-cutting, apolitical federation which aspired to act as the single matrix for political Catalanism, even though it was in fact marginalised by both the parliamentary left and right within Catalan nationalism. Martí i Julià remained linked to a naturalist and positivist vision of Catalanism, a distant cry from disorienting myths like imperialism. He hailed from republican federalism and vividly sensed the need to link Catalan nationalism to social reforms so that Catalanism could gain a majority base among the people.

Upon the introduction of imperialism into Catalan nationalist theorisation, Martí i Julià said: "Ultra-modern imperialism is nothing other than Nietzschean individualism applied to collective organisms". Martí i Julià repudiated the irrational vitalism influenced by Nietzsche. By tying nationalism to emancipation, he believed that nationalism was incompatible with imperialism, a myth that he regarded as pathetic when applied to a subjugated nationality such as the Catalans: "Imperialism is a secularised, foolish conception; nationalism is the plenitude of nature", he declared in the magazine *Juventut* in February 1905 in response to Eugeni d'Ors.

Back in 1901, Martí i Julià had written that the "universal fatherland" was a single fatherland and that it was a step backwards because the law of life was distinction and evolution, not uniformity. In the same article he expressed his anti-imperialism: "We do not want to civilise anyone, or

more accurately, we do not any people to be enslaved and annihilated, not even the most backwards peoples, through the actions of white barbarians".⁷ And in 1906 he further stressed: "True universalism is the kind that does not ask anyone to give up anything [...], the kind that does not accept imperialist actions, not even to universalise; it is the opposite of colonisation, yet the defender of the universal spread of progress and civilisation". Coherent with this line of thinking, Martí i Julià, a radical Catalan nationalist, was against the Moroccan War aimed at bringing the northern part of this kingdom into the Spanish protectorate.

In January 1914, Martí i Julià stated that the socialisation of wealth was the precondition for the socialisation of the fatherland, and that only in this way can the fatherland be for everyone. In 1915, he declared that without socialism there could be no national emancipation and that without this national emancipation socialism was merely a negation. Martí i Julià believed that nationalists had to be socialists out of patriotism and that socialists had to fight for the emancipation of the oppressed nationalities in order to truly be international. Both had to counter the imperialisms that had unleashed the world war. If socialist internationalism had been unable to prevent the Great War, it was because it was not truly international, rather only inter-state.

Since the Catalanist left had entered into a period of decline after 1914 and the Catalanist right had become hegemonic in the elections in Catalonia, Martí i Julià believed it necessary to turn the Unió Catalanista into a nationalist Catalan social democratic party. His attempt was a wholesale failure. He died in 1917; however, his thinking remained influential. During his lifetime he was a dissenting voice in the wilderness. He was outside of Spanish socialism, which was in the minority in Catalonia and was divorced from Catalanism. Yet Martí i Julià was even further from the majority syndicalism in Catalonia, which was dominated by the anarchosyndicalists, who were equally indifferent to the Catalanist movement.

When a former colleague of Martí i Julià, Manuel Serra i Moret, the founder along with others of the Unió Socialista de Catalunya in 1923, wrote the prologue to the Catalan translation of Marx and Engels' 1848 *Communist Manifesto*, he warned that the statement that the proletariat had no fatherland did not mean that they should not have one and that they would not have one in the future.⁸ Serra i Moret proposed a Catalan socialism that was organisationally independent of the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (Socialist Workers' Party of Spain, PSOE) and committed to the cause of Catalonia's autonomy. His ideal was direct Catalan participation in the Socialist International, which would not have been allowed. It was an aspiration for international recognition of the Catalan nationality which would come true, albeit problematically, with the Communist International in 1936.

ANTONI ROVIRA I VIRGILI'S *HISTÒRIA DELS MOVIMENTS NACIONALISTES*, 1912-1914

The most notable effort to situate Catalonia's national claims within the contemporary European context was *Història dels moviments nacionalistes* (History of the Nationalist Movements), a book by Antoni Rovira i Virgili (1882-1949), at that time a journalist at the newspaper *El Poble Català*. He was a republican, leftist Catalan nationalist who would become one of the leading ideologues of this current, with books like *Nacionalisme i federalisme* (Nationalism and Federalism, 1917).

When it was established in 1991, the University of Tarragona was named *Universitat Rovira i Virgili* after the journalist, a native of that city. The first volume in Rovira i Virgili's history of nationalist movements was published in 1912 and examined Finland, Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine, Schleswig, Alsace-Lorraine and Flanders. In the second volume, which came out in 1913, he discussed Bohemia, Slovakia, Trieste and Trentino, Croatia, Hungary and Transylvania. The third volume, published in July 1914, examined Albania, Epirus, Crete, Macedonia, Old Serbia and Armenia as well as the conflicts of interests between Austria, Italy and the Turkish Empire in the Balkans. This last volume ended with the cases of Ireland, the Basque Country and Catalonia, such that the entire international scene he examined ended with a synthesis of Catalanism.

In Spain, only one less comprehensive book appeared on the same topic prior to 1914, the one by the Basque nationalist Luis de Elizalde entitled *Países y razas. Las aspiraciones nacionalistas en diversos pueblos (1913-1914)* (Countries and Races: The Nationalist Aspirations of Different Peoples [1913-1914]), which was reissued in 1999. The lack of a work in the Spanish market similar to Rovira i Virgili's is the reason why it was translated into Spanish by the Barcelona publishing house Minerva in 1919. It was issued in a single volume with a brief update of the events that had transpired until early that year. A second facsimile edition of the Spanish version of Rovira i Virgili's work appeared in 1980 from the Hacer publishing house. The second edition of the Catalan original was published in Barcelona in 2008 on the initiative of the Base publishing house, this time with an epilogue by Xavier Ferré Trill and with the support of the Generalitat's Centre of Contemporary History of Catalonia.

In 1912, the author of the prologue of Rovira i Virgili's book was the jurist, economist and politician Pere Coromines, the leader of the party to which Rovira belonged at the time, the *Unió Federal Nacionalista Republicana* (Republican Nationalist Federal Union). Coromines stressed two conclusions from a book that aimed to be descriptive and avoid theorising. The first was that generalising on the criteria that define nationalities had to be avoided, given that each one evolves in its own specific way. The second conclusion was that "the dramatic episode of the nationalities is part of the evolution of the State in Europe". Coromines noted that there had been a shift from citizens' rights to nations' rights.



Figure 4. Antoni Rovira i Virgili, ideologue of Catalan republican nationalism.

The common thread in Rovira's work, just like in that of Prat de la Riba, was distinguishing between fatherland and state, between a socio-cultural reality and a political structure.

Rovira i Virgili viewed federalism as the solution to the problems of the subjugated nationalities, and he stated that a nationalist movement could become separatist depending on the politics of the dominant state. Certainly before the outbreak of World War I claims for autonomy through parliament and negotiations predominated in Irish and Czech nationalism, which only gave rise to claims for independence with the Great War and in view of the political unfeasibility of autonomy without violence. Until the outbreak of World War I, the future president of the Czech Republic, Professor Masaryk, was an autonomist, not a separatist.

Rovira i Virgili noted that prior to 1914 the Czechs had not been in favour of the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire because they feared that Bohemia would be absorbed by Germany with the help of the Germanic minority from their country. Therefore, prior to World War I there were already fears of what Hitler went on to impose 25 years later, namely Bohemia and Moravia's submission and the segregation of Slovakia, deeds leading up to the outbreak of World War II in 1939.

THE WAR OF THE NATIONS

This was the title that Rovira i Virgili gave his book on World War I whose five volumes appeared between 1916 and 1925. Certainly the Great War began with the magnicide in Sarajevo, in a Bosnia that had been in Austrian

hands since 1908, a country at the heart of the war of the nationalities and the Balkan states, which had already been at war since 1912. Austria's invasion of Serbia and Germany's invasion of neutral Belgium made the leftist Catalanists, steadfast Francophiles, indignant.⁹

A more complex position was the one that inspired the active neutralism of the Manifest dels Amics de la Unitat Moral d'Europa (Manifesto of Friends of the Moral Unity of Europe) written by Eugeni d'Ors and signed by a significant number of Catalan intellectuals of diverse ideologies, from conservatives like Miquel dels Sants Oliver and Ramon Rucabado to leftists like Andreu Nin, Rafael Campalans and Salvat-Papasseit. Published in December 1914, it repudiated the war as a "European civil war" which had to end in a reconciliation of the values of European unity represented by France and Germany rekindled by classical Mediterraneanism. The interplay of freedom with authority, of democracy with the strong intervening state, had to emerge from the war. The French version of the Catalan Manifesto of Friends of the Moral Unity of Europe was published by Romain Rolland in the *Journal de Genève* on the 9th of January 1915, a fact which made the international headlines. There was an outcry against the manifesto in both France and Germany and in Catalonia itself.¹⁰



Figure 5. Marshall Joffre. The Catalan nationalists adopted him as a Catalan hero because he was born in Roussillon. He presided over the Jocs Florals in Barcelona in May 1920.

The radical Catalan nationalists wanted to believe that an allied victory would lead to the emancipation of the oppressed European nationalities, while the moderate Catalanist party, which held the presidency of the Mancomunitat de Catalunya, mainly shared the neutralism upheld by the Spanish governments at the time despite the fact that the indiscriminate submarine war declared by Germany was affecting the Spanish merchant marine. Marshall Joffre, the military head of the French army in the Battle of the Marne, was turned into a Catalan hero by Catalanist propaganda because he was from Roussillon. A group of Catalanist intellectuals from a variety of political stripes visited Perpignan in February 1916 to declare their solidarity to the people of Roussillon, located in Northern Catalonia, as part of the French state at war with Germany.¹¹

The error of the nationalist Catalan left was believing that the allied powers were against Alphonse XIII's reign in Spain and in favour of the country's democratisation. Instead, English and French diplomats were against the anti-monarchic agitation in the summer of 1917 in Spain, a kingdom that they believed to be within their sphere of influence, thus rendering it inconceivable for it to take Germany's side.

Almost 1,000 Catalan volunteers fought with the French Foreign Legion, a figure below the legendary 12,000 that circulated back then yet comparable to the number of Garibaldi Italians, Poles and Czechs, and much higher than the total of 2,500 volunteers from the rest of Spain. Leaders of the Unió Catalanista created the *Comité de Germanor amb els Voluntaris Catalans* (Brotherhood Committee with the Catalan Volunteers).¹² The most nationalistic cell of those Catalan volunteers considered itself the valid representation of Catalonia at the Paris Peace Conference. The Fourteen Points for Peace set forth by United States President Woodrow Wilson, who had justified the US's intervention in the war after 1917, seemed to confirm that hope since they included nationalities' right



Figure 6. Medals for the Catalan volunteers in the French army during World War I.

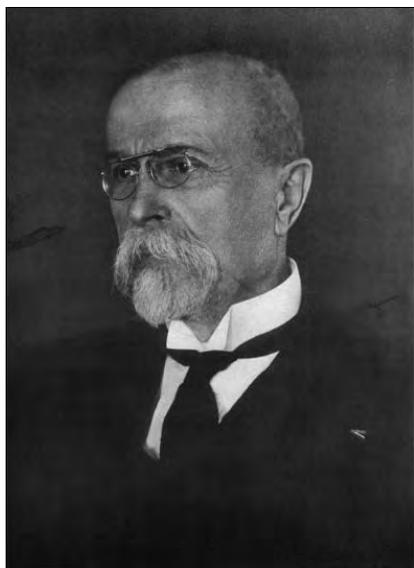


Figure 7. Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, first president Czechoslovakia.

to self-determination. For a moment, Wilson was a popular figure venerated by the Catalanists.

A Catalan national committee was assembled in Paris that aimed to imitate the Czech example. Its goal was to gain the allies' support, but it proved to have no influence. The Czech success aroused a great deal of interest. Tomáš Masaryk had gone into exile in Paris and ultimately secured the support of the allied governments. He became the first President of the Republic of Czechoslovakia. Czech prisoners and deserters fought as volunteers alongside the Russians during World War I. Masaryk himself went to Russia until the Bolshevik revolution. In 1918, the Czechoslovak legion had to cross all of Siberia in its fight with the Bolsheviks, who had given the order to disarm it. This ran counter to the agreement reached with the allies before the separate peace with Germany, which stipulated that the Czechs had to move to the French front.

When the armistice came and many European nationalities achieved independence, it also seemed to be the most propitious time for Catalonia to secure a negotiated autonomy from the Spanish government. However, the planned charter of self-government drawn up by the Catalan parliamentarians and the *Mancomunitat de Catalunya* in Barcelona in January 1919 was rejected by the Spanish Parliament, despite the moderation of the text.¹³ At the same time, the allies in Paris did not allow the Catalan question onto the agenda of the peace conference.

After this political fracas, a notably harsh class struggle began in industrial Catalonia characterised by the proliferation of social attacks, which had started earlier. In Barcelona, they were the years of the thuggery called *pistolisme*. The first Catalan pro-independence political organisation also appeared in 1919, led by MP Francesc Macià; initially it met little success in the elections.¹⁴



Figure 8. First photograph of the old flag of Estat Català. It is being exhibited by Catalan and North American hikers on Montserrat (1918). It was inspired by the Cuban and American flags and added the blue triangle (humanity) and the republican star above the four stripes of the Catalan flag.

It was succeeded in 1922 by Estat Català (Catalan State), a paramilitary organisation with Macià at the helm. The Catalan pro-independence flag had been designed in late 1918, which added a blue triangle and a solitary star, inspired by the Cuban and US flags, in the middle to the traditional four red horizontal stripes over a golden background.¹⁵

THE ECHOES OF THE IRISH UPRISING

The House of Commons voted on Irish Home Rule in 1912, but the veto in the House of Lords set it back two more years while the Orange unionists in Ulster armed themselves to oppose dependence on an autonomous government in Dublin. In 1914, the war served as the justification to postpone Ireland's autonomy. Sinn Féin's 1916 Easter Rising in Dublin was put down with executions, imprisonment and banishment. The call for the Irish ranks to fight in Europe only accentuated the malaise. The Catalanists' trust that an allied victory would favour the subjugated nationalities led it to deplore Sinn Féin's failed uprising in Dublin in 1916 because it could

benefit Germany. However, they also condemned the English army's executions. Rovira i Virgili was the mastermind behind this position.

In the 1918 elections at the end of the war, Sinn Féin, until then a minority in the Parliament, landed 73 of the 105 Irish seats in the House of Commons, while the nationalist autonomists only earned six and the unionists 26. The Sinn Féin MPs refused to go to London and instead set up an independent Parliament – the Dáil – in Dublin; they appointed Eamon de Valera President of the Republic of Ireland.¹⁶ On the 4th of February 1919, the autonomist Catalan MP Pere Rahola warned the Spanish Courts that Spain's intransigency against Catalonia's demands for autonomy could lead to a surge in pro-independence feelings, as in Ireland after the failure of autonomism: "There, the ones who wanted to strike out by themselves won" he said, in allusion to Sinn Féin and the translation of the name ("We Ourselves") into Spanish.

Great Britain, which was in an uncomfortable position at the peace conference, promised to resolve the Irish question, which could theoretically be regarded as included on President Wilson's points and had the support of the Irish in the United States. However, when the peace conference ended, the repression began in Ireland with a war of independence that discredited England in the eyes of the radical pro-ally Catalans, who were already quite disappointed because the great victorious powers had refused to include the Catalan question among the issue of the nationalities to be emancipated at the Paris Peace Conference in Versailles.

The event that resonated the most in Catalonia was the death by inanition of Terence MacSwiney, the Lord Mayor of Cork, on the 25th of October 1920 in the English prison where he had been on a hunger strike for 73 days. He was a practising Catholic, and his martyrdom spurred the sympathy of Catalan Catholics, especially after the bishops of Ireland had taken MacSwiney's side. The President of the Provincial Council of Barcelona, Vallès i Pujals, sent a message to Lloyd George demanding the release of the Lord Mayor of Cork from prison and freedom for Ireland. Similar messages were sent to London by the Unió Catalanista and the Centre Autonomista de Dependents del Comerç i de la Indústria (Autonomist Centre of Retail and Industry Clerks, CADCI), the largest retail and office workers' association in Barcelona.

The Mayor of New York City, who had demanded the release of the Lord Mayor of Cork, ordered all the flags in his city to be flown at half-mast. Funerals for MacSwiney were held in many different towns in Catalonia, and several magazine monographs spotlighting Ireland were published.¹⁷ Despite conservative Catalan autonomism's sympathies for the Irish plight, as a model it ran counter to the gradualist, parliamentary model which the Catalanist majority preferred, even though this approach was being blocked by the Spanish monarchy. Ireland's insurrectional approach only fit with the new pro-independence group

Estat Català, which had been organised as a paramilitary group in 1922 and was headed by MP Francesc Macià.

When the death of the Lord Mayor of Cork inspired Catalanist sympathies, the fratricidal war among the Irish nationalists had not yet broken out, a civil war between those who accepted the separation of Ulster and some limitations for free Ireland in December 1921 in London and those who did not, including De Valera. The civil war among the Irish caused more deaths than the previous war between the Irish and the English, and even led to the deaths of nationalist leaders like Michael Collins. It lasted until May 1923.

At the same time, the violence of the class struggle in Catalonia did not allow any autonomist front to be reassembled, and the existing political stalemate went far towards facilitating the September 1923 coup d'état in Barcelona by General Miguel Primo Rivera, the Captain General of Catalonia. Catalanism was persecuted and the Mancomunitat de Catalunya liquidated, so insurrectional separatism founds its justification in frustration of the legal pathway towards autonomy.¹⁸

Macià, in exile in Paris, conspired against the Spanish dictatorship through donations from Catalans in the Americas – another similarity with Ireland – and prepared an armed expedition that was to cross the Pyrenees.

However, at the same time the more moderate Catalanists, who did not believe in the armed approach, launched paradiplomatic actions at the League of Nations headquartered in Geneva, presenting the case of Catalonia as one of the national minorities whose rights the League of Nations had pledged to defend. The insurrectional tack of the Irish was rejected by this sector.¹⁹

ABOUT THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND PARTICIPATION IN THE CONGRESS OF THE NATIONALITIES

In reality, the case of Catalonia was not about national minorities that belonged to a state dominated by another nationality, such as the Germans in Poland. The rights of these national minorities had to be defended by the League of Nations in order to avoid conflicts that could trigger another war. The case of the Catalans was the case of a nationality that had been minoritised in its own, unique territory by a state, Spain, which denied Catalans the right to use their native language in education and the courts. However, the appeal to the League of Nations meant presenting Catalonia as a case similar to the national minorities, one way of internationally projecting the plight of the Catalans. However, the Catalan people were not included among the national minorities protected by the peace treaties.

On the 24th of April 1924, Manuel Massó i Llorens, with the support of eleven other deputies from the group Acció Catalana, left an *Appeal in Favour of Catalonia* in Geneva addressed to the League of Nations. The need for active propaganda abroad had been defended earlier by

Joan Estelrich in March 1920 with his *La valoració internacional de Catalunya* (International Assessment of Catalonia). Estelrich served Francesc Cambó, the leader of the Lliga Regionalista de Catalunya, had been a minister in the Spanish government in 1918 and 1921, and had recently become a millionaire and patron. During the dictatorship of General Primo de Rivera, the activities of the agents of Catalanism abroad penetrated two international associations outside the League of Nations yet which the League could not ignore: the International Union of Associations for the League of Nations, headquartered in Brussels, and the Congress of European Nationalities, whose mandate was precisely to bring together the national minorities. The latter, set up in 1925, was headquartered in Vienna starting in 1927.²⁰

The opportunities for Joan Estelrich, Lluís Nicolau d'Olwer, Alfons Maseras and other Catalanist agents to engage in paradiplomatic activities rose when Primo de Rivera's Spain left the League of Nations in early 1926 to protest the denial of his demand to have a permanent seat on its Executive Council. The Catalanists achieved nothing at the International Union of Associations for the League of Nations, but they did succeed at the Congress of European Nationalities, which was presided over by the Baltic-German MP from Estonia, Ewald Ammende. A Catalan delegation attended the second Congress of the Nationalities in 1926. They made it clear that they accepted the Congress' principles, which were identical to those of the League of Nations even though it seemed somewhat unwilling to enforce their implementation. However, the Catalan delegates also warned that they would not give up Catalonia's right to self-governance, which went beyond the rights recognised for national minorities. The Catalan jurist Francesc Maspons i Anglasesell became the President of the Congress of European Nationalities, which included 40 national groups encompassing 50 million people.²¹ Catalonia's presence helped to counter the French propaganda which painted the Congress of Nationalities as an instrument of Germany and Hungary to rectify the borders they had been assigned, which left their own national minorities inside other states.

Germany joined the League of Nations in 1926 with a permanent seat on its Executive Council, and Chancellor Gustav Stresemann's visit to Spain in May 1929 was greeted with hope by Catalans. However, Weimar Republic Germany did not want to fall out with the government of Primo de Rivera, which had rejoined the League of Nations in 1928 and had the support of French and British diplomacy to prevent the Catalan claims from coming to fruition. The recommendation approved by the League of Nations that states not explicitly covered in the peace treaties should also respect and recognise the rights of national minorities was not a binding resolution, so the Spanish state was able to turn a blind eye toward it.

Of these efforts to project Catalans' claims abroad, what remain are only useful reflections for situating the Catalan plight within the international legal context, as in the book

by Lluís Nicolau d'Olwer, *Idees i fets entorn de Paneuropa* (Barcelona 1928), and the ones by Joan Estelrich, *La qüestió de les minories nacionals i les vies del dret* (Barcelona 1929) and *La question des minorités et la Catalogne* (Lausanne and Geneva 1929), as well as the book by Maspons i Anglasesell, *Punt de vista català sobre el procediment de protecció de les minories nacionals* (Barcelona 1930). After that, Catalanism had its sights set on the rights protected by the international agreements which Spain had signed so it could condemn their noncompliance in Catalonia.

The political shift in Spain in 1931 and the autonomy granted to Catalonia boosted the internal possibilities, which led to a loss of interest in international events despite Catalonia's presence in the Congress of European Nationalities held in 1933. However, the inoperability of the League of Nations also played a part. The departure of Nazi Germany, the League of Nations' impotence to stop Japan's aggression against China – both of them member countries – while Hitler was threatening European stability undermined this international organisation's authority and credibility. Precisely the issue of the national minorities would be used by Hitler immediately before the outbreak of World War II in the case of Sudetenland.

THE INSURRECTIONAL TACK INSPIRED BY IRELAND AND GARIBALDI IN THE 1920s

Francesc Macià was in contact in Paris with representatives of the Confederació Nacional del Treball (National Confederation of Labour, CNT), which was operating underground in Catalonia at the time, and with the Secretary General of the persecuted and minuscule Communist Party of Spain, José Bullejos. Macià received funds from the Catalans in the Americas for the expedition he was preparing. However, the money from the Americas was not enough, not even after adding the resources contributed by Macià's wife, who had inherited a considerable amount of personal assets.

The influence of the Soviet model and the prestige of the Bolshevik Revolution were considerable among the youth in France preparing for the Estat Català venture, including Martí Vilanova, Josep Rovira and Jaume Miravittles. The list of recommended reading provided to the Estat Català volunteers living in Toulouse was almost entirely communist, and it contained the most famous tracts by Lenin, Bukharin, Trotsky, Stalin, Labriola, Marx, Engels and Sorel.²² However, Macià did not subordinate the emancipation of Catalonia to a social revolution.

In this context, it should come as no surprise that in the autumn of 1926, Macià travelled to Moscow to enlist the aid of the Communist International. There, he managed to meet first with Bukharin and finally with Zinoviev, who shortly thereafter fell into disgrace as the head of government. Andreu Nin, a Catalan who had become a senior functionary in the Red Trade Union International, served as Macià's interpreter. Zinoviev bid Macià farewell with



Figure 9. Francesc Macià, resting his head on his hands on the far right, on the defendants' bench of those accused in the Paris trial after their arrest in Prats de Molló.

the words: "Tell the Catalans that we are the most fervent supporters of their independence."

Despite the fine words and vague promises, Macià returned empty-handed and had to conduct his guerrilla penetration solely with his own resources. The goal was to kindle the latent spirit of revolt among the people with the spark of the expedition of a handful of heroes. Should things go badly, as they did with Sinn Féin's Easter Rising in 1916, the blood of the martyrs would later pave the way for a broader revolution, as it had in Ireland. This was the perspective of the group from Estat Català.

Macià managed to assemble around 60 anti-Fascist Garibaldi veterans from World War I in exile in France. The Garibaldi republicans had also devised a similar plan against the Italy of Mussolini, a good friend of Spain's Primo de Rivera. The Garibaldi tack was also present in the expedition being planned by Macià.²⁴ The operation got underway in November 1926. The French police intercepted the participants at the border crossing at Prats de Molló, and around 100 of them were brought to trial in Paris and immediately expelled from France. The trial became an act of propaganda for Catalan nationalism and Macià, while Ricciotti Garibaldi, the son of the famous driving force behind Italian unification, was arrested as a double agent and the dealings of Mussolini's agents in France were revealed.²⁵

The insurrectional approach had failed, but Macià took a trip to America to rally the support of the Catalans in the American centres.²⁶ The fall of Primo de Rivera in January 1930 opened up other prospects, and Macià decided to bring his group from Estat Català into the Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (Republican Left of Catalonia, ERC), a federal but not separatist party which, though just formed, roundly won the April 1931 elections, the first ones held in eight years.

Nonetheless, some of Macià's followers refused to join the party that won the parliamentary majorities in Catalonia during the first half of the 1930s. Their irreducible Catalan nationalism prevented them from making concessions, which they viewed as acts of treason.²⁷ One of these groups was *Nosaltres Sols*, the literal translation of the Gaelic "Sinn Féin" into Catalan, led by Daniel Cardona. But we should also take into account the tiny *Partit Nacionalista Català* (Catalan Nationalist Party), as well as the *Estat Català-Partit Proletari* (Catalan State-Proletarian Party). The latter adopted a position that was simultaneously Marxist-Leninist and nationalist, and in July 1936 it ended up merging with the socialists and communists in the *Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya* (Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia, PSUC), which had declared itself an adherent of the Communist International since its founding. In the same year, 1936, the other aforementioned na-

tionalist groups had joined Estat Català, which ended up being reassembled as an independence party by dissidents from the ERC, who had left this party after the failed Sixth of October uprising in 1934.²⁸

The evolution of Estat Català-Partit Proletari reveals the degree of influence that the Soviet model and communist ideology would attain among retail, office and salaried workers during the 1930s.

The last comparative essay on the Irish case was published in October 1932 by Joan P. Fàbregas, a self-taught economist, and it was entitled *Irlanda i Catalunya, paral·lelisme polític-econòmic* (Ireland and Catalonia, Political-Economic Parallelism). After comparing the nationalist conceptions of Cosgrave and De Valera, Fàbregas compared the situation of politically independent Ireland with that of a Catalonia that had just attained its charter of self-government, which the author considered insufficient, while he criticised the hegemonic Catalan party, Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, for having become conciliatory. While Ireland needed to achieve economic independence, Catalonia needed political independence. Fàbregas lamented the failure of Briand's project for European economic union, which he linked to disarmament and peace, and he proposed that the small European nationalities form their own union. Joan P. Fàbregas served as the Minister of the Economy of the government of the Generalitat de Catalunya between September and December 1936 on behalf of the CNT in the midst of the civil war and revolution.

THE EXAMPLE OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

The independence of the Czechoslovak Republic with the support of the allies in the autumn of 1918 and the stably democratic and socially reformist nature of the new state after almost 300 years of subjugation reinforced the prestige of the Czech model in Catalonia, a model distinct from Ireland's Sinn Féin republicanism and from the Soviet model, given its liberal democracy. In his essay *Política vol dir pedagogia* (Politics Means Pedagogy, 1933), after alluding to Poland under the dictatorship of Pilsudski, the Catalanist social democrat Rafael Campalans said that the enthusiasm towards the new states of the nationalities that used to be oppressed which emerged from the Versailles Treaty had cooled off in view of their subsequent political evolution: "One of them, however, has acquitted itself with full honours: Czechoslovakia".

Josep Maria Batista i Roca, an ethnographer and excursionist, founded Catalan scouting in 1927²⁹ – he had learnt about the British model of the Boy Scouts – and shortly thereafter, in 1930, he created in Barcelona a patriotic youth organisation devoted to physical, intellectual and civic education: Palestra. For the presidency of this organisation, he sought the linguist who had normalised written Catalan, the indispensable base of its survival, Pompeu Fabra. This new association was founded after

the fall of General Primo de Rivera and before the proclamation of the Republic. Palestra drew inspiration from the Czech Sokols and sent a representation to Prague led by Amadeu Serch, Batista i Roca's right-hand man. Palestra thus participated in the ninth federal festival of the Sokols in July 1932, but it was banned from parading with the Catalan flag due to pressure from Spanish diplomacy. "This incident served to remind us that Catalonia was still a dominated country, lest we forget it", wrote Amadeu Serch, who published a leaflet the same year entitled *L'exemple de Txecoslovàquia* (The Example of Czechoslovakia) with the intention of demonstrating the role played by the Sokols in the formation of a state of collective consciousness that had paved the way for the national emancipation on the occasion of World War I.

In 1932, the Sokols had 750,000 active members, the Czech socialist gymnastics organisation had 109,085 more and the Catholic Orel had 110,235. Despite its dynamism, Palestra, which aimed to train Catalan youth in a nonpartisan way, never achieved anything resembling a size comparable to that of its Czech model.³⁰ Palestra had yet another reference: the *Mendigoizals* (mountain youth) of the Basque nationalist movement. The youth belonging to the parties at that time of intense, premature politicisation would rob Palestra of much of the base it was targeted at and would frustrate its plans for a national Catalan youth front.

THE SOVIET MODEL

The illusions that the Bolshevik Revolution aroused within the trade union movement in Catalonia and elsewhere in October 1917 were of such a magnitude that the CNT, which was growing quickly, decided to conditionally join the Communist International in late 1919 despite the fact that most of the leaders of that prominent union were anarchosyndicalists.

Imitating its example, and in the zeal to attract the sympathy of the syndicalists from the CNT, Francesc Layret managed to get his party, the Partit Republicà Català (Catalan Republican Party), to join the Third International in September 1920. The agreement of the Partit Republicà Català assembly was never put into practice. However, if there had been real attempts to do so, it would have run into the severe 21 conditions established by Lenin the previous August on joining the new Moscow-led International, which stipulated the total subordination of the parties that joined it and required them to purge all social democratic members. Francesc Layret was murdered on the 30th of November of the same year by thugs from the Sindicat Lliure, the enemy of the CNT, which had also in some ways been combating the Sindicat Lliure.

The Bolsheviks' association of the emancipation of the nationalities in the Russian Empire with the worker and peasant revolution was an act of adaptation to the chaotic situation that made it easier for the communists to conquer the power based on the Soviets or workers' councils, but it

was also the consequence of the military impotence which obliged Lenin and Trotsky to accept the independence of the nationalities located under the German or Turkish protectorate in March 1918. After the separate peace with Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Bolsheviks had to face a three-year civil war which ended up bringing the country to its knees, yet which reinforced the dictatorship of the single party which gradually reconquered lands that they granted the guise of federated states. Despite all the contradictions, they never lost the sympathies of many in Europe who believed that the revolution that was to spread to the entire continent after the Great War had gotten underway in Russia, an expectation which never came to fruition despite the attempts at revolution in Germany and Hungary immediately after the war.

Ángel Pestaña was the only CNT delegate who actually participated in the second Communist International congress held in Moscow in July 1920. He was arrested upon his return. His report against the Soviet regime dated November 1921 was slow in being disseminated, but it proved to be decisive in the CNT's official rupture with communism in July 1922, when it learnt about the repression that the anarchists in the Soviet Union were undergoing.³¹

However, before that another CNT delegation had been sent to the founding congress of the Red Trade Union International in Moscow at a time when it had been forced underground in the midst of repression. The delegation, made up of Andreu Nin, Joaquim Maurín, Hilari Arlandis, Jesús Ibáñez and Gaston Leval, attended the Moscow congress in July 1921. The first three became communists. In Catalonia, the first communist cell took shape within the CNT, not through a split-off with socialism, as in the rest of Spain. Andreu Nin came from a Catalanist republican background. After that he moved to PSOE, where he had upheld Catalonia's autonomy. Then he joined the CNT. While the remaining delegates returned to Catalonia, Nin was arrested in Germany and decided to go back to Moscow, where he became a leader of the Red Trade Union International. He lived there until his support for Trotsky's thesis led to his dismissal by Stalin and his expulsion from the USSR in 1930. Nin then returned to Catalonia, where Maurín and others had set up a communist cell which was soon condemned by the small Partido Comunista de España (Communist Party of Spain, PCE). Shortly thereafter he was expelled from the CNT, which was dominated by the anarchists.³²

In the 1920s, the prestige of the Soviet Union was so enormous that even the Catalanist social democrats in the Unió Socialista de Catalunya (Socialist Union of Catalonia, USC) accepted it, albeit critically: "We prefer a Georgia enslaved to the Soviet Union over slavery to the bourgeoisie", they said in *Justícia Social*, the USC's magazine. In November 1924, the same publication also claimed: "We esteem the Russian revolution with loyalty and sincerity. However this loyalty and this sincerity mean that we do not defame it like the bourgeoisie, yet nor do we pay fanatical devotion to it [...] we salute it as an outstanding

manifestation of the strength of the working class, the first pathway that must be taken to reach the future and fulfil its mission. However, it is not the only pathway, nor perhaps the one that goes the furthest."

In any event, the communist tactics could lead to mistakes. When the workers' party had to combat the nationalism of its own national bourgeoisie in fraternity with the workers from other nations, these tactics could be justifiable in relations between parties from two hostile states, but it was very ambiguous in the internal case of a state with one dominant nation and other dominated nations. Even prior to 1917, the Bolsheviks had perennially opposed the organisation of parties of the different nationalities in Russia.³³

It was after 1930 that the communist theses on the national emancipation movements spread in Catalonia, especially after the regime change in 1931.³⁴ It should be noted that there was virtual wholesale lack of knowledge about the reality in the Soviet Union. Only a handful of Catalans had travelled to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. These journeys were recounted in a series of articles, some of which gave rise to books such as the ones by the conservative liberals Josep Pla –*Viatge a Rússia* (Journey to Russia), with the first edition in 1925 and the second in 1990– and Ferran Valls i Taberner –*Un viatger català a la Rússia de Stalin* (A Catalan Traveller in Stalin's Russia), articles published in *La Veu de Catalunya* in 1928 which were assembled in book form in 1985– as well as the book by the centre-left liberal democrat Carles Pi i Sunyer, *La Rússia que vaig veure (1931)* (The Russia I Saw [1931]) published by the Carles Pi i Sunyer Foundation in 2009, with a second, more definitive version: *Com vaig veure Rússia* (How I Saw Russia), a set of newspaper articles that appeared in late 1935 and early 1936, also published in book form by the Carles Pi i Sunyer Foundation in 1992.

These travellers generally conveyed their satisfaction with the respect for national rights and their solution within the legal framework of the USSR. Valls i Taberner was a member of the Lliga Regionalista, later called the Lliga Catalana (Catalan League). Upon the Civil War, he had to move to the anti-republican zone and forswore his previous Catalanist political credo which years earlier had pitted him against the Primo de Rivera dictatorship. Pi i Sunyer left Acció Catalana to join the Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya and became the regional minister of the government of the Generalitat de Catalunya in 1933 and Mayor of Barcelona in 1934. He was the author of a book, *L'aptitud econòmica de Catalunya* (Catalonia's Economic Aptitude), which became quite influential upon its publication in 1927. He was a member of a Spanish delegation that was invited to visit the USSR in the autumn of 1931 to study the feasibility of forging commercial relations between the two states. Later, between June 1937 and January 1939, Carles Pi i Sunyer was the Regional Minister of Culture and Education for the Generalitat de Catalunya. In exile he served as the Generalitat's representative in London during World War II. Pi i Sunyer's 1931 report on the USSR is eminently economic and praises the results of the five-year



Figure 10. Andreu Nin, author of a Marxist formula for national emancipation.

plans, the progress of instruction and the morale of austerity. He recognised that the people lived under a dictatorship dominated by Stalin.

In late 1935, Pi i Sunyer wrote: “If the new regime emerged victorious from these difficult times it was because, in recognising peoples’ right to their own personality, it took the support of national sentiment from the counter-revolutionary movements. And today the Ukraine is a republic of 40 million inhabitants federated with the others that make up the Soviet Union [...] one gets the impression that Ukrainian sentiment has been largely satisfied. The Constitution promulgated in 1923 primarily to resolve the problem of the Ukraine and other southern lands states of the Soviet Union is founded upon mutual trust, equality, peaceful coexistence and the cooperation of its peoples. On this point, the constitution was largely inspired by Stalin, who since his youth has been familiar with the reality and the strength of national sentiments.” Pi i Sunyer also noted that Turkish was the co-official language in Baku along with Russian, and that at schools instruction was provided in each of the eleven mother tongues spoken in the region.

In 1930, Jordi Arquer, who moved in the circles of retail clerks and office workers in favour of radical Catalan nationalism, published *El comunisme i la qüestió nacional i colonial* (Communism and the National and Colonial Question), a collection of Catalan-language texts by Marx, Lenin, Bukharin and Stalin on the question of nationalities presented as a guide for Catalan Marxists. Arquer had created a group called the Partit Comunista Català (Catalan Communist Party), which joined the Federació Comunista Catalano-Balear (Catalan-Balearic Communist Federation) led by Joaquim Maurín. In 1931, Arquer published the leaflet *Los comunistas ante el problema de las nacionalidades* (Communists in View of the Problem of the Nation-

alities), where he sketched out a line that others would repeat and try to pursue further, including Maurín himself.

In any event, with the republican regime in Spain there was no further information about the USSR, which remained a looming revolutionary myth.³⁵ In view of the deterioration of the liberal parliamentary systems and the Great Depression, during the first half of the 1930s the USSR appeared to be the society of the future, with huge industrial growth and improvements in the workers’ living conditions. It was an ideal made reality that encouraged revolutionary socialists everywhere and ended up holding appeal even among democrats who were alarmed at the spread of fascism.

When Hitler easily defeated German social democracy, the referent for other European socialists vanished. Not only did the loss of faith in liberal democracy contribute to promoting the Soviet model; rather the USSR also appeared as the power the most consistently ready to stop fascism, especially when the communists adopted the tactic of the popular anti-fascist fronts in France and Spain in 1935, replacing their previous extremist isolation which had so heavily contributed to the rise of the Nazis in Germany.

In Catalonia, where the left was emerging from the repression that came in the wake of the Sixth of October 1934 uprising of the government of the Generalitat, presided over by Lluís Companys, the USSR, through the addition of Stalinism, began to become unquestionable not only among Marxists but also among Socialists, who had viewed it critically in the past – such as Rafael Campalans after his trip in 1933 –³⁶ and even among the republican non-communist left, who had quite successfully allied with the socialist and communist groups in the February 1936 elections in the Front d’Esquerres de Catalunya (Left Front of Catalonia), which was similar to the Frente

Popular (Popular Front) in the rest of Spain. The fact that the question of the nationalities had been satisfactorily addressed in the Soviet constitution was something even averred by the communists who criticised Stalin, such as Andreu Nin, who was a Trotsky follower until 1935, when he broke with him in the autumn of that year. The fact that Catalonia's national liberation would only be effective if a communist revolution took place was the core thesis of Joaquim Maurín, who published his writings – in Spanish – in *La Batalla*, the Barcelona newspaper of the Bloc Obrer i Camperol (Workers' and Peasants' Bloc).

The main book on the issue was the one by Andreu Nin, *Els moviments d'emancipació nacional* (The National Emancipation Movements), published in 1935 by Barcelona's Proa publishing house, which became a classic. It was reissued by Paris' Edicions Catalanes in 1970, while a French edition was issued by Paris' Syros publishing house in 1975 and a Spanish version by Barcelona's Fontamara in 1977.

With the authority conferred on him from having lived in the USSR and being not an unconditional follower of Soviet communism but a critic of it, Nin presented the USSR, as it was established in 1922, as the perfect solution for the rights of the nations inside it. "The USSR," wrote Nin, "is the protoplasm of the future Union of Socialist Republics of Europe first, and of the Union of Universal Socialist Republics later. Its doors are open to all the workers' republics that are established." This cosmopolitan idealism was his conclusion. Nin never managed to publish the second part, which he had announced, in which he was going to apply his thesis to Catalonia.

The book is basically doctrinaire and theoretical more than socio-political. After declaring that the national movements had a democratic content that the proletariat should uphold without reservations, Nin condemned the fact that the pseudo-internationalist position, which denies nationalities and preaches the establishment of large units, practically advocates the absorption of small nations by large ones and therefore oppression. Since this position, criticised by Nin, was indeed the point of view of a considerable number of socialists and anarchists around him in Catalonia and Spain, there is no denying the interest that his condemnation held back then and still holds today.

However, to Nin, who followed Lenin, the indisputable recognition of separation did not entail propaganda in favour of secession. Separation is not always a gradual deed; rather it should be judged according to the higher interest of the social revolution, an interest that is defined by the communist party in power or in the opposition. Recognition of the right to separation lowers the dangers of disintegration, claimed Nin, and strengthens the required solidarity among the workers of the different nations within a state. The revolutionary workers from the oppressed nationalities have to combat their national bourgeoisie and strengthen their union with the proletariat of the dominant nationality, while the latter have to combat their dominating national bourgeois-

sie in defence of the oppressed nationalities. While the former often occurred, the latter rarely did since it is overly altruistic. Often, and Nin never said this, the socialists and communists from the dominant nation have interpreted what has been none other than the subordination of the oppressed classes from the dominant nationality and their collaboration with national oppression as this required worker solidarity.

Following communist orthodoxy, Nin did not want the workers from the different nationalities within a single state to organise themselves independently. It turns out that first, an integral confederalism has to be part of the political constitution, yet on the other hand, this confederalism should not be applied to the revolutionary party of the proletariat which governs or aspires to govern. Andreu Nin concludes, "And thus, the Bolshevik party, which has practised consistent nationalitarian politics, has always been an essentially centralised organisation". In short, the centralism of the party contradicted the federalism of the nationalities, without Nin finding this in any way objectionable. Nin spoke as a more orthodox communist, not as a critic, on such a crucial issue as the nationalities within the Soviet Union, an issue that was even more important to Nin, who had had Catalan national awareness since his republican youth.

The memory of Marxist positions in favour of Catalan self-determination would later be lost. The compilation of texts from 1930 to 1936 edited by Josep Benet in 1974 under the pseudonym of Roger Arnau and published by Paris-based publishing house Edicions Catalanes, entitled *Marxisme català i qüestió nacional catalana, 1930-1936* (Catalan Marxism and the Catalan National Question, 1930-1936), aimed to show the link between the social and national liberation that had been formulated by the Marxists of Catalonia in those years. The conclusions seemed so obvious that Benet wrote no introductory study which would contextualise and relativise his compilation of texts. The two-volume book had not only historical but also political interest at a time when Marxism was the dominant ideology among the ranks of anti-Francoists.

In the 1930s, the perspective of the Union of Iberian Socialist Republics, a name copied from the Soviet Union, was associated with the communist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, even though it should be noted that the parties which were considered truly communist were the vanguard of the proletariat with the consequent right to hold power. Two vied for this role: the Partit Obrer d'Unificació Marxista (Workers' Party of Marxist Unification, POUM) established in November 1935 and led by Joaquim Maurín and Andreu Nin, and the Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya (PSUC), formed in July 1936. Later this issue would cause bloodshed in May 1937 in Barcelona, and it would even cost the life of leftist Andreu Nin.

The core of the PSUC's unconditional identification with the USSR can be found in the image of the latter as the leading bastion of anti-fascism worldwide and the only ef-

fective support for the Spanish Republic during the Civil War, which it interpreted as a war to defend democracy against fascism in the context of the Communist International's support of popular fronts. In this sense, the POUM's criticism of Stalin's purges was condemned as inadmissible disloyalty by the PSUC and the USSR's consul in Barcelona, Antónov-Ovsienko. The Trotskyist stigma that the PSUC applied to the POUM, despite the latter's lack of any ties with Trotsky, projected what in Stalin's USSR was synonymous with traitor and enemy of true communism.

The PSUC, created not from a split-off from socialism but from the merger of four groups (two of which were socialist), violated the principle of a single party for each state. Alongside the PCE, the PSUC would be a member of the Communist International, which it joined at the moment it was founded, to Moscow's surprise. This direct affiliation with the Communist International may have been the most eloquent outside recognition of the Catalan nation,³⁷ yet the privilege did not last long. The Komintern was dissolved in 1943 in order to avoid the mistrust of the British and American governments, which were the USSR's indispensable allies in the war that Hitler had declared in June 1941. The PSUC then lost the direct international recognition it had managed to secure. In exile, the independence of the Catalan communists increasingly became more apparent than real in relation to the PCE, which also depended on Moscow.

Before the republican defeat in 1939, the PSUC contained real Catalanists who, enmeshed in the tragic dealings of the Civil War and trailing behind the Spanish communists, unwittingly found themselves supporting the minimisation of the Generalitat de Catalunya's real capacity to govern without these sacrifices helping them to win the war. The PSUC lost many of its ranks in immediate exile. There were life-long social democrats in the Catalan communist party who were uneasy with Stalinism – they called it Bolshevikisation – and were ultimately faced with the unpleasant surprise of the German-Soviet pact in August 1939, the clearest subordination of international communist politics to Russia's short-term national interests. Stalin showed no qualms about signing the pact with Hitler in World War II and had absolutely no consideration for the fate of Poland. Nor did he respect the sovereignty of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Finland, which were invaded with the goal of regaining all the lands from the former Russian Empire. Since they had capitalist systems, ideologically these countries earned no consideration from Moscow.

But let us go back to 1936. At that time, the Soviet myth was not exclusive to the workers' movement, with the exception of the anarchists; rather it was one of the characteristics of the popular front in Catalonia. With the Civil War, this vision of the USSR as the only true, effective friend of republican Catalonia became even more prevalent and uncontested. Yet it required ignoring the aggression against and conquest of Georgia (Stalin's homeland) in 1921 and the fact that Georgia, when it was invaded, had been governed by socialists, not by counter-revolutionaries.

However, certainly the fact that gives an idea of the real extent of Sovietism beyond the communist ranks in Catalonia during the Civil War was a liberal democrat like Rovira i Virgili's acceptance of the presidency of the *Associació Catalana dels Amics de la Unió Soviètica* (Catalan Association of Friends of the Soviet Union).³⁸

After the anarchosyndicalists left the government of the Generalitat de Catalunya after the Fets de Maig (Deeds of May) in 1937, the Catalan government was made up of a coalition of the ERC – the party to which Rovira i Virgili belonged – and the PSUC – which aspired to consolidate its recognition by the Communist International as a national, independent party. There was considerable criticism of Stalin from all fronts, criticism that was inadmissible for the only power that was indeed a friend of the Spanish republican cause and of anti-fascist Catalonia. Failing to respect this taboo would cost the POUM, Andreu Nin's party, dearly, but it would come at a particularly high price for Nin himself.

In this context, and when the republican defeat became inevitable, Rovira i Virgili made the unavoidable trip to the USSR in November 1938, a journey, just like all of its kind, perfectly orchestrated by the official guides to show the best side of the regime and Soviet society, without any chance to enter into contact with the real society outside the scheduled programme. Rovira wrote a chronicle of his visit in the magazine *Meridià* and his party's newspaper, *La Humanitat*. The instalments appeared until the 14th of January 1939, just twelve days before the fall of Barcelona to Franco's troops.

Rovira i Virgili believed Stalin's words when he declared that the Soviet Union was a multinational state whose internal cohesion could be the envy of any national state in the world. He also seemed to believe in the effectiveness of the constitutional right that any of the thirteen Soviet republics could separate whenever they wanted, and he believed in the absence of Russian cultural imperialism. "Therefore, the example of the USSR proves," wrote Rovira i Virgili in December 1938, "that it is feasible to give states an authentic, durable and lasting unity without appealing to the procedures of absorption and domination that characterise political centralisation."

One aspect which inspired Rovira i Virgili's admiration was the lack of symmetrical uniformity in Soviet federalism. In addition to republics, the USSR also contained autonomous regions. The number of republics had risen from the four initial ones in 1922 to thirteen before the war in 1939. There was no standardising symmetry, which must have been quite appealing to a Catalan nationalist like Rovira, even though the disproportionate weight between Russia and the others meant that outside the leader, they all fell into a secondary periphery with the exception of the Ukraine.

Rovira i Virgili could not deny the strength of Moscow's central power, and he defined the Soviet system as an attenuated federalist regime compared to the American and Swiss federal models. However, Rovira also warned: "In contrast, Soviet federalism gives the federated republics a

freedom that the particular states of the federation have nowhere else, and that is the freedom to separate freely from the Union at each state's will".³⁹ Under those circumstances, Rovira i Virgili forgot that the Soviet army's occupation and the exclusive domination of the single party under Stalin's autocracy rendered the exercise of this right of self-determination until separation of the nations that made up the USSR totally unfeasible. However, he believed that they did not separate because they were satisfied.

Rovira i Virgili did not bear in mind the hundreds of thousands of victims of the Stalinist purges, which even affected many communist party members during the Spanish Civil War. Both the Soviet ambassador to the Spanish Republic, Marcel Rosenberg, and the consul of the USSR to Barcelona, the popular Vladimir Antónov-Ovsienko, lost their lives in these purges. While censorship prevented these deeds from being publicised, they should not have escaped Rovira i Virgili's attention as a journalist and well-informed person. We should also take into account the fact that André Gide had also spread the news about the scandal of the Soviet purges even though he had once been an enthusiastic supporter of Soviet communism.

Living in France in exile, and upon the German-Soviet pact in late August 1939 which unleashed the Nazi invasion of Poland and World War II, Rovira i Virgili was able to express himself with greater freedom after the alliance between the remnants of the ERC and the PSUC had been shattered. At that time, late 1939, articles about Rovira i Virgili's journey to the USSR that he had left half-written had just appeared in *Revista de Catalunya*, which was then being published in Paris. Now, of course, his viewpoint was more critical, but the similarities outweigh the differences and the rectifications are barely perceptible. He said, for example, that before Stalin's about-face – the German-Soviet pact – there had been a trend towards democratisation in the USSR following the pattern of the popular fronts in France and Spain, even though Rovira expressed doubts about the continuity of that democratisation by the time the last articles in the series were being published.

Rovira i Virgili died in Perpignan in 1949. He never witnessed the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, or the decomposition of the state party, or the paralysis of the Soviet army in its efforts to keep the empire together. The right to self-determination until separation was finally being applied, but only as a result of the fact that the solidity of that power was much lower than everyone had imagined, beginning with its own enemies.⁴⁰ The Soviet model did not work. However, for a long time, even after de-Stalinisation, the mirage of the Soviet solution to the national question had persisted among Catalan leftists, as if a lack of democracy and political freedom were compatible with a true federal pact among diverse nationalities.⁴¹

NOTES AND REFERENCES

- [1] Amadeu SERCH. *L'exemple de Txecoslovàquia; la lluita per la independència, els sokols*. Barcino, Barcelona 1932.
- [2] Jordi LLORENS I VILA. *Catalanisme i moviments nacionalistes contemporanis (1885-1901)*. Rafael Dalmau, Barcelona 1988, "Episodis de la Història" Collection, no. 271.
- [3] Jordi LLORENS I VILA. *La Unió Catalanista i els orígens del catalanisme polític. Dels orígens a la presidència del Dr. Martí i Julià (1891-1903)*. Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, Barcelona 1992, pp. 326-332.
- [4] Josep BURGAYA. *La formació del catalanisme conservador i els models "nacionals" coetanis. Premsa catalanista i moviments nacionalistes contemporanis, 1868-1901*. Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Bellaterra 1999. Unpublished doctoral thesis.
- [5] *Els modernistes i el nacionalisme cultural (1881-1906)*. Prologue and anthology by Vicente Cacho Viu. La Magrana and Provincial Council of Barcelona, Barcelona 1984, "Biblioteca dels Clàssics del Nacionalisme Català" Collection, no. 3.
- [6] Enric PRAT DE LA RIBA. *La Nacionalitat Catalana*. Edition by Jordi Casassas Ymbert. La Magrana - Diputació de Barcelona, Barcelona 1993, "Biblioteca dels Clàssics del Nacionalisme Català" Collection, no. 30, p. 77; *Obres completes d'Enric Prat de la Riba*. Edition by Albert Balcells and Josep M. Ainaud. Institut d'Estudis Catalans and Proa, Barcelona 1998-2000, 3 vol.; Enric UCÉLAY DA CAL. *El imperialisme catalán: Prat de la Riba, Cambó, D'Ors y la conquista moral de España*. EDHASA, Barcelona 2003.
- [7] Domènec MARTÍ I JULIÀ. *Per Catalunya*. Associació Catalanista de Gràcia, Barcelona 1913; Domènec MARTÍ I JULIÀ. *Per Catalunya i altres textos*. Edition by Jaume Colomer. La Magrana - Diputació de Barcelona, Barcelona 1984, "Biblioteca dels Clàssics del Nacionalisme Català" Collection, no. 9, p. 97.
- [8] *Manifest del partit comunista. Karl Marx i Friedric Engels*. Introduction by Jesús M. Rodés. Prologue by Manuel Serra i Moret and Joan Comorera. Undarius, Barcelona 1976.
- [9] David MARTÍNEZ FIOU. *El catalanisme i la Gran Guerra*. La Magrana - Diputació de Barcelona, Barcelona 1988, "Biblioteca dels Clàssics del Nacionalisme Català" Collection, no. 21.
- [10] Maximiliano FUENTES CODERA. *El campo de fuerzas europeo en Cataluña. Eugenio d'Ors en los primeros años de la Gran Guerra*. Pagès, Lleida 2009. It should be borne in mind that the concept of "European civil war" was later adopted by Ernst Nolte after World War II and totally revised by Enzo Traverso in his book *À feu et à sang. De la guerre civile européenne 1914-1945*. Stock, Paris 2007.
- [11] E. CORTADE. *Catalunya i la Gran Guerra*. Rafael Dalmau, Barcelona 1969, "Episodis de la Història" Collection, no. 125.
- [12] David MARTÍNEZ FIOU. *Els voluntaris catalans a la Gran Guerra (1914-1918)*. Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, Barcelona 1991.

- [13] Albert BALCELLS. *El projecte d'autonomia de la Mancomunitat de Catalunya del 1919 i el seu context històric*. Parliament of Catalonia, Barcelona 2010. This volume contains versions in both English and Spanish.
- [14] Isidre MOLAS. "Federació Democràtica Nacionalista (1919-1923)". *Recerques* (Barcelona), no. 14 (1983).
- [15] Joan CREXELL. *Origen de la bandera independentista*. El Llamp, Barcelona 1984.
- [16] Joan Carles FERRER PONT. *Nosaltres Sols. La revolta irlandesa, 1910-1923*. Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, Barcelona 2007.
- [17] In the prologue to a 32-page leaflet written by Ramon Negre i Balet in early 1921, *Irlanda, el Batlle de Cork i Catalunya*, Rovira i Virgili said: "Ireland's main strength lies in the extreme intensity and diffusion of patriotic conviction. The atmosphere in Ireland is saturated with radical nationalism [...] Therefore, let us learn the lesson of the powerful, widespread and deep patriotism from the heroic Ireland of today. Without the prior intensification and diffusion of nationalist feelings, the sacrifices, both individual and collective, would be sterile."
- [18] Josep M. ROIG I ROSICH. *La Dictadura de Primo de Rivera a Catalunya. Un assaig de repressió cultural*. Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, Barcelona 1992.
- [19] Francesc Cambó, who had disapproved of Macià's insurrectional venture, wrote a very meaningful paragraph on Ireland's methods in his most famous essay, *Per la concòrdia*, written before the fall of Primo de Rivera but published afterward, in 1930: "When agreeing to a pact [with Spain], it would be impossible in Catalonia for the same tragedy to take place as in Ireland when the British government legally went to solve the Irish problem. If this did unfortunately occur, we could only hope that to defend the legally established concord against the Catalan extremists, Catalonia would have patriots with mettle and energy like the ones who have saved Ireland from the perils created by the Irish extremists." In this paragraph, Cambó postulated his party, the Lliga Regionalista de Catalunya, as the force called upon to oppose a hypothetical intransigence by the pro-independence factions.
- [20] Xosé M. NÚÑEZ SEIXAS. *Internacionalitzant el nacionalisme: el catalanisme polític i la qüestió de les minories nacionals a Europa (1914-1936)*. Afers, Catarroja 2010.
- [21] Albert BALCELLS. "La Conferència de pau a París (1919). Catalunya i la Societat de Nacions." *Catalunya i els tractats internacionals*. Eurocongrés 2000, Barcelona 2003, pp. 89-112.
- [22] Ricard FAURA. *El complot de Prats de Molló*. El Llamp, Barcelona 1991, pp. 29-31.
- [23] Josep CARNER-RIBALTA. *Memòries. De Balaguer a Nova York passant per Moscou i Prats de Molló*. Viena, Barcelona 2009, pp. 88-107.
- [24] Giovanni C. CATTINI. *El gran complot. Qui va trair Macià? La trama italiana*. Ara Llibres, Barcelona 2009.
- [25] Agustí COLOMINES. *La Catalunya rebel: el procés de Francesc Macià i els protagonistes dels fets de Prats de Molló*. Símbol, Barcelona 2003.
- [26] Ramon FABREGAT. *Macià, la seva actuació a l'estranger*. Edicions Catalanes de Mèxic and Xaloc, Mexico 1956. Second edition: Llettra Viva, Barcelona 1978.
- [27] Josep CASALS and Ramon ARRUFAT. *Catalunya, poble dissortat*. Barcelona 1933; Jaume MIRAVITLLES. *Ha trair, Macià?* Barcelona 1932.
- [28] The government of the Generalitat, presided over by Lluís Companys after the death of Francesc Macià in late 1933, declared itself in rebellion against the government of the Republic on the Sixth of October 1934 when ministers from the Spanish Catholic right joined it, a deed that was interpreted as a serious threat to the Republic, to Catalan autonomy and to the application of the Catalan law on crop contracts that favoured the tenant farmers in a non-collectivistic agrarian reform. That was the first social law voted on by the Catalan Parliament. The Tribunal of Constitutional Guarantees nullified it en masse. The Spanish socialists had threatened to revolt if a right-wing government entered that had not voted on the constitution in 1931. The general strike declared by the socialists proved to be violent. President Companys capitulated after ten hours. The movement was repressed and resulted in the suspension of Catalonia's autonomy, a backsliding in the social legislation and the trauma that had caused a veritable lead-up to a civil war in Asturias. The destabilisation of the Republic was quite difficult to remedy. However, the military uprising against the legitimate republic on the 18th of July 1936 after the reactivation of the agrarian reform and the re-establishment of Companys' government and Catalan autonomy was neither justified nor inevitable. Within the Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, Lluís Companys' party, the fraction of Estat Català was blamed for the uprising in 1934 and its failure, such that the majority of its members were required to leave the ERC. In reality, the political responsibility went to the entire party and its allies. This ended the perennial tension existing within the majority Catalan party between those in favour of republican autonomism and those in favour of independence.
- [29] Albert BALCELLS and Genís SAMPER. *L'escoltisme català, 1911-1978*. Barcanova, Barcelona 1993.
- [30] Lluís DURAN. *Intel·ligència i caràcter. Palestra i la formació dels joves (1928-1939)*. Afers, Catarroja 2007.
- [31] Àngel PESTAÑA. *Trayectoria sindicalista*. Prologue by Antonio Elorza. Tebas, Madrid 1974, pp. 441-493.
- [32] Pelai PAGÈS. *Andreu Nin: su evolución política (1911-1937)*. Zero, Barcelona 1975; Andreu NIN. *Socialisme i nacionalisme, 1912-1934: escrits republicans, socialistes i comunistes*. Coordinated by Pelai Pagès. La Magrana - Diputació de Barcelona, Barcelona 1985, "Biblioteca dels Clàssics del Nacionalisme Català" Collection, no. 11.
- [33] Martí JORDÀ. *El referent nacional del marxisme català, fi del segle XIX-1924*. Girona 1997.
- [34] Albert BALCELLS. *Marxismo y catalanismo 1930-1936*. Cuadernos Anagrama, Barcelona 1977.
- [35] Martí JORDÀ. *Les idees d'emancipació nacional dels partits marxistes catalans (1924-1979)*. Girona 2000.

- [36] ALBERT BALCELLS. *Rafael Campalans, socialisme català*. Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, Barcelona 1985.
- [37] JOSEP PUIGSECH. *Nosaltres, els comunistes catalans. El PSUC i la Internacional Comunista durant la Guerra Civil*. Eumo, Vic 2001.
- [38] In Rovira i Virgili's book *Defensa de la democràcia*, published in 1930, Soviet communism and Italian fascism were framed as the two enemies of liberal democracy, the only authentic, valid system in the author's opinion. At that point even Rovira i Virgili considered Soviet communism more anti-liberal than Italian fascism. He remarked that democracy consisted not only of the government in concurrence with the majority but also respect for pluralism, peaceful coexistence and the efficient guarantee of individuals' rights. "Majority absolutism is ultimately a dictatorship," said Rovira i Virgili. This book, which is still relevant today, was reissued in 2010 by Pòrtic sponsored by the Memorial Democràtic de Catalunya (Democratic Memorial of Catalonia).
- [39] ANTONI ROVIRA I VIRGILI. *Viatge a la URSS*. Prologue by Joaquim Molas. Edicions 62, Barcelona 1968, "Antologia Catalana" Collection, no. 43, p. 58.
- [40] HÉLÈNE CARRÈRE D'ENCAUSSE. *Le gran défi: bolcheviks et nations: 1917-1930*. Flammarion, Paris 1987. By the same author: *El triunfo de las nacionalidades; el fin del imperio soviético*. Rialp, Madrid 1991.
- [41] The Partit Socialista d'Alliberament Nacional dels Països Catalans (Socialist Party of the National Liberation of the Catalan Lands, PSAN) was formed in 1969 through a Marxist-leaning split-off from the Front Nacional de Catalunya (National Front of Catalonia). It declared that the Soviet Union was a historical landmark in the formation of the nationalities, despite "the existence of obvious Russian imperialism and some genocides". *Document d'estudi i de discussió número 1*, PSAN, point 32. This judgement is significant, given that the PSAN wanted to distance itself from official communism. What is surprising is the credit given to the federalism of the USSR after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in May 1968, an invasion condemned even by Italian Euro-communism, a position echoed by Spanish communism. In 1977, Rafael Ribó, from the ranks of the PSUC, admitted that most of the Marxist theses on nationhood had been purely strategic and did not further the dialectic, while it was a subject that had been regarded as outside the revolutionary movement and was treated as such, as if communists had no national identity. The subordination of national emancipation to the socialist revolution had been total. Prologue to the edition of the essay STALIN, *El marxismo y la cuestión nacional*, Anagrama, Barcelona 1977.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Albert Balcells is a member of the History-Archaeology Section of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans, where he has served as the President, and he is a Professor Emeritus of Contemporary History at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. He has been awarded the Creu de Sant Jordi (Cross of St. George) from the Generalitat de Catalunya and the Narcís Monturiol Medal for Scholary Merit. His first book was *El sindicalisme a Barcelona, 1916-1923* (1965). He is the co-author and editor of the *Història de l'Institut d'Estudis Catalans* (2003-2006). Around 40 of his titles can be found in the United States Library of Congress. His most recent books include *Llocs de memòria dels catalans* (2008), which won the Carles Rahola prize from the Prudenci Bertrana Foundation; *El pistolerisme. Barcelona 1917-1923* (2009); *El projecte d'autonomia de la Mancomunitat de Catalunya del 1919 i el seu context històric* (2010); and finally *Els Estudis Universitaris Catalans, 1903-1985. Per una Universitat Catalana* (2011). Albert Balcells is the editor-in-chief of the *Catalan Historical Review*. He is also the editor and one of the writers for the most recent *Historia de Cataluña* published in Spanish in Madrid in 2006.