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SnM Studies on national Movements
Volume 7

Introduction

Kas Swerts

Articles

‘Visca Catalunya Lliure!’ – Battles for Catalan Autonomy in the Ramblas in the Immediate Aftermath of World War One

Florian Grafl

Peuples et Frontières: a Europeanist Journal against the Europe of the Treaties (1936-1939)

Sébastien Carney

The Dilemma of Dual Loyalty. Werner Hasselblatt and the Rise and Failure of Baltic German Minority Politics in the Inter-War Period

Jörg Hackmann

Protodiplomacy Across the Mediterranean: The Catalan Participation in the First Congresses of Byzantine Studies in South-Eastern Europe During the Interwar Period

Lucila Mallart

Archival Review

The Scottish Political Archive – A Contemporary Collection

Rosie Al-Mulla and Sarah Bromage

The Archival Holdings of the Centre de recherche bretonne et celtique

Marie-Alice le Corvec

State of Nationalism (SoN)

Nationalism and Empire

Yesim Bayar

Book Reviews

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Introduction Volume 7

KAS SWERTS

NISE/University of Antwerp

As Covid-restrictions are starting to ease up, discussions on what the post-covid world should entail have flared up. The pandemic laid bare fault lines in modern society, which subsequently raised questions as to how (or if) these fundamental issues should be addressed. The debates themselves appear to indicate the feeling of a 'new normal', a sense that the old mechanisms do not have the same efficacy as before, and new alternative approaches or methods should arise to address contemporary and future issues.

One could argue that a hundred years ago, a similar feeling of a 'new normal' took shape following the First World War. As old empires collapsed and new maps were being drawn, debates and questions arose across the globe on how the 'new normal' should be shaped and moulded. In particular, sub-national and regional movements across Europe took up the debates. They not only discussed the prospects of the 'new normal' in their own regions, but transgressed their borders, looking across Europe for similar cases, finding others with whom they could discuss alternative or novel ways to give meaning to the period after WWI.

The focus on sub-national and regional movements after the First World War formed the basis for the Annual NISE conference which took place on 28 May 2021. In cooperation with the Italian journal *Nazioni e Regioni*

SnM

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and the *Consello da Cultura Galega*, the conference (following the 2019 NISE Warsaw conference which addressed the issue of 'national minorities' following WWI) focused on the way the implementation of the principles of nationality and national self-determination after the Great War were fraught with inconsistency, resulting in new issues and question being raised on the regional, national, and international level. Four different sessions – 'Irridentism and Periphery', 'Irridentism and Minorities debated', 'Diversity and Repression', 'Minorities and Diplomacy' – delved into various aspects of the general questions that were being raised following the First World War, and the problems following the inconsistent implementation of the principles of nationality.

The articles in this volume stem from this conference and include a number of cases across Europe. They not only highlight the intricate and diverse ways in which different regions and (sub)-nations dealt with the post-war context and the themes addressed in the conference, but also illustrate the transnational character of these movements: protagonists of these movements travelled across Europe, finding inspiration or legitimacy from other regions, or forming friendships or alliances that could strengthen their own claims.

Finally, while this volume only includes a section of the articles that were being presented at the conference, all presentations during the conference were recorded, and you can find them online at http://www.nise.eu/europe-reframed-online-conference-now-available-online/ It does seem that online conferences (or the element of presentations being recorded online) are a tiny piece of the 'new normal' puzzle: henceforth NISE will always strive to record its presentations (NISELecture, conferences, etc…) in order to present its findings to a wide audience.

‘Visca Catalunya Lliure!’ – Battles for Catalan Autonomy in the Ramblas in the Immediate Aftermath of World War One

FLORIAN GRAFL

Ludwig Maximilians-Universität München

The short period from November 1918 to January 1919 marked a very distinct episode in the history of Catalan nationalism and in the history of Barcelona. The after-war years in the Catalan metropolis became known as *Pistolerismo* due to the bloody struggles between workers and entrepreneurs. The first months after the armistice, however, were dominated by the confrontations of Catalan nationalists and the police as well as radical proponents of the Spanish central state in Barcelona’s main avenue, Las Ramblas. This article analyses these violent street protests for Catalan autonomy in a microhistorical perspective aiming for a better understanding of how these struggles emerged, why they reached such a radical dimension, and under which conditions they came to a sudden end in February 1919. Firstly, the socio-political developments are examined, arguing that Catalanism underwent a transformation from a cultural to a political movement at the turn from the 19th to the 20th century and that despite Spain’s neutrality, the raise of nationalisms caused by the First World War also affected Catalonia. Secondly, the importance of the Ramblas as a stage of street protest in Barcelona is highlighted. Thirdly, the logics and the routines of these violent confrontations are analysed. Finally, it is demonstrated how the Canadiese strike in February 1919 immediately pushed the quest for Catalan autonomy completely into the background for several years. In general, this article contributes to both the history of Catalan nationalism as well as to the history of urban violence in contemporary Barcelona.

Keywords: Urban Violence, Catalonia, World War One, Nationalism, Street Protest

Introduction

> Clashes between police and militant elements in a thousand-strong crowd of demonstrators transformed part of central Barcelona into a battleground late on Saturday as another day of pro-independence protests turned violent. Projectiles were fired, at least six people were hospitalized with injuries, and barricades were set alight after officers charged ranks of demonstrators – many young and masking their faces – who had amassed outside Spanish police headquarters. The violent standoff in the city's tourist heartland offered stark evidence of the faultlines developing between hardline and conciliatory elements within the region's independence movement. It lasted several hours before protesters dispersed through the city's streets.[1]

The report illustrates the intensity of the violent street fights between radicalized supporters of Catalan separatism and the police in October 2019. The protest had risen as a reaction to Spain's Supreme Court sentencing several Catalan politicians to prison for their involvement in the independence bid two years earlier. So far, this had been the last violent climax in the struggle for Catalan independence.

A similar scenario located in the streets of Barcelona had taken place already more than hundred years ago. The rearrangement of Europe after the First World War had raised the hopes of Catalan nationalists for more autonomy. But when political negotiations had finally come to a dead end, they took their demands to the streets. Protesters regularly gathered to walk down the Ramblas, which was already back then Barcelona's most central and most important avenue. By screaming slogans as 'Visca Catalunya liure!' (Long live free Catalonia) or 'Mori Espanya!' (Death to Spain), by singing the Catalan protest song *Els segadors* and by waving the Catalan flag 'La Senyera' they provoked a

violent reaction by the police as well as by radical supporters of the Spanish central state.

Given the fact that both the history of Catalan repression in the 20th century as well as Barcelona's history of violence in the decades preceding the Spanish Civil War are already well investigated, it is puzzling that the violent fights in the Ramblas in the immediate afterwar years have been rather neglected. Historical research on Catalan repression mainly focused on Primo de Rivera's and Franco's dictatorship.[2] Research on Barcelona's history of violence put emphasis on the anarchist terror attacks in the last decade of the 19th century, the *Pistolerismo*, i.e. the struggles between entrepreneurs and workers from 1919 to 1923, as well as the anarchist uprisings during the Second Spanish Republic.[3]

Despite Spain's neutrality in both World Wars, the Spanish-based historian Francisco Romero Salvadó emphasized the huge impact of the First World War on Spain.[4] Recently, he published an article in which he focused on the immediate post-war months, arguing that they highlighted the crisis of the Spanish liberal regime which came to an end after Primo de Rivera's military coup in September 1923.[5] While Romero Salvadó has convincingly analysed the political changes in Spain and Catalonia from a broader perspective, the objective of this article is to give a detailed micro-historical analysis of the bloody clashes in the Ramblas in the same period.

Firstly, the socio-political developments are highlighted which led to the intensification of this conflict. Secondly, it is examined why the Ramblas turned into the main battleground. Thirdly, a closer look on the events is taken to understand the logic and the routines of these violent confrontations. Finally, the question is addressed why these fights came to a sudden end in January 1919. In general, this article, by closely examining the fights in the Ramblas in the immediate post-war period,

contributes to both the history of Catalan nationalism as well as the history of urban violence in Barcelona.

'Triumphant Catalonia will be great again!' – The Transformation of Catalanism from Cultural to Political Movement

> The Triumphant Catalonia will be rich and great again! Down to those people so swanky and big-headed. Good cut with the sickle, good cut with the sickle, defenders of the soil, good cut with the sickle! The time has come, reapers! The time has come to be alert! To be prepared when the next June will come, let's sharpen our tools well! May the enemy tremble seeing our banners. As we make the golden spikes fall, we saw the chains when the time has come![6]

The lyrics originate from the Catalan song *Els Segadors* (The Reapers). It remembers the so-called 'Reapers' War' which had started in 1640 as a local uprising of peasants in several regions of Catalonia against the stationing of Spanish troops during the Franco-Spanish War. In the course of the events, the *Generalitat*, the local Catalan parliament, declared independence from Spain to become a part of the French kingdom. The conflict came to an end in 1651, after most parts of Catalonia had been reconquered.[7]

At that time, Catalonia had been a part of Spain for almost two centuries. In 1469, Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabel of Castile married. By unifying their kingdoms, they laid the foundation of the modern Spanish central state. The king and his successors hardly ever interfered in Catalan's local rights. In consequence, Catalonia preserved a fair amount of autonomy and developed its own regional identity even further.[8]

This came to a sudden and radical end after the Spanish War of Succession. Catalonia supported Karl of Habsburg, but his rival Philipp of Anjou remained victorious. Barcelona was conquered in 1714 by Franco-Castilian troops. The day of defeat, 11 September, later turned into Catalonia's most important public holiday. Catalonia was punished with severe repressions.[9]

It took nearly one and a half centuries until Catalanism came to a revival. The time of *Renaixanca* (rebirth) started with the publication of Bonaventura Aribau's poem *La Patria* (the Fatherland) in 1833, in which he praised his home-country and the Catalan language. During that time, however, Catalanism had no political implications but the aim to raise the popularity of Catalan culture.[10]

In this context, the text of *Els Segadors* was published for the first time by Manuel Milà i Fontanals in 1882.[11] Ten years later, Francesc Alió included the lyrics in his song book *Cançons populars catalanas* (Catalan folk songs). He added tunes to turn the text into a song and changed the refrain into more combative lyrics.[12] Alió's version had been performed at an official event in 1894 for the first time and was highly praised by the Catalan press afterwards.[13]

At the turn of the century, both the nature of Catalanism and the tone of the song changed radically. Catalanism turned from a purely cultural movement to a political one. One of the main reasons was the so-called 'Disaster of 1898'.[14] In that year, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, the last remaining non-African colonies of the former empire were lost in a war with the USA.

It became obvious by then that Spain's status as one of the leading European imperial powers had gone forever. This led to a profound crisis which simultaneously caused serious doubts on the Restoration monarchy. The Catalan journalist and politician Claudi Ametlla wrote in

his memoires that many Catalans became hostile to the government in Madrid at the end of the 19th century.[15]

Back then, Barcelona faced the first wave of working migrants. From 1887, the year before the First World Exhibition staged in Barcelona, to the beginning of the new century, the number of inhabitants grew from about two hundred seventy-two thousand to five hundred thirty-three thousand.[16] Most of the people coming to Barcelona in search for work originated from rural areas of Catalonia or from other Catalan-speaking regions as Valencia or the Balearic Islands.[17] Their integration was facilitated not only by the Catalan language but also by many local Catalan traditions which found its way into Barcelona's working-class culture. The most influential habits included the building of human towers, known as 'Castells', and a group dance called 'Sardana'. When the first wave of migrants arrived in Barcelona, both traditions were forcefully popularized by the Catalanists to illustrate the across-the-board character of their ideas.[18]

The integration of migrant workers in Barcelona into the Catalan culture was also facilitated by the fact that they hardly had any sympathy with the Spanish central state. In comparison to other nations, compulsory military service in Spain had no integrative function. On the contrary, the Spanish military was very unpopular in working class circles because in their view, it only served the causes of the upper class.[19]

The Spanish central state also failed to win the loyalty of the workers by means of social legislation. As the reports of the workplace inspectors illustrate, the compliance with labour laws was only sparsely supervised in the factories and violations were punished very mildly. Labour laws were especially ineffective in Catalonia as there were few state-run companies.[20]

As a result, the *Lliga Regionalista de Catalunya* (Catalan regionalist league), a conservative right-wing party demanding more autonomy for Catalonia, became the leading power in Barcelona's urban politics at the beginning of the 20th century. It aimed for the mobilisation of public opinion to establish local institutions which could represent the interests of the Catalans much better than the government in Madrid. Their objectives should be realized peacefully via negotiations with the Spanish government.[21]

Nevertheless, supporters of the *Lliga Regionalista* became involved in violent clashes with proponents of the opposing Republican Party. Its leader, Alejandro Lerroux, wanted to modernize Spain by the establishment of a republican system and had polemicised in an aggressive tone against the conservatism and clericalism represented by the *Lliga*. The Republicans had chosen *La Marseillaise* as their hymn, while their political rivals favoured *Els segadors*. Lerroux himself openly polemicised against *Els Segadors* after it had caused several clashes between his followers and Catalan nationalists singing the song.[22]

In its original version, *Els segadors* narrated the story of three reapers and a lady, rather evoking erotic than nationalist connotations.[23] In 1897, Emili Guanyavents, a poet who corresponded in socialist and anarchist circles, changed the lyrics and turned it into a protest song. In the same year, the Spanish government answered the wave of anarchist terror attacks in Barcelona with a severe repression which also affected Catalan newspapers as *La Reinaxenca* (Rebirth) and *Lo Regionalista* (The Regionalist). In the resistance put up against these measures, singing *Els segadors* became a symbolic act, accompanied with shouts as 'Visca Catalunya!' (Long live Catalonia) and 'Lliure!' (Free!).[24]

In Madrid, Spain's political elite began to realize the symbolic power of the song. In the Spanish parliament it was condemned as 'a hymn of hate, rage and destruction.'[25] The influential Madrilenian newspaper *El*

Heraldo de Madrid (Madrid's Herald) published an article on the song, calling it 'Catalanism's most efficient medium of propaganda'. [26] In 1899, for the first time, a group walking down the Ramblas singing *Els Segadors* provoked a confrontation with the police.[27] This form of protest would become frequent two decades later in the post-war months from November 1918 to January 1919. In order to understand why the authorities could not tolerate this, it is necessary to elaborate on the significance of the Ramblas as a stage for popular protest in contemporary Barcelona.

'To the Ramblas' – Staging Popular Protest in Contemporary Barcelona

> A loud scream came out of their throats: "To the Ramblas!". According to the Catalans, any funeral, procession and demonstration of importance needed the green and likeable stage of their Via Sacra, the Ramblas. Powerful echoes of "To the Ramblas!". They started moving. The police deployed its units. The cavalry headed against the crowd and the horns rang out. This meant that the police had orders to start firing at the people after the slightest sign of disobedience. The crowd ignored the threat. "To the Ramblas!" They took the corpse as an ensign and brought it down the Calle de Balmes. When they arrived at the crossways to the Calle de Cortes, the chief of police finally gave the order to attack….and the horses of the policemen trampled over the workers, who ran away in all directions. […] Whistles, throwing stones, caps that got lost during the hunt, entrance doors violently slammed to deny access to those who wanted to seek shelter in the houses nearby. And still one could hear the shouts "To the Ramblas!"[28]

Comparable to other European cities, street protests in Barcelona emerged from religious processions and festive parades dating back to Early Modern times. These cultural practices improved the sense of community among the lower classes as both the nobility and the upper class usually stayed away from these festivities.[29] Generally speaking, until the second half of the 19th century, street protest had turned into a kind of political representation as a counterpart to the official public ceremonies such as the celebrations of the birthday of a member of the royal family.[30] In the following decades, popular resistance became an established form of collective action.[31] As a way to express anger at the political or social conditions, mass rallies made a huge impact both on their actors as well as on the observers and posed a challenge to the authorities.[32]

In Barcelona, the joint walk through the streets was rather a civic ritual until the last decade of the 19th century. Since most people were still illiterate, it gave them a feeling of power and community. By gathering together in public, people made clear that they shared the same values.[33] The transformation of this cultural practice to a form of resistance became obvious in 1890, when the first celebration of the May Days took place in Barcelona. Around twenty-five thousand people walked from the Plaça de Catalunya down the Ramblas to the office of the civil governor in order to demand the improvement of the working conditions. At the same time, radical anarchists also gathered in the Ramblas to call for a general strike, which resulted in a clash with the police.[34]

The American historian Temma Kaplan has investigated the routes of the most important processions, parades, and demonstrations in Barcelona between 1808 and 1920. In accordance with the quote above, she highlighted the importance of the Ramblas as a stage of public representation and protest.[35] Kaplan reasoned that the Ramblas, located in the centre of the city, made up a connection between many public

meeting points of importance such as the market 'Mercado de la Boqueria', where housewives collected groceries, the Liceu theatre, in which the upper class gathered, and the Plaça Reial, where the civil governor resided.[36] On both sides of the Ramblas, one could find the best hotels, restaurants, cafés, and theatres in Barcelona. By the beginning of the 20th century, the Ramblas started to lose its exclusiveness and became a staging area of all classes of society.[37] The Ramblas stretch from the harbour to the Plaça de Catalunya. Already back then, this place was the symbolic centre of the city. The routes of trams and buses converged there, and the news of the day was exchanged.[38]

The boulevard must have made a big impression. This is illustrated by the contemporary Catalan author Domènec de Bellmunt. In his book *Les Catacumbes de Barcelona* (Barcelona's catacombs), published in 1930, he wrote: 'The Ramblas are unique in Barcelona, maybe in the entire world. This avenue has dynamics, local grace, variety of colours, and different aspects, which made it difficult for the journalist to describe it in an objective, detailed and photographic way'.[39]

Only Lerroux chose another boulevard for the manifestations of his party members and followers, namely the 'Paral·lel', connecting the harbour with the Plaça de Espanya. The boulevard was constructed in 1894 and quickly turned into Barcelona's centre of night life. With its Flamenco spectacles, the 'Paral·lel' could be regarded as the 'Spanish' city centre during that period.[40] But in comparison to the Ramblas, it lacked any tradition of popular protest. Although the demonstrations led by Lerroux gained a lot of attention and made him the 'Emperor of the Paral·lel', the avenue was less significant as a stage of protest in that period.[41] Consequently, in the post-war months the Catalan nationalists headed for the Ramblas to articulate their demands for more autonomy.

'Ara o Mai' – The Radicalization of Catalan nationalism after World War I

> As expected, last night the demonstrations on the Ramblas and the Plaza de Cataluña continued. At 8 pm the Ramblas made an impressive sight. A huge crowd of people had gathered on this central avenue and made use of its absolute legitimate right to claim the independence of Catalonia. The police had already occupied the Plaza de Cataluña, the Ramblas and the streets nearby. Armed with sabres, they took action against the protesters, dissolving the demonstration. The attack of the police was as unexpected as brutal. […] Nine persons were arrested. Numerous injured persons were brought and cared for in the pharmacies nearby.[42]

During the First World War Catalan nationalism had considerably grown. The rivalry between the *Lliga Regionalista* and Lerroux's radical party was decided in favour of the former.[43] The wave of nationalism, which had affected all the countries who took part in the hostilities, had also spilled over to Catalonia. On 14 October 1918, the Catalan newspaper *La Veu de Catalonia* (The Voice of Catalonia) published an editorial headed 'Ara o Mai' (Now or Never).[44] Hopes for more autonomy were further nourished by the concept of the self-determination of small nations by American president Woodrow Wilson. In Catalonia, he became very popular, and places and streets were named after him.[45]

The victory of the Entente was celebrated with great enthusiasm on 11 November 1918.[46] In the Spanish parliament, an autonomy status for Catalonia was seriously discussed for the first time. But in the end, the application for more autonomy was refused on 12 December 1918. Neither did the Allies intervene in favor for the Catalans. The euphoria of

the first days after the end of the war now turned into frustration, and most of the Catalan delegates withdrew from the parliament in Madrid.[47]

After political negotiations had finally ceased, the demands for more autonomy were taken to the streets. The choreography of protests included singing *Els segadors* and waving 'La Senyera', the horizontally red and yellow-striped Catalan flag. Similar to the song *Els segadors*, 'La Senyera' had become a symbol of Catalan nationalism in the second half of the 19th century and was turned into a form of provocation in the first decades of the 20th century.[48]

The first confrontation with the police had already occurred on 29 September 1918. That day was commemorated as the first anniversary of the death of Enric Prat de la Riba, one of the most influential supporters of Catalan nationalism at the beginning of the 20th century. A small group equipped with American and Catalan flags walked up the Passeig de Gracia, a boulevard in the upper-class area of Barcelona, until they were dissolved by the police.[49] In the last weeks of the war, the tension grew further. One day before the armistice, a group of Catalan nationalists walked down the Ramblas and was stopped by the police.[50] Similar incidents occurred in the following days.[51]

While the first protests for Catalan autonomy had ended up rather peacefully, they took a much more radical turn after political negotiations in Madrid for more autonomy had failed definitively. Violent fights in the Ramblas as the one described above became frequent in the second half of December 1918.[52] Generally speaking, the protests tended to follow the same pattern. They usually took place on working days, starting in the evenings when the shops were about to close. A group mainly consisting of students, workers and employees used to move through the Ramblas screaming their slogans until they were confronted by the police.[53]

At the beginning of 1919, the struggles took a different, even more violent turn. Between 11 and 14 January, forty-two Catalan nationalists were arrested.[54] Apart from the clashes with the police, a new rival had come up: *La Liga Patriótica Española* (the league of Spanish patriots), which at the beginning of 1919 claimed to count about a thousand members.[55]

Between 11 January and 16 January, several shows of the comedy *Fuerzas inútiles* (Useless Forces) were violently assaulted by Catalan nationalists. The reason for their anger against those performances was that the star of the show, Mary Focela, was famous for her patriotic songs praising Spain.[56] In return, on 17 January, a group of about eighty people, most of them presumably supporters of *La Liga Patriótica Española*, tried to invade a theatre in which the traditional Catalan dance *La Sardana* was performed.[57]

The clashes reached their climax the very next day when a young Catalan nationalist was murdered by a member of *La Liga Patriótica Española*. In the following days, more violent clashes took place resulting in several persons severely injured.[58] The escalation of violence caused protests all over Spain which put the government under pressure. On 28 January, Catalan symbols were forbidden.[59]

'A Battle fought in the Shadows' – The Beginning of *Pistolerismo*

> The city lay completely in the dark, the streets were almost fully deserted. From my flat, I passed Calle de Launa, Plaça d'Urquinaona and Calle de Fontanella to arrive at Plaça de Catalunya. I was absolutely surprised by the silence of the streets, with very few persons passing by. […] I was overwhelmed from

> feelings of concern and fear at every step I took, expecting any kind of detonation as a start of a battle which was fought in the shadows. I rolled over and returned home in a hurry, pushing myself against the walls to be as least visible as possible, despite that prevailing darkness. This is how that epic strike began, which was so different than the ones before, in which the tactics of the trade union seemed like a very difficult riddle, to which no one could provide an appropriate solution.[60]

The seemingly apocalyptical event, to which the industrialist Pedro Gual Villalbí referred to, was a strike in the Canadiese factory, Barcelona's most important powerhouse. It brought Barcelona to a total standstill for more than 40 days. The strike spread to other factories as well and in total about hundred thousand workers participated.[61] Many contemporaries felt that this event was the start of a new age, as the anarchist trade union CNT (*Confederación Nacional del Trabajo*) demonstrated its growing power for the first time.[62] Only a few months after the strike, which ended in a success for the workers, the *Federación Patronal*, the most powerful Catalan employers' association, struck back by organizing a lock-out in order to smash the CNT. It affected about two hundred thousand workers.[63]

After these events, a peaceful solution of the labour struggles became almost unthinkable. Therefore, the workers started to blackmail factory owners in order to improve their working conditions. Some of the victims refused and were shot. As a response, the *Federación Patronal* saw the work of the police as completely inefficient. They started to build up a group of assassins themselves in order to take revenge. Until 1923, hundreds of people died in this bloody labour war which became known as *Pistolerismo*.[64]

The violent battles between entrepreneurs and workers pushed the protests for more autonomy in Catalonia completely into the

background. Between the beginning of the strike in the Canadiese factory to the end of the *Pistolerismo* in 1923, there were only two minor incidents without any major consequences.[65] On 11 September 1923, Catalan, Basque and Galician nationalists gathered on the Plaza de Cataluña, demanding an autonomy status for their home region. In the fight involving the police and Spanish nationalists, about thirty persons were injured. General Primo de Rivera felt encouraged to bring his coup d'etat forward to the night of 12 September.[66] He completely banned Catalan culture from public life after he had established his dictatorship.

Conclusion

The short period from November 1918 to January 1919 marked a very distinct episode both in the history of Catalan nationalism as well as in Barcelona's history of violence. The post-war years in Barcelona became known as *Pistolerismo* due to the bloody struggles between workers and entrepreneurs. The first months after the armistice in Barcelona, however, were dominated by the violent clashes in the Ramblas between Catalan nationalists and the police as well as radical proponents of the Spanish central state. This article analysed these fights from a micro-historical perspective aiming to better understand how they emerged. Furthermore, social and political conditions contributing to their escalation and their sudden ending have been investigated.

Catalanism had already undergone a transformation from a cultural to a political movement at the turn from the 19th to the 20th century. Despite Spain's neutrality, the rise of nationalisms caused by the First World War also affected Catalonia. In December 1918 it became obvious that no political solution could be found for more autonomy in Catalonia. Its supporters took their disappointment and agony to the streets.

Relating to the contemporary newspaper article quoted above, one might argue that the manifestations turned violent mainly due to the aggressive response of the police. However, focusing on the symbols used by the Catalan nationalists to support their protest visually and acoustically, it stands to reason that they were used as deliberate means of provocation. They were assured that singing *Els Segadors* as well as waving the Catalan flag "La Senyera" would challenge both their antagonists and the police.

Not only the symbols were carefully chosen by the Catalan nationalists, but also the location to stage their protests. The Ramblas, situated in the heart of Barcelona, already had a long tradition of manifestations and demonstrations back then. It was a well-known fact that any protest heading for Barcelona's most central and most popular boulevard would receive a lot of attention and could hardly be ignored by the authorities. The manifestations for more autonomy in Catalonia, however, took the politicization of this public space to another level.

By closely focusing on single incidents, it became obvious that during this short period, the intensity of violence grew steadily. Initiating peaceful manifestations in the beginning, the protests took a violent turn when Catalan nationalists got involved in regular fights with the police in December 1918. The clashes intensified as theatres were invaded at the beginning of 1919. They reached their climax when a young Catalan was murdered by a member of *La Liga Patriótica Española* on 19 January.

It seems surprising that the struggles fought out for months on a nearly daily basis came to a sudden end in February 1919. As many contemporaries noticed, a new era was initiated by the strike in the Canadiese factory. In what became known as *Pistolerismo*, assassinations of workers and entrepreneurs put Barcelona on the verge of a civil war. The quest for Catalan autonomy was completely pushed into the background, only to be taken up again more than a decade later, in the

time of the Second Spanish Republic. The violent clashes between radical supporters of Catalan separatism and the police in October 2019 illustrate that the symbolic fight for urban space and territory in Barcelona still remains an important issue in the Catalan struggle for independence more than a century later.

Endnotes

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[5] F. Romero Salvadó, 'Between the Catalan quagmire and the red spectre, Spain, November 1918 – April 1919', in: *The Historical Journal* 60/3 (2017), 795-815.

[6] Translation from Catalan to English by the author of this article. The quotation refers to Emili Guanyavents' version of the song's lyrics later mentioned in this paper.

[7] For a detailed coverage of the events of the Reapers' War and its aftermath, see: J. Sanabre, *La acción de Francia en Cataluña en la pugna por la hegemonía de Europa (1640-1659)* (Barcelona, 1956).

[8] Simon i Tarrés, 'Catalunya Moderna', in: A. Balcells, F. Sabaté, A. Simon (eds), *Història de Catalunya* (Madrid, 2009), 337-355.

[9] J. Falkner, *The War of Spanish Succession 1701-1714* (Barnsley, 2015).

[10] For a detailed examination of the development of Catalan nationalism up to the end of the 19th century, see the recent study by Angel Smith, *The Origins of Catalan Nationalism, 1770-1898* (Basingstoke, 2014).

[11] Milà Fontanals, *Romancerillo catalán* (Barcelona, 1882), 73-76.

[12] Massot i Muntaner, '"Els Segadors", de canço popular a himne patriòtic', in: J. Massot i Muntaner, S. Pueyo, O. Martorell (eds.), *Els Segadors, Himne nacional de Catalunya* (Barcelona, 1993), 12-15.

[13] *La Veu de Catalunya*, 29/4/1894.

[14] Smith, *Origins*, 222.

[15] Smith, 'From subordination to contestation: the rise of labour in Barcelona, 1898-1918', in: A. Smith (ed.), *Red Barcelona. Social Protest and Labour Mobilization in the 20th Century*, (London, 2002), 34.

[16] I. Julián, *L'urbanisme a Barcelona entre dues exposicions (1888-1929)* (Barcelona, 1988), 113.

[17] A. Caules, 'Investigación analítica sobre la evolución demográfica de Cataluña', in: *Cuadernos de Información Economica y Sociologica* 1 (1955), 33.

[18] K.J. Nagel, '"Multikulturelle Gesellschaft" und Staatliche Interventionspolitik in der Stadt Barcelona zwischen den Weltausstellungen von 1888 und 1929', in: *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 32 (1992), 17.

[19] D. Marín, *La Semana Trágica. Barcelona en llamas, la revuelta popular y la Escuela Moderna* (Madrid, 2009), 59.

[20] Nagel, *Multikulturelle Gesellschaft*, 26.

[21] Smith, 'The Lliga Regionalista, the Catalan Right and the Making of the Primo de Rivera Dictatorship, 1916-1923', in: A. Smith & F. Romero Salvadó, *The Agony of Spanish Liberalism. From Revolution to Dictatorship, 1913-1923* (London, 2010), 148.

[22] One example of such a clash is reported in *La Vanguardia*, 19/11/1905.

[23] J. Ayats, *Els Segadors. De cançó erótica a himne nacional* (Barcelona, 2011), 48-49.

[24] Ayats, 'Segadors', 82.

[25] *La Vanguardia*, 21/2/1900.

[26] Alier, 'La societat coral, Catalunya Nova', in: *D'art* 2 (1973), 55.

[27] P. Anguera, *Els Segadors. Com es crea un himne* (Barcelona, 2010), 53.

[28] This quote was translated by the author of this article from Spanish to English. It is taken from a book by contemporary journalist Francisco Madrid. He described the assassination and the funeral of Francesc Layret, a lawyer who successfully had defended several union leaders at court, F. Madrid, *Las últimas veinticuatro horas de Francisco Layret* (Buenos Aires, 1942), 68-69.

[29] J. Amelang, 'Public Ceremonies and Private Fetes. Social Segregation and Aristocratic Culture in Barcelona, ca. 1500-1800', in: G. McDonogh (ed.), *Conflict in Catalonia. Images of an urban society* (Florida, 1986), 21-23.

[30] Kaschuba, 'Von der "Rotte" zum "Block". Zur kulturellen Ikonographie der Demonstration im 19. Jahrhundert', in: B.J. Warnecken (ed.), *Massenmedium Straße. Zur Kulturgeschichte der Demonstration* (Frankfurt/M., 1991), 69-70.

[31] Robert, 'Metamorphosen der Demonstration. Lyon 1848, 1890, 1912', in: B. J. Warnecken (ed.), *Massenmedium Straße. Zur Kulturgeschichte der Demonstration* (Frankfurt/M., 1991), 49.

[32] Pigenet, 'Räume und Rituale des ländlichen Arbeiterprotestes im 19. Jahrhundert. Am Beispiel der Protestmärsche im Department Cher', in: B.J. Warnecken (ed.), *Massenmedium Straße. Zur Kulturgeschichte der Demonstration* (Frankfurt/M., 1991), 39.

[33] T. Kaplan, *Red City, blue period. Social movements in Picassos Barcelona* (Berkeley, 1992), 13-14.

[34] T. Kaplan, 'Civic Rituals and Patterns of Resistance in Barcelona, 1890-1930', in: P. Thane, G. Crossick & R. Floud (eds.), *The Power of the Past. Essays for Eric J. Hobsbawm* (Cambridge, 1984), 175-177.

[35] Kaplan, *Red City*, 202-203. One could extend Kaplan's analysis and support her conclusion by mentioning that for example, in 1922, FC Barcelona's celebration of winning both the Catalan championship as well as the *Copa del*

Rey was staged both on the Ramblas as well as on Plaça de Catalunya. T. Sala, *La vida cotidiana en la Barcelona de 1900* (Madrid, 2005), 194. At the beginning of the Second Spanish Republic, a demonstration during the rent strike of 1931 also headed for the Ramblas, F. Aisa Pàmpols, *La huelga de alquileres y el Comité de Defensa Económica* (Barcelona, 2014), 59.

[36] Kaplan, *Red City*, 2. An overview of the history of this boulevard is given by E. Vila, *Breu història de la Rambla* (Barcelona, 2012).

[37] Gabriel, 'La Barcelona obrera y proletaria', in: A. Sánchez (ed.), *Barcelona 1888-1929. Modernidad, ambición y conflictos de una ciudad soñada* (Madrid, 1994), 99.

[38] Kaplan, *Red City*, 3. The historical significance of this place is demonstrated by the fact that city chronicler Lluís Permanyer dedicated a whole 'biography' to it, L. Permanyer, *Biografia de la Plaça de Catalunya* (Barcelona, 1995).

[39] D. de Bellmunt, *Les Catacumbes de Barcelona* (Barcelona, 1930), 20.

[40] J. Termes & T. Abelló, 'Conflictivitat social i maneres de viure', in: J. Sobrequés i Callicó (ed.), *Història de Barcelona, el segle XX, I. De les annexions a la fi de la Guerra civil* (Barcelona, 1995), 143; Gabriel, 'Barcelona obrera', 100-101.

[41] J. Àlvarez Junco, *El Emperador del Paralelo. Lerroux y la demagogia populista* (Madrid 1990); J. Ballerster i Peris, *Memòries d'un noi de Gràcia* (Barcelona, 1999), 23.

[42] *El Diluvio*, 14/12/1918.

[43] Àlvarez Junco, *El Emperador*, 328.

[44] *La Veu de Catalonia*, 14/10/1918.

[45] J.M. Poblet, *El moviment autonomista a Catalunya dels anys 1918-1919* (Barcelona, 1970), 7.

[46] R. Tasis i Marca, *Barcelona. Imatge i història d'una ciutat* (Barcelona, 1963), 457-458.

[47] K.J. Nagel, *Arbeiterschaft und nationale Bewegung in Katalonien zwischen 1898 und 1923* (Saarbrücken, 1991), 428.

[48] For the meaning of the Catalan senyera see: J. Alberti, *La bandera catalana. Mil anys d'història* (Barcelona, 2010), as well as: P. Anguera i Nolla, *Les quatre barres. De bandera històrica a senyera nacional* (Barcelona, 2010).

[49] A. Balcells, E. Puyol, J. Sabater, *La mancomunitat de Catalunya i l'autonomia* (Barcelona 1996), 102.

[50] E. Ucelay da Cal, Estat Català, *The Strategies of Seperation and Revolution of Catalan Radical Nationalism 1919-1933* (Columbia, 1979), 92.

[51] Such an event for example is documented in *El Día Gráfico*, 17/11/1918.

[52] A similar incident was reported by *El Diluvio*, 24/12/1918.

[53] Ucelay da Cal, *Strategies*, 98.

[54] Molas, 'Federació Democrática Nacionalista (1919-1923)', in: *Recerques* 4 (1974), 140.

[55] Quiroga, 'Nation and Reaction', in: F. Romero Salvadó & A. Smith (eds.), *The Agony of Spanish liberalism. From revolution to dictatorship, 1913-1923* (London, 2010), 207-208.

[56] *El Noticiero Universal*, 13/1/1919, *El Diluvio*, 13/1/1919, E. González Calleja: *El máuser y el sufragio. Orden público, subversión y violencia política en la crisis de la Restauración 1917–1931* (Madrid, 1999), 349.

[57] *El Noticiero Universal*, 18/1/1919.

[58] *El Correo Catalan*, 25/1/1919.

[59] González Calleja, M*áuser*, 351.

[60] P. Gual Villalbí, *Memorias de un industrial de nuestro tiempo* (Barcelona, 1922), 162-163. The quote was translated from Spanish to English by the author of this article.

[61] A. Smith, *Anarchism, Revolution and Reaction, Catalan Labour and the Crisis of the Central State, 1898-1923* (New York, 2007), 290-297.

[62] P. Coromines, *Cartes d'un visionari* (Barcelona, 1921), 218-219 A. Baratech, *Los sindicatos libres de España. Su origen – su actuación – su ideario* (Barcelona, 1927), 51.

[63] The lock-out is extensively covered in S. Bengoechea, *El locaut de Barcelona (1919-1920). Els precedents de la Dictadura de Primo de Rivera* (Barcelona 1998).

[64] Romero Salvadó, '"Si vis pacem para bellum". The Catalan Employers' Dirty War 1919-23', in: F. Romero Salvadó & A. Smith (eds.), *The Agony of Spanish liberalism. From revolution to dictatorship, 1913-1923* (London, 2010), 175-201.

[65] *El Noticiero Universal*, 3/5/1920, *La Vanguardia*, 12/9/1922.

[66] Quiroga, *Nation and Reaction*, 202.

Peuples et Frontières: a Europeanist Journal against the Europe of the Treaties (1936-1939)

SÉBASTIEN CARNEY

Centre de recherche bretonne et celtique

Université de Bretagne Occidentale

From 1919 some voices were raised in Brittany to claim the right of the Breton people to dispose of themselves. Grouped around the newspaper *Breiz Atao*, a team of young activists pretends to lead Brittany to autonomy within the framework of a federal Europe, even to independence, which requires a redrawing of borders. Very quickly it was the Europe of the Treaties which was criticized, in a logic of rapprochement with other regional nationalisms, and with Germany, some nationals of which stirred up local claims. This Breton and European activism finds its most complete expression in two reviews: the *Bulletin des minorités nationales en France*, created in 1936, and quickly renamed *Peuples et Frontières* (Peoples and Borders). Why and how did a few Breton activists without an audience pretend to get involved in European geopolitics? What interest did their journal defend?

After being disappointed by Panceltism, these Breton nationalists first turned to the oppressed minorities of France, who gathered in 1927 in a committee without a future. The federalism promoted by this committee finds new life in the *Bulletin des minorités nationales en France*, which soon spread to Europe under the name *Peuples et Frontières*, in accordance with the wishes of some German activists, including Gerhard von Tevenar. Consequently, the review defends German interests in Central Europe, since asking for the revision of the Treaties would make it possible to defend Breton interests in France. Largely, this monthly was moderated by Yann Fouéré, whose network extended to central Europe, that was considered as a laboratory.

Keywords: Breton Nationalism; federalism; Central Europe; Collaboration; Brittany.

Introduction

At the end of the Great War, for reasons already explained elsewhere,[1] a handful of young people who had been too young to take part in the combat invested their heroism deficit in politics instead. They became convinced that Brittany had lost the war and began to denounce the degeneracy of their Gallicised compatriots. The *Groupe Régionaliste Breton* (Breton Regionalist Group) was founded in 1918.[2] Its main aim was to 'work actively to *restore the Breton Fatherland*'.[3] Armed with its mouthpiece, the journal *Breiz Atao,*[4] the group hoped to remedy this state of affairs by unearthing Celtic warriors who had been buried under the veneer of a forced Latinisation and by re-Celtising Brittany through contact with their so-called Celtic brothers in Ireland, Wales and Scotland.[5] However, by the mid-1920s, the cross-Channel contact they had made had proved disappointing and their plan for a Celtic alliance had come to nothing. This failure of pan-Celticism contrasted, however, with the reception that Olier Mordrel and Morvan Marchal, two leading figures in the group, were given by Flemish students in Belgium in February 1925 (the Breton activists also saw the Flemings as the victims of Latinisation). The activists thus began to promote European federalism. The objective was clear. The 'small, oppressed nationalities'[6] intended to join forces to defeat the common enemy – sovereign states – and establish a new federal European order. Very quickly, the Europe of the Treaties came in for criticism as they sought closer ties not just with other regional nationalisms but also with Germany, where some nationals were stirring up local grievances. This Breton and Europeanist activism found its fullest expression in the *Bulletin des Minorités Nationales en France*, a fortnightly journal founded in 1936 by Olier Mordrel and edited by Yann Fouéré. Renamed *Peuples et Frontières* shortly after its launch, this twenty-to-thirty paged journal moved to monthly publication in 1938 before being banned in 1939 after just twenty-nine issues.[7] Why and how did a few Breton activists without an

audience pretend to get involved in European geopolitics? What interest did their journal defend? To answer these questions, we need to look closely at the context in which the journal emerged, which will give us an understanding of who the main protagonists were and what the content of its discourse was.

Federating first the French and then the European regional nationalisms

The first issue of the *Bulletin des Minorités Nationales en France* opened with an article written by Olier Mordrel. This son of a general, who had joined the Breton cause seventeen years earlier while still an architecture student, was one of the key figures within the small *Breiz Atao* team. A brilliant polemicist with a divisive personality, he regularly presented contemporary political experiments that he saw as offering solutions for Breton activism. Indeed, he tried to merge the ideologies of the *Groupe Régionaliste Breton* (1918), the *Parti Autonomiste Breton* (Breton Autonomist Party) (1927) and the *Parti National Breton* (PNB - Breton National Party) (1931) with these successive experiments. We can see this in his shift from championing pan-Celticism to promoting European federalism. On his return from Flanders in 1925, he noted that 'It is in the interests of small oppressed nationalities to stand together on their respective causes, to create an international programme from their own specific programmes, to form a European movement out of their dispersed struggles.'[8] He would speak of a United States of Europe. His alter-ego at the time, Maurice Marchal, also a former architecture student who was in the process of designing the Breton flag, had taken this idea a step further, advocating the union of 'comrades in the struggle' who were linked by a 'similar fate, similar hopes, similar efforts':

> An era of closer contact seems have opened up […] from this affinity, from this friendship in some cases, that has spontaneously sprung up between parallel movements, we believe it is possible to form a closer relationship and more effective moral support […] The existence of a common organisation would allow not only exchanges of views but, where necessary, a real coordination of our efforts.[9]

Marchal had therefore proposed a '*Comité International des Minorités Nationales* [International Committee of National Minorities], to meet periodically and to comprise delegates from the national movements of Western Europe'. The *Comité Central des Minorités Nationales de France* (CCMNF (central committee of the national minorities of France)) was inaugurated in Quimper on 12 September 1927 at the end of the Rosporden congress, which had also seen the creation of the *Parti Autonomiste Breton*. The CCMNF charter, which was signed by a small group of Corsican, Alsatian and Breton activists, claimed to 'align the efforts of all the member groups and, where necessary, to represent them en bloc'.[10] It also provided for the establishment of statutes and the integration of the Flemings.

The CCMNF had a meteoric trajectory. On 4 December 1927, it met in Paris to publicly protest against the banning of several newspapers,[11] and the arrest of a number of Alsatian autonomist leaders for conspiring against state security.[12] This activity had been enough for the investigating judge in Mulhouse to order searches to be carried out in Corsica, Flanders and Brittany. At the same time, the national press believed – wrongly – that the CCMNF's actions were being orchestrated by 'the hand of Moscow'.[13] Finally, in a special issue of *Breiz Atao*, which was distributed in Alsace on the day the autonomists' trial opened in Colmar, the CCMNF had published an open letter to the jurors.[14] This was to be its final act. Due to the arrests in Alsace and the lack of means

available to all, the links between the Alsatians, Corsicans and Bretons became more distant after this.

It would be reasonable to suppose that, eight years on from Colmar, the *Bulletin des Minorités Nationales en France* was an old project resurrected. It was in fact a scaled-back version. The CCMNF's aim was to compare its member organisations' information and methods and 'increase their influence on public opinion through joint events'.[15] Mordrel set out the *Bulletin*'s objectives, which included the following: 'regular reading […] will give European opinion, which has been misled by French propaganda, a precise idea of the importance and struggle of each distinct nationality within the French state. It would be a mistake to ascribe to each and every one of them similar situations and even aspirations'.[16] The *Bulletin* therefore intended to stick to providing information, but not just any information.

The contributors to the *Bulletin*, who were mainly Breton, offered articles highlighting the historical, linguistic, literary and cultural specificities of Brittany, Alsace-Lorraine, Flanders, the Basque Country, Corsica, Catalonia and Occitanie. For example, Karl Heller gave an 'overview of the history of Alsace until 1918',[17] while an anonymous contributor analysed the relationship that the Flemish of France had with their language.[18] Local political movements, demonstrations and actions were also presented in the journal, as was the Basque *eskualerrist* movement's programme[19] with details of actions undertaken in Brittany to support the teaching of Breton.[20] There was a strong emphasis on French oppression and the hostility of successive governments towards the demands of minorities.[21] Information and even activist pedagogy also appeared in the form of maps – for example there was one map showing the chronology of the decline of the Breton language[22] – and electoral results, particularly during the legislative elections in the Haut-Rhin and Bas-Rhin departments in April and May 1936.[23] It is not clear whether this type of information was included predominantly because

of a need to produce papers.[24] This was perhaps the *Bulletin*'s main problem. Its editors had quickly understood the need to open it up to other countries in order, on the one hand, to have more topics to write about and, on the other, to reach a wider audience.

In January 1937, the *Bulletin* was renamed *Peuples et Frontières* with the subtitle 'Revue d'information sur les peuples opprimés d'Europe Occidentale' (Journal of Information on the Oppressed Peoples of Western Europe).[25] The editors explained the situation to their readers, assuring them they would 'adopt exactly the same line' as the *Bulletin* and that the change had been prompted by the need to broaden the scope of the publication 'if only to ensure the continuation of its material existence'. They wrote:

> The role of our journal will be to show that there are peoples living within these borders, and in some cases on both sides of a border, who are ignored through diplomatic arbitrariness. We will show that, standing in stark contrast to these factitious borders, these seeds of wars, these bloody conflicts, there are peoples, small populations, whose dynamism and right to live must throw off these crippling shackles.[26]

It was thus not just French oppression that the journal aimed to denounce now but also the Europe of the Treaties and any form of imperialism that ran contrary to Germany's interests. While the *Bulletin* had only offered a few forays outside of France (Ireland, Italy, Slovakia) and almost a third of its articles had concerned Brittany, *Peuples et Frontières* was characterised by a greater emphasis on Celtic countries (Ireland, Scotland, Wales), Central and Eastern European countries, and the Netherlands. In addition, Brittany now accounted for only a fifth of the articles, and references to Catalonia, Corsica and Occitanie were rare. There was a marked increase in the number of articles on topics related to Germany's sphere of influence, specifically Flanders, which quickly

became included in everything concerning the Netherlands, Alsace-Lorraine, and Central Europe, particularly Czechoslovakia. These countries represented 29% of the total content in 1936 rising to almost 40% a year later. During this same period, the number of articles on Brittany and the Celtic countries had increased from 25% to 29% and, on the Basque Country, Catalonia, Corsica and Occitanie, the number had dropped from 16% to 12%. The peoples and borders that the journal focussed on were situated in a Nordic grouping that was also regularly discussed in *Breiz Atao* and *Stur*, the doctrinal journal edited by Mordrel. In the mid-1930s, all these publications were operating under the influence of a young German man named Gerhard von Tevenar.

The promotion of an ethnic Europe under Germanic rule

Although Mordrel had created the *Bulletin* in 1936, the closure of his architect's practice and personal problems had forced him to abandon activism for a while in order to provide for his family. Yves Delaporte was therefore put in charge of the journal's editorial staff, mainly because Mordrel already had to manage his own staff – at *Stur* – and to provide papers for *Breiz Atao*. The two men were not on friendly terms, but they knew what their actions could bring to the cause. Delaporte was the son of a prominent local figure from Central Brittany and the third child in a family of activist children. His Catholic piety was matched only by his seriousness, his organisational skills, and his low-key but effective work. Mordrel, on the other hand, was more prone to the grand gesture and to embarking on political experiments that he would then quickly abandon. The leader of the *Parti National Breton*, François Debauvais, was wary of Mordrel's antics and his propensity to dip into the party's coffers and would have preferred to entrust the management of the party and *Breiz Atao* to Raymond Delaporte, Yves's brother.

All was going fairly well until March 1937 and the publication of the encyclical *Mit brennender Sorge* containing Pius XI's reactions to, among other things, the adoption of racism as an official state doctrine and the anticlerical and pagan statements being made by the Nazi regime's dignitaries.[27] Mordrel had been expressing increasing admiration for Germany since 1931 and the transformation of the *Parti Autonomiste Breton* into the *Parti National Breton*. He had translated Rilke into Breton, tried to impose a Breton adaptation of the NSDAP's programme and disseminated his racist and Nordicist thinking in *Stur* and *Breiz Atao*. While none of this had prompted any response from party members generally speaking, some Catholics had taken offence after the publication of *Mit brennender Sorge*, in particular Raymond Delaporte, who publicly condemned Mordrel's racism.[28] Even though Delaporte's wealth was useful to the survival of *Breiz Atao*, Debauvais decided to dispense with his services and side with Mordrel. The reason for this was that behind Mordrel, there was Tevenar.

Tevenar has only recently attracted the attention of researchers, who see him as an enlightened Celtic specialist, architect of the European minorities' revolution for the benefit of Germany and opponent of Hitler.[29] Born in 1912, this son of a Prussian aristocrat who had died in the trenches had come through the *Wehrjugendbund* '*Schilljugend*', the largest nationalist youth organisation of the 1920s. He had studied law, history and geopolitics and regularly associated with the *Nationalsozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund* (National Socialist Student League). Forced to abandon plans to join the *SA-Dienst* due to ill health, he became a *Nachrichtenlieferant* (intelligence provider) for Admiral Canaris's *Amt Ausland/Abwehr* in 1934, where he received an order to move to Paris to try to establish contact with the minorities in France.[30] During his first year there, he met some Breton activists, including Mordrel. In 1937, Canaris placed him as a correspondent in Holland for the *Berliner Börsenzeitung* and the *Münchner Neueste*

Nachrichten. In the meantime, Tevenar had become the secretary general of a society he had co-founded with friends in Berlin in January 1937 called the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für keltische Studien*. Headed by Dr Kurt Georg Haller, this German society for Celtic studies was connected to the *Ahnenerbe* institute,[31] and the journal *Zeitschrift für keltische Philologie*. Very quickly, links were forged between this journal and the *Abwehr II*'s subgroup no 7, led by Major Voss, whose mission was to intervene clandestinely with European national minorities.[32] Tevenar was also a follower of the *Unabhängige Freikirche*, Friedrich Hielscher's pagan 'Independent Free Church'. Hielscher was an original representative of the 'Conservative Revolution', who dreamed of becoming the priest-king of an ethnic and hierarchical Reich, built on the ruins of the dismantled European states, under the aegis of Germany.[33]

Tevenar meddled in the Breton affairs through these different capacities.[34] For example, in exchange for information on the French maritime installations, he managed to secure a place for Debauvais, who was sick at the time, in a sanatorium in the Black Forest. He also made a significant financial contribution to the *Parti National Breton*, which ensured the survival of *Breiz Atao* and funded more regular issues of *Stur* as well as the *Bulletin des minorités nationales de France*'s transformation into *Peuples et Frontières.*[35] Additionally, he supported a strengthened Nordicist discourse in the three publications. It became clear to everyone that *Peuples et Frontières* was the international showcase of *Breiz Atao*, which worried its handful of Corsican and Catalan friends. In June 1937, Yves Delaporte wrote:

> Some of our Catalan and Corsican collaborators have asked us to clarify our position with regard to the Mediterranean peoples, a request they consider to be justified by what they read in the last issue of the journal *Stur* (1 April 1937), which contained some violent attacks against the peoples of Latin language and civilisation.[36]

Despite Delaporte's insistence that the journal was independent of *Breiz Atao* and *Stur*, and that Mordrel was merely a guest writer from the first *Bulletin*, both his own and the *Peuples et Frontières*'s fates were already sealed because Tevenar did not like him. In fact, even though the material existence of the journal was considered to be assured, the next issue appeared a month late. A 'profound change' in the journal's administration was cited.[37] Charles Gaonac'h, who was also an administrator at the *Bulletin* and who had just quit the secretariat of *Breiz Atao*, demonstrated his loyalty to Raymond Delaporte, who had been repudiated by Debauvais, by giving up his position. Yves Delaporte was also forced to quit *Peuples et Frontières* at the end of 1937 but not before issuing a final snub to the pagan Tevenar in a two-page spread comprising a photo, a short biography and extracts in Breton translated into French of the sermon given by Monsignor Tréhiou, Bishop of Vannes, at the *Millénaire de la Résurrection de la Bretagne* (Millennium of the Resurrection of Brittany) mass in Plougastel on 24 August 1937.[38]

Yves Delaporte was immediately replaced by Fred Moyse, who changed the journal's direction:

> We shall make […] our modest contribution to the creation of a fairer and more humane order in that part of Europe whose states and diplomacy have ignored national problems for too long. We want to collaborate in the search for the foundations of a new order, which will exclude the assimilative imperialism of the large states. We are therefore aware that we are leading a profoundly human struggle and that we are fighting, like our minority brothers in Central and Eastern Europe, for the triumph of universal principles.[39]

Moyse had been living in Belgium since 1930, where he was employed at the permanent secretariat of the Salon de l'Alimentation in Brussels.[40] He was very involved as an activist in the PNB and had links with Flemish

autonomist circles as well as with the Gaelic League and with Scottish and Irish nationalists. Because of his job and also because he enjoyed it, he travelled a lot to the Netherlands, England, Germany and France. He thus acted as a linchpin between the nationalist movements of Northern Europe and Nazi Germany. This was reflected in the journal's potential readership.

There were only seventy-two names on the list of subscribers to *Peuples et Frontières*. These were mainly Breton activists, a few people closely associated with the movement, such as Gantois and Thomasset, and twenty or so Dutch, Belgian and German nationals.[41] In addition to these subscribers, the journal was also regularly distributed to numerous news outlets and press correspondents and to more than four hundred key figures, generally located in Northern and Eastern European countries. The Brittany contingent obviously made up a large proportion of the journal's distribution, comprising activists as well as some elected representatives and municipal libraries. However, the Brittany contingent was outstripped by that of Belgium, which counted Flor Grammens and Joris van Severen among the journal's readership, and Germany, which totalled more than sixty recipients, including Otto Abetz and Erich Mengel, a member of the *VDA*.[42] A specialist in the minorities of Germanic origin in the west of the Reich, Mengel received twenty copies alone. Excluding Brittany and Alsace, France accounted for around forty copies, which went mainly to libraries, foreign embassies, and some newspaper outlets, such as *La Flèche*, *Esprit* and *Temps Présents*. Switzerland and the Netherlands each received around thirty copies. After these two countries came Alsace, represented by Karl Roos, Emil Pinck, Hermann Bickler and Camille Dahlet, and then Scotland.

There were also very small shipments sent to representatives from the League of Nations in other countries, like the United States, South Africa and India. Clearly, the very existence and distribution of *Peuples et Frontières* contributed to Germany's European policy such as it was

defined in the interwar period, which was to establish a Europe under a Germanic-rule Nordic hegemony and to reshape *Mitteleuropa* by deciding the future of the nationalities concerned with a view to restoring Germanic greatness.[43] Central Europe in fact represented the final key position for the *Peuples et Frontières* press service, with about thirty copies being sent out to Bulgaria, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia and, above all, Hungary.

Central Europe: a laboratory

Central Europe was one of Yann Fouéré's pet causes. Having joined the Breton movement in the early 1930s, Fouéré had access to many networks and was never one to miss an opportunity. He was involved in the push to have the Breton language taught in schools through his association *Ar Brezoneg er Skol*. He had also campaigned for a Franco-German rapprochement as a youth representative in the *Union Fédérale des Anciens Combattants* (Federal Union of Veterans) and was seen as an expert on the ideas promoted by the 'relèves' (the new generation of politically-minded young people) of his time, particularly those around the journal *L'Ordre Nouveau*.[44] Alongside Abbé Gantois for Flanders and Hermann Bickler for Alsace, he was one of the cornerstones of *Peuples et Frontières* in his position as editor-in-chief. Although representatives from other European nationalist movements contributed from time to time, Fouéré provided the bulk of the copy under multiple pseudonyms that read like a solo tour of Europe, including van Huffel, F. Fraggiani, H. Muller and J. Irigoyen.

In 1935, Fouéré went to Romania as part of a trip organised by the *Fédération Interalliée des Anciens Combattants* (FIDAC). By 1936, he had made the acquaintance of André Tamas, secretary of the Office for Hungarian Minorities and representative of the Hungarian revisionist

league in Geneva, who organised his visit to Budapest in September 1937. He was also in touch with Christo Dimov-Bogoev, the chairperson of the youth organisation's foreign affairs department in the Bulgarian union *Otetz Païssy*.[45] Tamas had put Fouéré in contact with Aldo Dami, a regular contributor to the journal *Esprit* and occasional writer for *Plans*, who was very interested in the Hungarian and Bulgarian minorities. Fouéré had also managed to establish a correspondence with the Czechoslovakian Borsody, a doctor of law, who saw in him 'an excellent specialist in the question of Central European nationalities'.[46]

The Hungarian cause was often seen by the French 'relèves' as an external projection of their own situation.[47] The focus of some of them on questioning the system, in particular the idea of nationhood, was echoed in the desire of others to revise the treaties, especially the Treaty of Trianon, which had redrawn the borders of Central Europe in 1920 following the dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Both sides aspired to a different future. For the Hungarians, the revision of the Treaty of Trianon was a prerequisite for plans that extended far beyond the national context. They were looking to save universal culture and defend the West.[48] Thus, at the end of the 1920s, René Dupuis from *L'Ordre Nouveau* and Philippe Lamour from *Plans* were regular contributors to the *Revue de Hongrie*, which was soon to become the *Nouvelle revue de Hongrie*. Aldo Dami also used the journal as a platform to speak out against the Treaties and to propose solutions concerning Czechoslovakia.[49] In May 1936, acting on his own initiative but on behalf of the PNB, Fred Moyse sent an article from Brussels entitled 'La lutte pour l'indépendance des Bretons' (The Struggle for Breton Independence) to the Hungarian journal *Magyar Hirlap*. He explained his approach to the journal's editors as follows: 'Given the great affinity that exists between the Hungarian nation and the Breton people, both victims of the same injustices and the imperialism of the major powers, I thought that these documents might interest you'.[50]

Noting 'the huge revision of values that characterises the modern world',[51] Yann Fouéré was saying similar things in *Peuples et Frontières*. Fouéré tried to get André Tamas to acknowledge that the Breton question had as much legitimacy as the claims of the Central European minorities. Fouéré planned a meeting with Tamas and the senior teams at *Peuples et Frontières* and *Stur* (which Tamas could not praise highly enough).[52] The idea being developed by both men was to establish an international conference for minority young people.[53] Fouéré promoted this idea in an article in *Peuples et Frontières*, and it was reprinted in *Voix des Peuples*, the mouthpiece of the *Bureau Central des Minorités* (Central Office for Minorities). He pointed out in this article that the Congress of European Nationalities, which only recognised the countries that had resulted from the treaties, did not ultimately attach any importance to minorities. In his view, this institution was more of an 'archaeology congress than a real assembly of minority peoples'.[54] He added that while *Peuples et Frontières* and *Voix des Peuples* played an important role, they did not have the impact of a body 'that would lead the joint action of all minorities on a more general level'.[55] He therefore proposed to make up for the League of Nations' shortcomings by creating 'a central body whose task it would be to bring together initiatives, coordinate efforts and create a solid de facto link between all minorities'.[56] Denouncing the treaties and thus the postwar division of Europe actually translated as a call for a global redefinition of borders, including within France, and an engagement in the fight for Brittany.

A few weeks after the Anschluss, Fouéré wrote in an article published in *Les cahiers de l'Union Fédérale*: 'The international policy followed by France since the end of the war has failed miserably'.[57] While he noted 'the all-consuming activity of the two totalitarian countries forming the Rome/Berlin axis',[58] he pointed above all to the 'criminal recklessness' of those who had dismembered the Austro-Hungarian Empire and thus encouraged 'irredentisms that are impossible to assuage'.[59] He was

aiming his comments at France and its Romanian and Yugoslav allies. Because of the ties that united the veterans of these three countries, Fouéré's article had a certain impact. The Romanians and (with the exception of two or three veterans) the Czechoslovaks refused to be represented at the *Union Fédérale* (a French interwar veterans association) congress held in Nice in June 1938. In a letter to André Tamas, Fouéré wrote: 'I have no doubt my name is now blacklisted in CZECHOSLOVAKIA and ROMANIA. They would probably be even more furious if they knew that I was also involved in "PEUPLES ET FRONTIERES"'.[60]

Then came Munich. At the height of the crisis, Fouéré claimed that the centralising Jacobin ideology, which had originated in France and been applied in Czechoslovakia, threatened to cause a war and bring an end to Western civilisation. It was necessary to fight for peace and freedom, which were under threat from the treaties that France had imposed.[61] His discourse was echoed in *Breiz Atao* and in many pacifistic right publications. Fouéré therefore considered the agreements signed in Munich to be realistic and even saw in them the promise of a new era: 'One chapter in a territorial revision that is more essential than ever. This can be the starting point for a total reconstruction of Europe based on new principles'.[62] At the beginning of 1939, after Poland and Hungary had also taken their slice of the Czechoslovakian cake and sub-Carpathian Ruthenia had become autonomous, he wrote: 'The Anschluss and the rectification of Czechoslovakia's borders mark the first step towards the construction of a new European order that is more in keeping with the true rights of nationalities'.[63] This new European order was in fact imposed by Germany. So when Hitler decided in March 1939 to violate the agreements of six months earlier by invading Bohemia and Moravia to establish a protectorate there and when the Slovak Republic was formed with his blessing, Fouéré told anyone who would listen: 'Sometimes the best things can come out of the worst situations'.[64] The

'worst' in this case were the postwar treaties. The 'best' was the so-called Reich's federalisation policy in Central Europe. By giving Bohemia its autonomy while annexing it, Germany was countering the economic, political and military interests of France and England. Fouéré remained cautious with regard to Hitler but believed that if he respected autonomy, his action would produce fruitful and lasting results.[65]

Such arguments amounted to self-deception. The previous month, referring to Franco's action against the Basque language, the Italianisation of the French-speaking Aosta Valley and France's oppression of the Breton language, Fouéré had contrasted the Latin and Nordic spirits. He had criticised the outdated Jacobin ideology, which he said acted as 'a real encouragement to violence', and highlighted the fact that it ran contrary to what he was seeing in England, Germany and the Scandinavian countries.[66] Fouéré admired the Reich's successes. When the police questioned his concierges in 1939, they were told that he had a portrait of Hitler in his home and that 'privately, he was always championing the Führer, understanding only him, seeing things only through his eyes'.[67]

The content of Fouéré's articles in *Peuples et Frontières* was enough to raise alarm bells with the police. In February 1939, a covert note on the journal stated: 'This booklet, which has been published in France, is being distributed, free of charge, to the Dutch press and in particular to Dutch members of the pan-Dutch and Francophobe movement "Algemeen Nederlandsch Verbond". It is likely to be detrimental to French propaganda works in the Netherlands'.[68] The note was accompanied by an article entitled 'Décadence de la nation française' (Decadence of the French nation), which Fouéré had written under the name of Jean Cam. In it, he described a country unable to adapt to the problems of postwar Europe, as evidenced by its inability to take into account the challenges faced by its minorities. He depicted a France that had given up its ideal of liberty: 'By remaining mute in the face of new

problems, it remains on the sideline of the great spiritual, political and moral revolution that is in the process of transforming the lives of the peoples and the principles of their governments before our very eyes'.[69] In May, the journal was subjected to a more thorough police investigation, but the person known as 'Jean Cam', author of the seditious article, was never identified.[70] From then on, however, the Breton nationalist press found itself in the crosshairs of the justice system, which scrutinised the columns of *Breiz Atao*, *Stur*, and *Peuples et Frontières*, rightly seen as mouthpieces intended to 'persuade people abroad to believe in substantial, serious separatist movements'.[71]. At the end of August, *Peuples et Frontières* was banned, and censorship was introduced throughout France.[72]

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After the Second World War, Mordrel set about writing a history of the Breton nationalist movement. A few scattered notes survive from this endeavour, including a list of concerted actions between Brittany and Germany featuring mentions of *Peuples et Frontières*.[73] There are two points worth noting in this regard. On the one hand, this journal was part of a strategy to tighten the noose on France that was mobilised at the end of the First World War by a handful of engaged activists and their allies at the time, both coveted allies – like the so-called Celtic brothers and Hitler's Germany – and more concrete allies, such as the Flemish, Alsatian, and Corsican nationalists as well as a few German nationals. The aim of this 'noose' strategy was to allow the *Parti National Breton* to raise awareness of the Breton cause abroad and enable Germany to justify its diplomatic pretensions. On the other, this corresponded to an ideological convergence between the main leaders of the *Parti National Breton* and some figures of the German 'Conservative Revolution', who all believed in the supremacy of the Celtic and Germanic peoples, united under the same Nordic banner.

From this dual perspective, independence for Brittany would have meant dismantling France, a move that would in turn have been linked to a reworking of the Europe of the Treaties, in accordance with the rights of minorities and the right of peoples to self-determination. It is therefore not surprising to learn that the two mainstays of *Peuples et Frontières*, Tevenar and Fouéré, had been trained as jurists and that Central Europe had taken on a paradigmatic significance for them.

It is clear their plan failed. We may have the journal's press service and subscribers lists, but we know nothing about its real readership or the impact that its articles had. It is likely, however, that this was almost non-existent and that it ultimately only addressed activists who needed no convincing or diplomats who were indifferent to the Breton cause. Otto Abetz, for example, who received copies of the journal, had no interest in helping the Breton nationalists during the Second World War. Moreover, by 1940, it was clear to all that the German authorities in general were going to do nothing for the Breton nationalists except allow their party to keep afloat just enough to disseminate their Nordicist propaganda and to act as a recruitment pool for agents in the fight against the Resistance. It is difficult nevertheless to believe that the *Peuples et Frontières* activists were being taken for fools, because the Breton/German alliance actually only involved a small handful of outsiders, both in Brittany and in Germany, and all of these individuals were nurturing a dream that was essential to their own survival in a world where they did not fit in.

Endnotes

[1] S. Carney, *Breiz Atao! Mordrel, Delaporte, Lainé, Fouéré: une mystique nationale (1901-1948)*, (Rennes, 2015). On Breton movement, see also R. Dulong, *La question bretonne* (Paris, 1975); A. Deniel, *Le mouvement breton: 1919-1945*

(Paris, 1976); M. Nicolas, *Histoire de la Revendication Bretonne: ou la revanche de la démocratie locale sur le « démocratisme » Des origines jusqu'au années 1980* (Spézet, 2007).

[2] On the impact of the First World War on regionalisms and nationalisms in Europe, see X. M. Núñez Seixas (ed.), *The First World War and the Nationality Question in Europe. Global Impact and Local Dynamics* (Leiden/Boston, 2021), in particular F. Zantedeschi, 'Micro-Nationalisms in Western Europe in the Wake of the First World War', 145-169.

[3] Olier Mordrel private collection, OM7 I78. Statutes of the GRB, 1918-1919 (author's highlight). Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations and extracts from French sources have been translated into English.

[4] *Breiz Atao* was published from 1919 to 1939.

[5] For an example of a re-Celticisation attempt, see S. Carney, 'L'Écosse régénératrice ou la création des "cliques nationales" bretonnes, d'une sortie de guerre à l'autre', in C. Manfredy & M. Byrne (eds.), *Bretagne-Ecosse: contacts, transferts et dissonances. Brittany-Scotland: Contacts, Transfers and Dissonances* (Brest, 2017), 167-183.

[6] Breiz Atao [alias O. Mordrel], 'De la Flandre à la Cornouaille', in: *Breiz Atao*, 3(75), 1/3/1925, 535.

[7] On *Peuples et Frontières*, see also S. Rojo, 'Prensa bretona y nacionalismo vasco: la revista Peuples et frontières', in: *Sancho el Sabio* 18 (2003), 89-103.

[8] Breiz Atao [alias O. Mordrel], 'De la Flandre à la Cornouaille', in: *Breiz Atao*, 3(75), 1/3/1925, 535.

[9] M. Marchal, 'Pour une politique internationale des minorités', in: *Breiz Atao*, 3(75), 1/3/1925, 536-537.

[10] Cited in P. Zind, *Elsass-Lothringen Alsace Lorraine: une nation interdite* (Paris, 1979), 432. On Corsican and Alsatian movements, see F. Arzalier, *Les perdants: la dérive fasciste des mouvements autonomistes et indépendantistes au XXe siècle* (Paris, 1990); Y. Rogé, *Le corsisme et l'irrédentisme 1920-1946: histoire du premier mouvement autonomiste corse et de sa compromission par l'Italie fasciste* (PhD thesis, Université Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense, 2008); A. Walh, *Les autonomistes en Alsace, 1871-1939* (Orbe, 2019).

[11] Those journals are *Zukunft*, *Volksstimme*, *Die Wahrheit*, banned in November 1927. In 1928 they are followed by *D'r Schliffstaan*, *D'r Muehlstaan*, *Des Neue Elsass*.

[12] Unsigned, 'Protestation', in: *Breiz Atao* 7, 18/12/1927, 1.

[13] Unsigned, 'Derrière les autonomistes on retrouve la main de Moscou', *Le Matin*, 12/2/1928, 3.

[14] Le Comité Central des Minorités Nationales de France, 'Lettre ouverte aux jurés de Colmar', in: *Breiz Atao,* special issue, 1/5/1928, 1.

[15] Article 8 of the statutes. 'Le Comité central des minorités nationales de France', in: *Breiz Atao*, special issue, 1/5/1928, 3.

[16] O. Mordrel, 'Le conflit des nationalités en France', in: *Bulletin des minorités nationales en France* 1, 1/6/1936, 2-5.

[17] K. Heller, 'Aperçu de l'histoire de l'Alsace jusqu'en 1918', in: *Bulletin des minorités nationales en France* 1, 1/6/1936, 13-14.

[18] Unsigned, 'Les Flamands de France et leur langue', in: *Bulletin des minorités nationales en France* 2, 1/8/1936, 32-34.

[19] 'Le programme Eskualerriste', in: *Bulletin des minorités nationales en France* 1, 1/6/1936, 18.

[20] Y. Douguet [alias Yves Delaporte], 'Le Mouvement en faveur de l'enseignement du breton', in: *Bulletin des minorités nationales en France* 1, 1/6/1936, 11-12

[21] See for example: La Rédaction, 'La France et nous', in: *Bulletin des minorités nationales en France* 2, 1/8/1936, 22-23, and La Rédaction, 'Que devons-nous attendre du Gouvernement Blum', in: *Bulletin des minorités nationales en France* 3, 1/10/1936, 38-39.

[22] 'Les diverses étapes du recul de la langue bretonne', in: *Bulletin des minorités nationales en France* 3, 1/10/1936, 44-45.

[23] 'Elections législatives 1936', in: *Bulletin des minorités nationales en France* 3, 1/10/1936, 48-49.

[24] This was the case, for example, with the publication of the aforementioned Basque programme, which was used because an article that had apparently been promised had not arrived in time.

[25] From the next issue onwards, the subtitle was 'Revue d'information sur les nationalités d'Europe Occidentale' (Journal of Information on the Nationalities of Western Europe).

[26] Y. Douguet, 'Notre programme', in: *Peuples et Frontières* 1, 1/1/1937, 1-2.

[27] S. Carney, 'Mit brennender Sorge et le mouvement nationaliste breton', in F. Bouthillon & M. Levant (eds.), *Pie XI, un pape contre le nazisme? L'encyclique Mit brennender Sorge (14 mars 1937)* (Brest, 2016), 321-335.

[28] R. Furic [alias Raymond Delaporte], 'La position de Breiz Atao reste nationale', in: *Breiz Atao* 274, 18/4/1937, 3-4.

[29] I. Schmidt, *Der Herr des Feuers. Friedrich Hielscher und sein Kreis zwischen Heidentum, neuem Nationalismus und Widerstand gegen den Nationalsozialismus* (Cologne, 2004), 85-93; J. Lerchenmüller, *Keltischer Sprengstoff: eine wissenschaftsgeschichtliche Studie über die deutsche Keltologie von 1900 bis 1945* (Tübingen, 1997), 384 *sq*; B. Schnitzler., 'Gerhard von Tevenar (1912-1943). Secrétaire de la *Deutsche Gesellschaft für keltische Studien*', in: *L'archéologie nazie en Europe de l'Ouest* (Gollion, 2007), 289-299.

[30] Testimony of Erika von Tevenar, widow of Gerhard von Tevenar, conversations from 20/7/2009 and 10/1/2012. The Alsatian autonomists resumed contact with the Bretons at this time.

[31] On *Ahnenerbe*, see M.-H. Kater, *Das « Ahnenerbe » der SS, 1935-1945. Ein Beitrag zur Kulturpolitik des Dritten Reiches* (Stuttgart, 1974) and H. Pringle, *Operation Ahnenerbe. Comment Himmler mit la pseudo-science au service de la solution finale* (Paris, 2007).

[32] R. Faligot, *La harpe et l'hermine* (Rennes, 1994), 88.

[33] On Hielscher, see the indulgent biography of I. Schmidt, *Der Herr des Feuers.*

[34] Concerning the relations between Nazism and Breton nationalism, see L. Mees, 'The Völkisch Appeal: Nazi Germany, the Basques, and the Bretons', in *War, Exile, Justice and Everyday Life, 1936-1946* (Reno, 2011), 251–284; J. A. R. Caballero, 'Nazismo alemán y *emsav* bretón (1933-1945): entre la sincera alianza y el engaño recíproco', in: *Historia Actual Online* 30 (2013), 25-38 ; S. Carney, 'Olier Mordrel, une des voies du national-socialisme en Bretagne', in: M. Grunewald, O. Dard, U. Puschner, *Confrontations au national-socialisme en*

Europe francophone et germanophone. Auseinandersetzungen mit dem Nationasozialismus im deutsch-und französischsprachigen Europa, 1919-1949, volume 4, (Bruxelles, 2020), 171-185.

[35] Between 1935 and 1937, the PNB received more than 30,000 francs from the *Abwehr II*. S. Carney, *Breiz Atao*, 279.

[36] Y. Douguet, 'Les latins et nous', in: *Peuples et Frontières* 4, 1/6/1937, 87.

[37] Y. Douguet, 'Aux amis de la revue', in: *Peuples et Frontières* 5, 1/8/1937, 90.

[38] Unsigned, 'Milvet Bloaz Adsavidigez Breiz (Millénaire de la Résurrection de la Bretagne)', in: *Peuples et Frontières* 7, 1/12/1937, 154-155.

[39] F. Moyse, 'Notre nouvelle organisation', in: *Peuples et Frontières* 8, 15/1/1938, 186-187.

[40] Archives Générales du Royaume Belge, Auguste Frédéric (Fred) MOYSE, file no 1660960 of the Office des Étrangers.

[41] Service Historique de la Défense [henceforth SHD], 7NN 2589. Renseignements sur activités du mouvement autonomiste breton.

[42] *Volksbund für das Deutschtum im Ausland*, the largest pan-Germanic organisation in Germany in the inter-war period.

[43] J. Elvert, 'Plans allemands d'entre les deux guerres mondiales pour la Mitteleuropa', in: E. Bussière, M. Dumoulin & S. Schirmann (eds.), *Milieux économiques et intégration européenne au XX^e siècle* (Paris, 2001-2002), 30-38.

[44] On the 'relèves', see O. Dard, *Le rendez-vous manqué des relèves des années trente* (Paris, 2002). On *L'Ordre Nouveau*, see C. Roy & T. Keller, *Alexandre Marc et la jeune Europe (1904-1934): l'Ordre Nouveau aux origines du personnalisme* and *Le personnalisme de l'entre-deux-guerres entre l'Allemagne et la France* (Nice, 1998).

[45] Institut de documentation bretonne et européenne [henceforth IDBE], box 'Action bretonne et minoritaire', letter from the Bulgarian Union 'Otetz Païssy' to Yann Fouéré, 12/10/1936.

[46] IDBE, box 'Action bretonne et minoritaire', letter from Dr Borsody to Yann Fouéré, 29/5/1938.

[47] H. de Montedy, *La Nouvelle revue de Hongrie et ses amis français (1932-44)* (PhD thesis, Université de Lyon 3, 2009); Roy & Keller, *Alexandre Marc et la jeune Europe*, 180-181.

[48] Montedy, *La Nouvelle revue de Hongrie et ses amis français (1932-44)*, 79 *sq*.

[49] A. Dami, 'Sur la mort des traités', in: *Esprit* 34, 1/7/1935, 501-549; 'À la recherche de la Tchécoslovaquie', in: *Esprit* 69, 1/6/1938, 363-400.

[50] Archives Nationales [henceforth AN], 20030297 art. 9, note from Commissioner Chenevier, 30/6/1936.

[51] Y. Kerberio [alias Yann Fouéré], 'États, Nationalités, Minorités', in: *Peuples et Frontières* 9, 15/2/1938, 210-212.

[52] IDBE, box 'Action bretonne et minoritaire', letter from Yann Fouéré to André Tamas, 27/9/1937. Relations between the two men seem to have ended before the meeting could take place.

[53] IDBE, box 'Action bretonne et minoritaire', letter from Yann Fouéré to Christo Dimov-Bogoev, 15/9/1937.

[54] Y. Kerberio, 'Pour une action commune des minorités', in: *Peuples et Frontières* 11, 15/4/1938, 262-264 and G. Kerberio, 'Pour une action commune des minorités', in: *Voix des Peuples* 4, 15/5/1938, 247-251.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Y. Fouéré, 'La fin des traités', in: *Cahier de l'Union Fédérale des Combattants*, 142, 20/5/1938, 15.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid.

[60] IDBE, box 'Action bretonne et minoritaire', letter from Yann Fouéré to André Tamas, 6/1938 (author's highlights).

[61] Y. Kerberio, 'L'évolution du problème Tchécoslovaque et son influence sur le régime général des minorités', in: *Peuples et Frontières* 16, 15/9/1938, 386-388.

[62] Y. Kerberio, 'L'Europe sera-t-elle reconstruite', in: *Peuples et Frontières* 17, 15/10/1938, 410-412.

[63] G. Marion [alias Yann Fouéré], 'La Nouvelle Tchécoslovaquie', in: *Peuples et Frontières* 21, 15/2/1939, 50-52.

[64] J. Cam [alias Yann Fouéré], 'Du pire peut parfois sortir le meilleur', in: *Peuples et Frontières* 23, 15/4/1939, 82-85.

[65] Ibid.

[66] J. Cam, 'De quelques folies politiques', in: *Peuples et Frontières* 22, 15/3/1939, 58-60.

[67] Archives de la Préfecture de Police de Paris, 1 W 0158, dossier no 39203, report of 21/10/1939.

[68] SHD, 7NN 2536. Fiches de renseignements sur le mouvement autonomiste Breton. Note dated 16/2/1939 (author's highlight).

[69] J. Cam, 'Décadence de la nation française', in: *Peuples et Frontières* 20, 15/1/1939, 4-6.

[70] SHD, 7NN 2801. Dossier sur les poursuites à l'encontre de Guieysse Marcel, autonomiste breton, pour atteinte à la sûreté extérieure de l'Etat (juin 1938-novembre 1939). Report of May 1939.

[71] AN, BB/18/7007, 2 BL 91, Breiz Atao, Parti National Breton, 1939. Report of 30/6/1939.

[72] AN, BB/18/7008, 2 BL 108, Peuples et Frontières, 1939. Reports of 22/7/1939 and 21/8/1939.

[73] Private collection of Olier Mordrel, OM8 M198, Notes on the chronology of the Breton movement.

The Dilemma of Dual Loyalty. Werner Hasselblatt and the Rise and Failure of Baltic German Minority Politics in the Inter-War Period

JÖRG HACKMANN

Szczecin / Greifswald

German minority politics in the Baltic states during the inter-war period has regained significant scholarly attention since the 1990s, when the Estonian concept of cultural autonomy from 1925 was rediscovered as a strategy for solving post-1989 minority conflicts as well as addressing issues of multiculturality. The case of the Baltic German politician Werner Hasselblatt, who is in the focus of this text, however, reveals a Janus-faced political approach: On the one hand, he had a significant share in the implementation of the law on cultural autonomy in Estonia, and he was also a major actor within the Congress of European Nationalities. On the other hand, from 1933 onwards Hasselblatt turned into an expert of Nazi resettlement and population politics, contrary to his earlier positions. Here, a critical analysis of his approach towards loyalty is undertaken, in order to discuss the tilting point in his political activities. My argument is that his attitude towards loyalty was based on the assumption of an irreconcilable conflict of dual loyalty to the 'host' state and the 'kin' nation. Whereas Hasselblatt regarded loyalty to German *Volkstum* not as a matter of individual choice for Baltic Germans and thus as not negotiable, he saw loyalty towards the Estonian state as connected to the fulfilment of the German minority's political claims. Such an instrumental approach towards loyalty together with Hasselblatt's primordial understanding of nationality in contrast to citizenship may be identified as crucial issues that led his concept of constructive minority politics tilt towards the destructive notion of 'dissimilation'.

Keywords: National minorities, loyalty, Estonia, cultural autonomy, Baltic Germans

Introduction

Baltic German minority politics during the inter-war period, which had been formed after Estonia and Latvia emerged as independent states from the Russian Empire in the aftermath of the First World War, was a largely forgotten issue during the Cold War. It has re-gained significant scholarly attention, however, since the 1990s, when the Estonian concept of cultural autonomy was rediscovered as a strategy for solving post-1989 minority conflicts as well as addressing issues of multiculturality.[1] Even if one leaves the question aside to what degree such a reference to the past could be used for solving contemporary political issues,[2] the biography of the Baltic-German journalist and politician Paul Schiemann (1876-1944)[3] from Latvia provided a positive image of liberal, non-nationalist minority politics and a counter-narrative against *völkisch* irredentism, which finally led to the resettlement of the Baltic Germans in 1939-1940. Studies of Schiemann's fellowmen in minority politics, Ewald Ammende (1893-1936) and Werner Hasselblatt (1890-1958) from Estonia, however, have revealed indications for such a proximity to Nazi politics.[4] In the claim by Erhard Kroeger, the leading Nazi representative among the German minority in Latvia, that he suggested Heinrich Himmler the evacuation of the Baltic Germans in October 1939,[5] one may see an evidence for the final failure of Baltic-German minority politics. The resettlement of the Germans from the Baltic States thus raises the question of inter-connection: Can Baltic-German minority politics be separated from the resettlement and connected to such a counterfactual hypothesis that under different historical circumstances the Estonian model of cultural autonomy could have expanded its international relevance by being adopted in other states as well?[6] Or should one hold an attitude of 'emotional obstructionism instead of intelligent adaptation'[7] – to refer to Leo Lundin's thesis formulated under fresh impressions from the Second

World War – among the Baltic Germans in Estonia and Latvia accountable?

The concept of loyalty will be used here as an analytical tool in order to discuss these questions. Loyalty here is not understood as a normative concept of describing the relations between a state and its citizens or inhabitants, but as a term that encompasses multi-level relations between social groups and institutions.[8] Referring to Albert Hirschman's influential study,[9] loyalty may be understood in the context of national minorities as one form of action besides protest and emigration. In the context of national minorities in the Baltic region, here understood as the territories of the Estonian and Latvian state, loyalty focuses on dispositions of acceptance of the new political order and on practices of integration and participation. This paper will concentrate on the Baltic German minority politician Werner Hasselblatt and his role in shaping minority politics in Estonia in the inter-war period as well as population politics in Nazi Germany. However, this paper does not intend to reiterate the facts on Estonian minority politics in detail, which have already been presented and discussed elsewhere.[10] Nor will it delve deeply into the biography of Werner Hasselblatt,[11] but focus at the most obvious facts of his Janus-faced political approach. On the one hand, he was the leading politician among the Baltic German minority to implement and promote the law on cultural autonomy in Estonia in 1925 and also a major actor in establishing the 'Congress of the Organised National Groups in the States of Europe', later known as Congress of European Nationalities, in the same year.[12] On the other hand, he also pursued a diverging agenda of cooperation with Berlin as well as German *Volkstum* organizations in order to coordinate politics towards German minorities in Eastern Europe, even before he became a legal advisor to the German minorities in Berlin in 1931. Finally, he turned into an expert in resettlement politics who could be counted to the 'Vordenker der

Vernichtung', to quote the well-known term by Götz Aly and Susanne Heim.[13]

The main aim of this text is to identify in Baltic German minority politics fault lines and tilting points between practices based on loyalty and obstructive strategies with regard to the post-1918 states. I will concentrate mainly on Estonia and Werner Hasselblatt here, but include connections to the situation in Latvia. In order to discuss these issues, I focus first on the legacy of pre-World War I politics, second on the issue of loyalty in post-war Estonia, and then address constructive and deconstructive features in Werner Hasselblatt's approach towards minority politics. In the conclusions it will be argued that his instrumental approach towards loyalty, focusing only on the interests of the minority, was crucial for the turn from constructive minority politics towards destructive German nationalities politics.

The first point to be addressed refers to the question of path-dependency or the legacy of German minority politics going back to the pre-1914 period. Some authors, partly with a Baltic German background in the inter-war period, have regarded the *Deutsche Vereine,* which existed between 1905/06 and 1914, as a predecessor of German minority politics.[14] There was, however, not a direct organizational connection for several reasons. First, these associations were formed under the still restrictive rules of the tsarist empire after the revolution of 1905, and they did not reappear after their forced dissolution by the tsarist authorities in August 1914, neither under German occupation of the region nor in the new states after the war.[15] The reasons for this discontinuation could still receive further attention, but there are at least two tentative explanations: First, the enthusiasm of the revolutionary period that drove Baltic Germans into a rather spontaneous social mass movement did not replace earlier structures of sociability and diminished already before 1914, before seeing only a short revival during the war, when the German army occupied Riga in September

1917.[16] Second, a major issue of these *Deutsche Vereine* – apart from the maintaining of German-language schools – was the struggle with the politics of russification, which had lost its relevance after 1915, when the German army established the military administration of Ober Ost. Nevertheless, one thread of continuation may be identified. As Gert von Pistohlkors has argued already in 1972,[17] the revolution of 1905 marked the beginning of a process of the Baltic Germans' transition from the leading class to a national minority. Despite the fact that they undisputedly formed an ethnic or linguistic minority in quantitative terms, they were convinced to constitute not a "minor" but the culturally hegemonic group in the region. Thus, the idea behind the formation of the *Deutsche Vereine* to transform the Baltic Germans into a coherent national group that levelled previous social distinctions, met with strong mental reservations among their elites, who were unwilling to accept this change, before and after the First World War.

Having noticed this mental resistance of adapting to the social and political dynamics that led to the loss of the leading social position raises the issue of loyalty as a crucial aspect. In general, loyalty to the Tsar was shaped by the notion of traditional faithfulness and had not been fundamentally shattered among the Baltic Germans until 1917,[18] although some, in particular in Courland and in Riga, during the First World War saw an option to have the region incorporated into the German Reich.[19] At the end of the war such plans, however, quickly collapsed and another problem emerged: the threat of a Bolshevist occupation of the region. In Estonia, which had come under German occupation only in February 1918, during the interruption of the peace negotiations in Brest-Litovsk, the military situation after the collapse of the Kaiserreich brought the Baltic Germans to a cooperation with the Estonian Salvation Committee under Konstantin Päts. The agreement of 26 November 1918 about establishing a voluntary regiment – the *Baltenregiment* – tackled with the problem of loyalty in two respects: It

not only signalled Baltic German acceptance of the new Estonian authorities they had not recognized before, but also addressed the distrust and fear among Estonians of a German separatism, hence the absence of loyalty.[20] Different from the *Baltische Landeswehr* in Latvia, which directly intervened in political struggles when unseating the Latvian government of Kārlis Ulmanis in April 1919, the *Baltenregiment* in Estonia remained a military, non-political formation. Whereas its contribution to defending the 'Heimat' was emphatically praised in Baltic German discourse, Estonian attitudes instead remained ambivalent.[21] The perception and the discursive use of loyalty clearly differed. Whereas the German praise of the *Baltenregiment* was meant as a proof of loyalty to the new power that should lead to political participation in the post-war order, the Estonian public remained sceptical towards the reliability of the former hegemons. But even if perceptions of loyalty differed, there are indications that, even after the battle with the *Baltische Landeswehr* at Cēsis in June 1919, the Estonian government's estimation of the *Baltenregiment*'s loyalty did not change fundamentally.[22]

Political interactions between Baltic Germans and Estonians based on expectations and declarations of loyalty, however, reach back to the beginnings of Estonian statehood. A Baltic German representative, the lawyer Max Woldemar Bock, participated in the provisional Diet of the autonomous province of Estonia after the February Revolution (*Maapäev*) in 1917-1919, although the *Ritterschaft* rejected cooperation and there were still competing Baltic German political projects.[23] In December 1918, a German party formed first as *Deutsche Partei in Estland* and then as *Deutsch-Baltische Partei* led by the Tallinn journalist Christoph Mickwitz, who had already been a leading figure in the *Deutsche Verein in Estland*.[24] Bock and two other Baltic German representatives, Herrmann Koch and Johannes Meyer, participated in the Estonian Constitutional Assembly (*Asutav Kogu*) in 1919-1920.

However, the Baltic-German Party abstained from reaffirming Estonian independence in June 1919. Against the mistrust stimulated by this position, Bock acknowledged the Estonian Republic in a speech on 29 August 1919.[25] This German reluctance re-appeared in 1920, when the party also abstained from approving the constitution, although Werner Hasselblatt in 1929 claimed that the party must be credited for successfully bringing minority protection into the draft constitution.[26] The fault line for the Baltic Germans had become the agrarian reform of October 1919 in Estonia. It comprised more than 50% of agricultural land, which had been in the hands of about 1,200 (mostly Baltic-German) noble landowners and was put first under state ownership, with c. 50% then subsequently distributed to already existing or newly created Estonian farmsteads. Initially, no compensation for the landowners was foreseen, and they could only apply for getting back 50 hectares of their land. Only in 1926 a modest compensation law was agreed upon by the parliament.[27] As a result of emigration and the social-economic change accompanying the agrarian reform, the Baltic Germans in Estonia underwent a deep social and economic change after 1918. They turned into a more urban group, with urban professionals instead of noble landowners now beginning to dominate the political life of the Baltic Germans, a significant difference to the situation before 1914. However, there were also signs of political and cultural adaptation to the new situation. On a cultural level, Arnold Hasselblatt, a journalist from Tartu and father of Werner, has to be mentioned: Under his presidency the Learned Estonian Society (*Õpetatud Eesti Selts*) in Tartu revoked the pre-war attempt to change the focus of the society from Estonian language and culture to the German history of the Baltic region, and the society subsequently became the predecessor of the Estonian Academy of Sciences.[28]

Political cooperation of the Baltic Germans continued in the first legislative period of the Parliament (*Riigikogu*), when four

representatives of the Baltic-German Party were elected. In the second *Riigikogu*, the Baltic-German Party received three seats, with the number shrinking to two from 1926 to 1935, in later years as part of a German-Swedish election group. In 1923, Werner Hasselblatt, who had been working as a lawyer after the war, took one of the seats of the Baltic-German Party and remained a member of parliament until 1932. According to the studies by Raimo Raag, Hasselblatt became the most active non-Estonian parliamentarian with more than 350 statements (of 881 altogether made by minority representatives) in Estonian and German language during his tenures.[29] The exact distribution of German and Estonian language use in Hasselblatt's statements is not given by Raag, but based on his general figures, they must have been predominantly in Estonian.[30] Raag also indicates that the use of language among those non-Estonian members of parliament, who spoke Estonian, depended on which audience they were addressing.[31]

When turning to the implementation of cultural autonomy for the national minorities in Estonia, the question was raised several times, why it took until 1925 to pass the law. Given the initial declaration to guarantee national minority rights in Estonia already in the declaration of independence from 24 February 1918, an argument often brought forward is that among ethnic Estonians a negative attitude towards Baltic Germans kept prevailing,[32] also after the defeat of the Bolshevists and the *Landeswehr* and the implementation of the agrarian reform in 1919. Thus, anti-German voices met those arguing that the agrarian reform could only be introduced as expropriation without compensation in order to avoid revolution among the peasants.[33]

Parliamentary negotiations about the implementation of cultural autonomy proved to be complicated due to several reasons: a lack of legal models, the internationalisation of minority issues at the level of the League of Nations, the reluctance of leading Estonian politicians to introduce minority protection, and the German protest against the

agrarian reform. A general agreement between the People's Party of Jaan Tõnnison and the Baltic German Party in 1924 paved the way towards an agreement about the core elements of the law, but it was only the attempted communist coup of December 1924 that finally changed the attitude in the *Riigikogu* towards a quick acceptance of the law.[34]

The political situation since 1924 then pushed a constructive disposition towards minority protection to the foreground: Preparing the law on cultural autonomy obviously was Hasselblatt's major parliamentary occupation, but according to his own account he was also active afterwards on other fields of legislation as religious communities and monuments protection.[35] Concerning cultural autonomy, Hasselblatt credited himself with being the responsible person. This opinion was also mirrored by his German fellowmen as well as German historians, but interestingly not by Estonian voices, neither before 1940 nor afterwards. Karl Aun in his post-war book cites Hasselblatt only twice in footnotes, thus underlining the existence of a parallel Estonian national discourse on cultural autonomy. The main arguments were that this was a project of the Estonian parliament, not one by a single national minority, and that it addressed individuals, but not a specific group. In addition, the connection with the December coup was questioned as well.[36] Actually, these two threads of the debate did not merge, although Hasselblatt praised the activity of Estonian politicians as Konstantin Päts, Karl Einbund (later Kaarel Eenpalu), and Eugen Maddison (later Maddisoo) on the official opening of the German cultural self-administration and claimed that the Baltic Germans are not only focusing on their own welfare but of the whole state.[37] In his publications since 1925 and also in his unpublished book manuscript, which was intended to summarize his notion of cultural autonomy,[38] Hasselblatt, however, left no doubt that he regarded cultural autonomy first and foremost as a German project. In addition, his point of international reference was a narrowly limited one, as he neither mentioned the Austro-Marxist

tradition of Otto Bauer and Karl Renner nor the preceding Ukrainian law of 1918.[39] Neither did Hasselblatt react to the Estonian perspective, but stressed the impact of the Austrian scholar Rudolf Laun in a short article he published in 1948.[40] It should also be added that Hasselblatt was far from being the only person to address and push forward the notion of cultural autonomy, even when looking at the German discussion in Estonia.[41]

In the making of the law, Hasselblatt departed from some of his basic positions: First of all, he accepted a quantitative definition of minorities as a precondition of cultural self-administration as well as the principle of individual confession, which could, however, be disputed by representatives of the ethnic group. Hasselblatt had openly supported more compulsory regulations because he was convinced that belonging to a minority was not based on individual choice and hence could not be changed. In this connection, Hasselblatt also addressed – although rather indirectly – the question of loyalty of the minority towards state institutions, arguing that it should be in the state's interest to provide such conditions that would give no grounds for complaint on the part of minorities and would thereby foster positive attitudes towards the state among the minorities. In this perspective, loyalty was less seen as a legitimate demand by the state, but as a result of respecting the minorities' interests.[42]

In the face of this positive image of constructive minority politics, the question arises, when did the perception start to change and when did political actions tilt. A simple explanation concerning Hasselblatt would be to link the change of perspective to his new job in Berlin. A major argument for such a hypothesis would be the observation that he was seemingly no longer pursuing to finish his manuscript on cultural autonomy.[43] However, a closer look at this work as well as at texts published by Hasselblatt since 1926 on cultural autonomy show a different picture. There, Hasselblatt tried to stress that the

implementation of nationality rights for the Germans in Estonia – in contrast to the already mentioned opinions of Estonian politicians – was not based on negotiations with Estonian politicians, but on an autonomous decision by the German *Volksgruppe* itself. In 1929, when reviewing the parliamentary work of the German minority in Estonia, he expressed a criticism, which explicitly followed Carl Schirren's notion of a mental predisposition towards *Ausharren*[44] from the 1860s: Repression from the state allegedly had deprived the Baltic German of the responsibility for administering the land. As the Baltic Germans' commitment to *Stamm* and *Heimat* had been challenged, they were pushed into a position to decide between remaining in the Baltic *Heimat* on the one hand or opting for German *Volkstum* with the consequence of emigration on the other hand.[45] According to Hasselblatt, attacks on the Germans since 1918 came not only from the Bolshevists, but also from anti-bolshevist Estonians. This was to explain, why the German representatives of the *Asutav Kogu* abstained from accepting the constitution.

It can also be noticed that Hasselblatt's convictions in crucial points dissented from the principles of the law on cultural autonomy. This refers not only to the rejection of the term of 'minority' as an application of quantitative reasoning, which Hasselblatt denounced as neglecting the cultural values and historical and sociological situation of different nationalities. Hasselblatt's position was based first of all on assumptions that *Volkstum* is not a matter of choice or individual decision, but invariably inherent to every nationality. Recording nationality in a national cadastre could thus not be seen as a policy of exclusion or separation that is limiting individual decisions, but as a reflection of non-negotiable facts. Resulting from this, national minorities could not be organized as a kind of voluntary association, but only as a corporative institution, which obliges its member as well as the state. In addition, Hasselblatt also criticized a crucial element of the law on cultural

autonomy: the limitation of the minorities' self-administration to cultural aspects. Hasselblatt's critical stance towards the Estonian state manifests itself throughout his manuscript, where he expressed a fundamental criticism of the post-war political order in Central and Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, and this underlines the Janus-faced character of Hasselblatt's disposition, he still published positive assessments of the cultural autonomy around 1930.[46]

Thus, one clearly sees an argumentation along two different lines in Hasselblatt's activities. The second, critical line appeared already as early as 1926, when the implementation of cultural autonomy in Estonia opened Hasselblatt access to German ministries as well as organizations taking care of *Deutschtum*. He did not only promote cultural autonomy as best practice for the national minority groups united in the Nationalities Congress, but in particular as an appropriate means for the German government to protect German minorities in Eastern Europe and to strengthen the influence of the German Reich in the region. In a paper directed to the German minister of the interior, Hasselblatt argued already in June 1926 that the concept of cultural autonomy was perfect for German minorities and would thus only be of limited utility for other groups. Hence, it could be used by the German government in order to strengthen the international role of Germany by emphasizing the international importance of minority protection.[47] In this regard, the stress on cultural autonomy as a German contribution to the solution of minority problems could be combined with a sharp criticism of the new nation states in Eastern Europe and of the policies of the Western powers.

What has to be concluded here is that Hasselblatt addressed different audiences in divergent ways and put his arguments in contradictory frameworks: first, as loyal and constructive Estonian citizen during his work in the *Riigikogu*,[48] second, as a loyal member of the German nation (and not only the German minority in Estonia), and third as an expert in

international affairs. So, if one would apply Hirschman's categories,[49] it becomes clear that 'voice' and 'exit' referred to the Estonian state, with the option of 'voice' being limited by the threat of 'exit', whereas the notion of loyalty was used in a specific, double-faced way, shaped by bindings that were contradictory and excluding each other.

The tilting point, as I would argue, was Hasselblatt's postulated dilemma between *Heimat* and *Volkstum* that would only allow to choose one of both,[50] as it entailed the negative scenario for (German) minorities of either emigration or assimilation. According to Hasselblatt, this dilemma could only be solved by a powerful leader, who could transcend state borders and be a leader to the whole nation. Such an assertion clearly limited his commitment to civic loyalty and opened up – first with a focus of the Sudeten German problem – the question of future border revisions related to minority issues.[51]

Closely connected was a second crucial issue of Hasselblatt's thinking: the dichotomy between minority and nationality: In fact, Hasselblatt always rejected the German term *Minderheit* and preferred *Minorität*, but actually *Nationalitiät* (nationality) in the sense of a transborder community always had been dominant. Hasselblatt suggested such changes of terms in various institutions, first of the organization of German minorities from the 'Ausschuss deutscher Minderheiten im Ausland' to the 'Verband der deutschen Volksgruppen in Europa' in 1928,[52] then of the Nationalities Congress and also in the subtitle of the journal *Nation und Staat*, where Hasselblatt replaced *Minoritätenproblem* by *Nationalitätenproblem*, after becoming the journal's editor in June 1938.[53]

There are further aspects underlining the tilting moment in Hasselblatt's understanding of nationality. First, there is a striking Germanocentrism in his attitude: He did not see any obvious connection to similar models of nationalities rights, neither in Britain and Switzerland nor in the

Habsburg monarchy prior to 1918. The same is true of his comparisons with the situation of other ethnic groups and minorities, which he addressed in discussions within the European Nationalities Congress: these other cases for him were secondary to the fate of German minorities. Second, his book manuscript reveals a fundamental criticism of the nation state and the making of new borders after 1918, which according to him dominated over categories of space, economy, and history.[54] Third, his understanding of 'assimilation' and 'dissimilation' has to be mentioned, which was informed by the *Volkstheorie* of Max Hildebert Boehm.[55]

Whereas the turning around of concepts was still pending before Hasselblatt's relocation to Berlin, he quickly became involved in the planning of Nazi *Volkstum* politics. Already in March 1933, he had talks with Alfred Rosenberg and Hitler, and some weeks later he submitted a memorandum reflecting on a possible negative impact of Nazi anti-Jewish politics on German minorities in Eastern Europe.[56] There, Hasselblatt addressed the question, whether the exclusion of Jews from German civil service could provoke similar repressions against German minorities abroad. Hasselblatt suggested as an argument that assimilated German Jews could not be regarded as a distinct national group and therefore, categories of minority rights could not be applied here, because a minority, according to him, must be characterized by a disposition of 'dissimilation'.[57] A similar argumentation Hasselblatt brought forward with regard to Jewish minority representatives in the Nationalities Congress since 1933.[58] Hasselblatt, thus, clearly tried to immunize minority politics with a focus on German minorities from possible collateral damage resulting from the deprivation of rights of the German Jews.[59] Hasselblatt, however, also went one step further, as his negative disposition towards giving priority to the individual confession of nationality and his preference for registering national groups in a cadastre provided an argument that the exclusion of Jews from public life

in Germany based on external criteria on the one hand and the support of German minorities by Nazi authorities on the other hand had its origin in the notion of 'dissimilation'.[60] The character of the national cadastre thus had changed from an instrument for maintaining cohesion with the German minority in Estonia to an instrument that could be used for registering such groups that should be deprived of fundamental rights.

Having outlined Hasselblatt's leading ideas two further aspects need to be discussed: First, the impact of Estonian nationalism and second a comparison with Ammende's and Schiemann's notions of minority politics. When we saw Hasselblatt already during his time in Estonia operating with diverging arguments depending on his audience, a similar observation also could be made with regard to Estonian approaches towards cultural autonomy. There are many hints that parts of the Estonian public had a negative disposition towards the Baltic Germans, particular on their historical as well as their socio-economic impact on the region.[61] The authoritarian period after 1934 saw no general change of the fundamental minority laws but tendencies increased that limited the use of non-Estonian languages or interfered into institutions of the German minority. Such a perspective of limiting the German Baltic social impact on the Estonian society can be connected to further social and political trends in inter-war Estonia such as Estonizing surnames.[62] One more aspect, which was already briefly mentioned, comes from Estonian publications on cultural autonomy. There, the impact of Hasselblatt is seen on a totally different level compared to his self-presentation as the driving force of the law in the second *Riigikogu*: Hasselblatt is hardly mentioned, neither in contemporary Estonian publications nor in post-war publications.[63]

Concerning the relation of Hasselblatt's positions to the other prominent Baltic German minority politicians, the fundamental differences to Schiemann are evident[64]: Schiemann supported the concept of an 'a-national state', meaning that it should refrain from interference into the

national identity of its citizens. Such a position was fully contradictory to Hasselblatt's conviction of the primacy of the nation or *Volk* over the state. More complicated is the case of the cosmopolitan Ewald Ammende, who was active first in organizing the 'Verband der deutschen Volksgruppen in Europa' and then as secretary of the Nationalities Congress. Ammende – as states Martyn Housden – had all national minorities in Europe in the focus of his activities and stressed unequivocally the necessity 'that German minority groups should remain completely loyal to the states they inhabited'.[65] According to Housden the standpoints of Ammende and Hasselblatt in the time of the implementation of the cultural autonomy were still similar,[66] but Ammende's positions were seemingly less coherent than those by his colleagues. In distinction to Hasselblatt, Ammende also argued for a concept of *Volksgemeinschaft* comprising a nation state and its national minorities including the right of cross-border cooperation in the sphere of culture.[67] Thus, notwithstanding Ammende's anti-Soviet attitude and his partial collaboration with Nazi authorities, he largely kept to the basic principles of constructive minority politics. Regarding their attitude towards the issue of loyalty, neither Schiemann nor Ammende followed Hasselblatt's postulated dilemma of *Heimat* vs. *Volkstum*. Loyalty in Schiemann's understanding – as well as of the Nationalities Congress before 1933 – had to be differentiated between one oriented towards the state and one towards the nation.[68] Ammende still in the 1930s underlined the necessity 'to find a mechanism permitting loyalty to both the state and their nationality'.[69]

Conclusions

Three issues remain to be discussed in the concluding remarks. First: Was there a common thread or a tilting moment in Hasselblatt's political notions? Martyn Housden and Xosé Núñez Seixas have argued that his

corporatist understanding of minorities as well as his priority of *Volksgemeinschaft* over state preformed his path to Nazi politics.[70] Although it is obvious that Hasselblatt's support for the individual confession of belonging to a national minority was limited to the defence against assimilation, the corporatist understanding of minority also shaped the Moravian Compromise of 1905, and thus did not directly lead to a *völkisch* understanding. In addition, there are – so far – no hints of a close cooperation between Hasselblatt and Nazi representatives among the Baltic German minorities. I would, therefore, argue that the tilting towards his *völkisch* understanding of nationalities and an instrumental use of minority politics appeared already as early as 1926 in Hasselblatt's contacts with Berlin and under the influence of Boehm's notion of dissimilation, which – although developed already during the First World War – gained strength in the early 1930s.[71]

Second: What were the political implications of loyalty in the case of Werner Hasselblatt and Estonian politics towards the German minority? In distinction between public confirmations of or demands for loyalty towards the 'host' state on the one hand and expressions of distrust or of diverging bindings to the 'kin' state on the other hand, loyalty was obviously conceived and practised situationally and negotiated on both sides. If in the beginning the Estonian declaration of independence as well as the constitution intended to secure the German minority's loyalty towards the new state through political integration, this goal partly clashed with the socio-economic interest in implementing an agrarian reform in order to distribute land to the ethnic Estonian population. Nevertheless, securing Baltic German loyalty was based on the common goal of preventing Bolshevist rule in Estonia. The level of Bolshevist threat seemingly decided about the waves of relevance of Baltic German loyalty from an Estonian perspective. The issue lost political relevance after the peace treaty of Tartu in 1920 but reappeared on the political agenda after the coup attempt of December 1924. It then once again lost

political relevance in the 1930s under the authoritarian rule, although at the same time *völkisch* tendencies emerged among the German minorities, which challenged previous attitudes and perceptions of loyalty. However, an unambiguous shift of loyalty towards Nazi Germany did not take place among the Baltic German minorities. In addition, the political dimension remained limited in its scope in the Baltic region, as the limitation of self-administration and autonomy to the cultural sphere was not fundamentally challenged. Based on the attitudes by Schiemann and Ammende it also becomes clear that dual loyalty to the 'host' state and the 'kin' nation did not pose a fundamental problem, as long as the political order was respected by all sides. This notion, however, became increasingly challenged by Hasselblatt, although less with open statements but with hints that loyalty might be directed to another institution, if the situation of a minority might worsen. Actually, Hasselblatt had no decisive impact in pursuing the 'Heim ins Reich' policy,[72] but his writings leave no doubt about his support. At the same time Hasselblatt had unambiguously shifted his focus from the Estonian state to Nazi Germany. So, when we reiterate the questions asked at the beginning, it becomes clear that any positive assessment of Baltic minority politics cannot be based on the suggested counterfactual narrative that separates cultural autonomy from the politics of Nazi Germany.[73] If the fate of Paul Schiemann indicates his powerlessness after 1933, then the case of Werner Hasselblatt highlights that the momentum of an instrumental disposition towards loyalty finally destroyed the prospects of inter-war minority politics.

Endnotes

[1] See in particular the special issue of *Ethnopolitics* 6 (2007), no. 3, on 'The Theory and Practice of Cultural Autonomy in Central and Eastern Europe'; and

also D. J. Smith & J. Hiden, *Ethnic Diversity and the Nation State. National Cultural Autonomy Revisited* (New York, 2012), 43. On the restauration of inter-war minority politics in Estonia see C. Hasselblatt, *Minderheitenpolitik in Estland. Rechtsentwicklung und Rechtswirklichkeit 1918-1995* (Tallinn, 1996). Further references will be given below.

[2] Cf. the skeptical remark by S. David, *Cultural Autonomy in Estonia. A Relevant Paradigm for the Post-Soviet Era?* (ESRC 'One Europe or Several?' Working Paper, 2001), 43.

[3] In particular in John Hiden's biography: J. Hiden, *Defender of Minorities. Paul Schiemann, 1876–1944* (London, 2004); see also J. Hiden, 'A Voice from Latvia's Past: Paul Schiemann and the Freedom to Practise One's Culture', in: *Slavonic & East European Review* 77/4 (1999), 680-699.

[4] M. Housden, 'Ambiguous Activists. Estonia's Model of Cultural Autonomy as Interpreted by Two of its Founders: Werner Hasselblatt and Ewald Ammende', in: *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 35/3 (2004), 231-253; M. Housden, *On Their Own Behalf: Ewald Ammende, Europe's National Minorities and the Campaign for Cultural Autonomy 1920-1936* (On the Boundary of Two Worlds: Identity, Freedom, and Moral Imagination in the Baltics, 37) (Leiden, 2014). In these publications Housden revised his former, more positive image of Ammende in: M. Housden, 'Ewald Ammende and the Organization of National Minorities in Inter-War Europe', in: *German History* 18/4 (2000), 439-460. The first to draw attention on Hasselblatt in this connection was S. Myllyniemi, *Die Neuordnung der baltischen Länder 1941-1944. Zum nationalsozialistischen Inhalt der deutschen Besatzungspolitik* (Dissertationes historicae, 2) (Helsinki, 1973); for further information see my publications mentioned in footnote 11.

[5] See his apologetic text: E. Kroeger, *Der Auszug aus der alten Heimat. Die Umsiedlung der Baltendeutschen* (Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Deutsche Nachkriegsgeschichte, 4) (Tübingen, 1967), 49-54; on the resettlement: J. v. Hehn, *Die Umsiedlung der baltischen Deutschen – das letzte Kapitel baltischdeutscher Geschichte* (Marburger Ostforschungen, 40) (Marburg, Lahn, 1984); and D. A. Loeber (ed.) *Diktierte Option. Die Umsiedlung der Deutsch-Balten aus Estland und Lettland 1939–1941* (Neumünster, 1972).

[6] See the arguments listed by M. Garleff, 'Zwischen Loyalität und Verweigerung. Zur Autonomie der Deutschbalten in Estland und Lettland', in: B. Störtkuhl, J. Stüben & T. Weger (eds.), *Aufbruch und Krise. Das östliche Europa und die*

Deutschen nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg (Schriften des Bundesinstituts für Kultur und Geschichte der Deutschen im Östlichen Europa, 41) (Munich, 2010), 301-302.

[7] L. Lundin, 'The Road from Tsar to Kaiser: Changing Loyalties of the Baltic Germans, 1905–1914', in: *Journal of Central European Affairs* 10 (1950), 255.

[8] This understanding is formed by: J. Osterkamp & M. S. Wessel, 'Texturen von Loyalität: Überlegungen zu einem analytischen Begriff', in: *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 42/4 (2016), 553-573; and M. Schulze Wessel, '„Loyalität" als geschichtlicher Grundbegriff und Forschungskonzept: Zur Einleitung', in: M. Schulze Wessel (ed.), *Loyalitäten in der Tschechoslowakischen Republik. Politische, nationale und kulturelle Zugehörigkeiten*. (Veröffentlichungen des Collegium Carolinum, 101) (Munich, 2004), 1-22; See also J. Osterkamp & M. Schulze Wessel (eds.), *Exploring Loyalty* (Veröffentlichungen des Collegium Carolinum, 136*)* (Göttingen, 2017); and P. Haslinger & J. v. Puttkamer, 'Staatsmacht, Minderheit, Loyalität. Konzeptionelle Grundlagen am Beispiel Ostmittel-und Südosteuropas in der Zwischenkriegszeit ', in: P. Haslinger & J. v. Puttkamer (eds.), *Staat, Loyalität und Minderheiten in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa 1918–1941* (Buchreihe der Kommission für Geschichte und Kultur der Deutschen in Südosteuropa, 39) (Munich, 2007), 1-16.

[9] A. O. Hirschman, *Exit, Voice and Loyalty. Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States* (Cambridge, MA, 1970), 76-105; cf. Osterkamp & Wessel, 'Texturen', 556.

[10] Apart from the literature mentioned above see K. Laurits, *Saksa kultuuromavalitsus Eesti Vabariigis 1925–1940. Monograafia ja allikad* (ad fontes, 16) (Tallinn, 2008); V. Vasara, 'Das estnische Parlament und die Deutschbalten. Zu den Debatten bis zur Verabschiedung der Kulturautonomie 1925', in: *Nordost-Archiv N.F.* 4/2 (1995), 479-500; K. Alenius, 'The Birth of Cultural Autonomy in Estonia: How, Why, and for Whom?', in: *Journal of Baltic Studies* 38/4 (2007), 445-462.

[11] See my earlier publications with more detailed information: J. Hackmann, 'Werner Hasselblatt on Cultural Autonomy – a Forgotten Manuscript', in: M. Housden & D. Smith (eds.), *Forgotten Pages of Baltic History. Diversity and Inclusion* (On the Boundary of Two Worlds: Identity, Freedom, and Moral Imagination in the Baltics, 30) (Amsterdam, 2011), 147-160; J. Hackmann, 'Concepts of German Nationalities Policy in Eastern Europe during the Second

World War: The Case of Werner Hasselblatt', in: D. Gaunt, P. A. Levine & L. Palosuo (eds.), *Collaboration and Resistance during the Holocaust: Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania* (Oxford et al., 2004), 95-110; J. Hackmann, 'Werner Hasselblatt. Von der estländischen Kulturautonomie zur nationalsozialistischen Bevölkerungspolitik', in: M. Garleff (ed.), *Deutschbalten, Weimarer Republik und Drittes Reich* (Cologne, Weimar, Vienna, 2008), 71-107.

[12] X. M. Núñez Seixas, 'Internationale Politik, Minderheitenfrage und nationale Autonomie: Der Europäische Nationalitätenkongreß (1925-1938)', in: H. Timmermann (ed.), *Nationalismus und Nationalbewegung in Europa 1914–1945* (Dokumente und Schriften der Europäischen Akademie Otzenhausen, 85) (Berlin, 1999), 39-70; X. M. Núñez Seixas, *Entre Ginebra y Berlín. La cuestión de las minorías nacionales y la política internacional en Europa, 1914-1939* (Akal universitaria, Serie Historia contemporánea, 216) (Madrid, 2001); not always reliable is S. Bamberger-Stemmann, *Der Europäische Nationalitätenkongreß 1925 bis 1938. Nationale Minderheiten zwischen Lobbyistentum und Großmachtinteressen* (Materialien und Studien zur Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung, 7) (Marburg, 2000); see also U. v. Hirschhausen, 'From Minority Protection to Border Revisionism: The European Nationality Congress, 1925–38', in: M. Conway & K. K. Patel (eds.), *Europeanization in the Twentieth Century: Historical Approaches* (London, 2010), 87-109.

[13] G. Aly & S. Heim, *Vordenker der Vernichtung. Auschwitz und die deutschen Pläne für eine neue europäische Ordnung* (Frankfurt/M., 1993).

[14] G. Kroeger, 'Die Deutschen Vereine in Liv-, Est- und Kurland 1905/06-1914', in: *Jahrbuch des baltischen Deutschtums* 16 (1969), 39-49; G. Kroeger, 'Zur Situation der baltischen Deutschen um die Jahrhundertwende', in: *Zeitschrift für Ostforschung* 17 (1968), 601-632; J. v. Hehn, 'Das baltische Deutschtum zwischen den Revolutionen von 1905 und 1917. Einige Bemerkungen zu Forschungsaufgaben und Forschungsproblemen', in: A. Ezergailis & G. v. Pistohlkors (eds.), *Die baltischen Provinzen Rußlands zwischen den Revolutionen von 1905 und 1917 / The Russian Baltic Provinces between the 1905/1917 Revolutions* (Quellen und Studien zur baltischen Geschichte, 4) (Cologne, Vienna, 1982), 43-57.

[15] J. Hackmann, 'Nachholende Nationalisierung. Das kurze Leben der Deutschen Vereine in den russländischen Ostseeprovinzen (1905–1914)', in: J. Hackmann (ed.), *Vereinskultur und Zivilgesellschaft in Nordosteuropa. Regionale Spezifik und europäische Zusammenhänge. Associational Culture and Civil Society in North*

Eastern Europe. Regional Features and the European Context (Quellen und Studien zur baltischen Geschichte, 20) (Vienna, Cologne, Weimar, 2012), 387-418.

[16] M. R. Hatlie, 'Flags and Bayonets. Mass Celebrations in Riga 1910–1920', in: *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung* 51/4 (2002), 475–499; M. R. Hatlie, *Riga at War 1914–1919. War and Wartime Experience in a Multi-Ethnic Metropolis* (Studien zur Ostmitteleuropaforschung, 30) (Marburg, 2014).

[17] G. v. Pistohlkors, 'Führende Schicht oder nationale Minderheit? Die Revolution von 1905/06 und die Kennzeichnung der politischen Situation der deutschen Balten zwischen 1840 und 1906 in der zeitgenössischen deutsch-baltischen Geschichtsforschung', in: *Zeitschrift für Ostforschung* 21/4 (1972), 601-618; K. Brüggemann, 'Von der führenden Schicht zur nationalen Minderheit. Zur Klärung der Rolle der estländischen deutschen Minderheit bei der Begründung der Republik Estland 1918-1919', in: *Nordost-Archiv N.F.* 4/2 (1995), 453-478.

[18] See A. Henriksson, *The Tsar's Loyal Germans. The Riga German Community: Social Change and the Nationality Question, 1855-1905* (East European Monographs, 131) (Boulder, New York, 1983).

[19] See the contributions by A. von Taube and K-H. Janßen in: J. v. Hehn, H. v. Rimscha & H. Weiss (eds.), *Von den baltischen Provinzen zu den baltischen Staaten. Beiträge zur Entstehungsgeschichte der Republiken Estland und Lettland 1917-1918* (Marburg/Lahn, 1971); H.-E. Volkmann, *Die deutsche Baltikumpolitik zwischen Brest-Litovsk und Compiègne. Ein Beitrag zur "Kriegszieldiskussion"* (Ostmitteleuropa in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart, 13) (Cologne, 1970); G. v. Rauch, *Geschichte der baltischen Staaten* (Hannover-Döhren, 1986).

[20] Brüggemann, 'Von der führenden Schicht', 462-463; E. v. Dellingshausen, *Im Dienste der Heimat! Erinnerungen* (Stuttgart, 1930), 349-350.

[21] Brüggemann, 'Von der führenden Schicht', 464.

[22] Brüggemann, 'Von der führenden Schicht', 468-471.

[23] Brüggemann, 'Von der führenden Schicht', 472; O. Arens, 'The Estonian Maapäev during 1917', in: V. S. Vardys & R. J. Misiunas (eds.), *The Baltic States in Peace and War 1917–1945* (London, 1978), 19-30, 198-201. See also: Meie parlament ja aeg. Fakte, sündmusi, dokumente, inimesi, ed. Marge Allandi, Eesti

Rahvusraamatukogu sotsiaalia ja parlamendiraamatukogu, https://meieparlamentjaaeg.nlib.ee/1917-maapaev/ [26/02/2021].

[24] Mickwitz (1850-1924) was a teacher and newspaper editor as well as president of various associations; cf. P. Schiemann, *Zwischen zwei Zeitaltern. Erinnerungen 1903–1919* (Schriftenreihe der Carl-Schirren-Gesellschaft, 3) (Lüneburg, 1979), 26-27.

[25] W. Hasselblatt, 'Zehn Jahre deutsch-baltischer Politik in Estland', in: *Jahrbuch des baltischen Deutschtums in Lettland und Estland* (1929), 66-70; M. Garleff, 'Die deutschbaltische Volksgruppe zwischen Anpassung und Widerstand bei der Staatsgründung der Republik Estland', in: *Eesti Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused* 40 (1991), 4-15 (7-8).

[26] Hasselblatt, 'Zehn Jahre', 68; cf. however Hasselblatt, 'Minderheitenpolitik', 35.

[27] G. v. Pistohlkors, 'Inversion of Ethnic Group Status in the Baltic Region: Governments and Rural Ethnic Conflicts in Russia's Baltic Provinces and in the Independent States of Estonia and Latvia, 1850-1940', in: D. W. Howell, G. v. Pistohlkors & E. Wiegant (eds.), *Roots of Rural Ethnic Mobilisation* (Comparative Studies on Governments and Non-Dominant Ethnic Groups in Europe, 1850–1940, 7) (Aldershot, 1993), 169-219 (198-199); T. Rosenberg, 'Agrarfrage und Agrarreform in Estland 1919: Ursachen, Voraussetzungen und Folgen', in: *Eesti Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised. Humanitaar- ja sotsiaalteadused* 43/3 (1994), 326-335; I. Lipping, *Land Reform Legislation in Estonia and the Disestablishment of the Baltic German Rural Elite, 1919–1939* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland) (College Park, MD, 1980); Laurits, *Saksa kultuuromavalitsus*, 128-136.

[28] For details see: J. Hackmann, 'Von der „Gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft" zu „Õpetatud Eesti Selts". Verein und Nation in Estland', in: N. Angermann, M. Garleff & W. Lenz (eds.), *Ostseeprovinzen, Baltische Staaten und das Nationale. Festschrift für Gert von Pistohlkors zum 70. Geburtstag* (Schriften der Baltischen Historischen Kommission, 14) (Münster, 2005), 185-211.

[29] R. Raag, 'The Multilingual Parliament: Language Choice by Non-Estonian Members of Parliament in Parliamentary Debates in Estonia 1919–1934', in: B. Metuzāle-Kangere (ed.), *The Ethnic Dimension in Politics and Culture in the Baltic Countries, 1920–1945* (Södertörn Academic Studies, 18) (Södertörn, 2004), 92-120; publications from that period listed in: M. Garleff, 'Deutschbaltische

Publizisten. Ewald Ammende – Werner Hasselblatt – Paul Schiemann', in: *Berichte und Forschungen* 2 (1994), 189-229.

[30] Of the 881 statements by non-Estonian members of Parliament more than 500 were given in Estonian, whereas the c. 300 statements by Russian members were given exclusively in Russian language, see Raag, 'The Multilingual Parliament', 102, 105.

[31] Some of Hasselblatt's speeches were printed in German language newspaper, for details see: Garleff, 'Deutschbaltische Publizisten'.

[32] Brüggemann, 'Von der führenden Schicht', 468.

[33] Brüggemann, 'Von der führenden Schicht', 474; J. Uluots, *Grundzüge der Agrargeschichte Estlands* (Tartu, 1935), 180-192; Rosenberg, 'Agrarfrage', 330.

[34] See Vasara, 'Parlament', for details; this connection, however, has also been disputed, see below.

[35] Hackmann, 'Kulturautonomie', 77.

[36] K. Aun, *Der völkerrechtliche Schutz nationaler Minderheiten in Estland von 1917 bis 1940* (Hamburg, 1951); see also K. Aun, 'On the Spirit of the Estonian Minorities Law', in: J. Olvet-Jensen (ed.), *Apophoreta Tartuensia* (Stockholm, 1949), 240-245; K. Aun, 'Vähemusrahvuste kultuurautonoomia Eestis. Tagapõhjast ja teostumisest', in: *Eesti Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused* 40/1 (1991), 61-66; O. Angelus, *Die Kulturautonomie in Estland* (Detmold, 1951); cf. Laurits, *Saksa kultuuromavalitsus*, 57.

[37] For details see Hackmann, 'Kulturautonomie', 77.

[38] See Hackmann, 'Cultural Autonomy'.

[39] Hints on the Ukrainian law: M. M. Laserson, 'Das Minoritätenrecht der baltischen Staaten', in: *Zeitschrift für ausländisches öffentliches Recht und Völkerrecht* 2 (1931), 401-429; Aun, 'Spirit'; Aun, 'Vähemusrahvuste'; Laurits, *Saksa kultuuromavalitsus*, 45.

[40] W. Hasselblatt, 'Kulturautonomie. Ein Erinnerungsblatt für Professor Rudolf Laun', in: G. C. Hernmarck (ed.), *Festschrift zu Ehren von Professor Dr. jur. Rudolf Laun, Rektor der Universität Hamburg anlässlich der Vollendung seines 65. Lebensjahres am 1. Januar 1947* (Hamburg, 1948), 32-35.

[41] See '*Revaler Bote*' on February 23, 1925; *Gesetze und Verordnungen betreffend die deutsche Kulturselbstverwaltung* (Reval, 1926); H. Kraus, *Das Recht der Minderheiten. Materialien zur Einführung in das Verständnis des modernen Minoritätenproblems* (Stilkes Rechtsbibliothek, 57) (Berlin, 1927), 189-208; A. Spindler, *An die Gegner der Kulturautonomie der völkischen Minderheiten in Estland* (Reval, 1924); on the role of Spindler see also Smith & Hiden, *Ethnic Diversity*, 36-38, 46.

[42] Hackmann, 'Cultural Autonomy', 152.

[43] For more details on the fate of the text see Hackmann, 'Cultural Autonomy', 148-149.

[44] Hasselblatt, 'Zehn Jahre', 67.

[45] Similar claims were made by Hasselblatt several times, see Hackmann, 'Kulturautonomie', 79; Hackmann, 'Cultural Autonomy', 154..

[46] W. Hasselblatt, 'Hat sich die Kulturautonomie in Estland bewährt?', in: *Nation und Staat* 4 (1930-1931), 441-448.

[47] Hackmann, 'Kulturautonomie', 77-78; excerpts from the paper are quoted in Bamberger-Stemmann, *Nationalitätenkongreß*, 51, 253.

[48] Following the findings by Raag, 'The Multilingual Parliament', one might however need to analyze Hasselblatt's statements more closely.

[49] Hirschman, Exit, see above footnote 9.

[50] This antithesis appears in many of his writings, see for instance: Hasselblatt, 'Zehn Jahre'; and W. Hasselblatt, 'Die nationale Autonomie als Ziel der europäischen Nationalitätenpolitik. Festvortrag zur Feier des Deutschpolitischen Arbeitsamtes', in: *Zehn Jahre Deutschpolitisches Arbeitsamt* (Veröffentlichungen des deutschpolitischen Arbeitsamtes, 32) (Prague, [1930]), 7-21; for more Information see: Hackmann, 'Cultural Autonomy', 151-154.

[51] W. Hasselblatt, 'Überstaatliche Volksgemeinschaft', in: *Baltische Monatshefte*, (1932), 1-6; W. Hasselblatt, 'Überstaatliche Volksgemeinschaft – eine Panbewegung', in: *Nation und Staat* 5 (1932-1933), 438-445.

[52] Hasselblatt claimed that this was his idea, see Hackmann, 'Kulturautonomie', 73, 95.

[53] See Hackmann, 'Kulturautonomie', 74. Actually, Hasselblatt already earlier opposed a first title of the journal as *Deutsche Zeitschrift für die Minderheitenfrage*, see M. Garleff, 'Nationalitätenpolitik zwischen liberalem und völkischem Anspruch. Gleichklang und Spannung bei Paul Schiemann und Werner Hasselblatt', in: J. v. Hehn & C. J. Kenéz (eds.), *Reval und die baltischen Länder. Festschrift für Hellmuth Weiss zum 80. Geburtstag* (Marburg, Lahn, 1980), 113-132 (118).

[54] Hackmann, 'Kulturautonomie', 78.

[55] On Boehm see U. Prehn, *Max Hildebert Boehm: radikales Ordnungsdenken vom Ersten Weltkrieg bis in die Bundesrepublik* (Hamburger Beiträge zur Sozial- und Zeitgeschichte, 51) (Göttingen, 2013); U. Prehn, 'Metamorphosen radikalen Ordnungsdenkens im "europäischen Großraum". Ethnopolitische und "volkstheoretische" Konzepte Max Hildebert Boehms vom Ersten bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg ', in: M. Garleff (ed.), *Deutschbalten, Weimarer Republik und Drittes Reich* (Cologne, Weimar, Vienna, 2008), 1-70.

[56] Hackmann, 'Kulturautonomie', 80, 96.

[57] Hackmann, 'Kulturautonomie', 80.

[58] Núñez Seixas, 'Internationale Politik', 55.

[59] Cf. here also Housden, *On Their Own Behalf*, 291.

[60] Hackmann, 'Kulturautonomie', 80.

[61] See the examples given by: Brüggemann, 'Von der führenden Schicht'; Hasselblatt, *Minderheitenpolitik*; Rosenberg, 'Agrarfrage'.

[62] For details see Hasselblatt, *Minderheitenpolitik*, 68-72.

[63] See above, footnote 36.

[64] They were already discussed by: Garleff, 'Nationalitätenpolitik'.

[65] Housden, 'Ammende', 449. In his later texts, however, Housden changed his opinion on Ammende, cf. fn. 4.

[66] Housden, On Their Own Behalf, 61.

[67] Housden, 'Ammende', 449; Housden, 'Ambiguous Activists', 241-242; Housden, *On Their Own Behalf*, 58.

[68] Smith & Hiden, *Ethnic diversity*, 89.

[69] Housden, *On Their Own Behalf*, 186.

[70] Housden, 'Ambiguous Activists', 246; X. M. Núñez Seixas, '¿Autodeterminación o autonomía cultural? Debates ideológicos en el Congreso de Nacionalidades Europeas (1925-1939)', in: *Hispania* 57/3 (1998), 1113-1151 (1147-1151).

[71] Prehn, *Max Hildebert Boehm*, 273-294.

[72] Although his attitude to Konrad Henlein's activities might receive further attention, cf. Bamberger-Stemmann, *Nationalitätenkongreß*, 71; and Garleff, 'Loyalität'.

[73] See above, footnote 6.

Protodiplomacy Across the Mediterranean: The Catalan Participation in the First Congresses of Byzantine Studies in South-Eastern Europe During the Interwar Period

LUCILA MALLART

Universitat Pompeu Fabra

In the interwar period, Catalan nationalists sought to participate actively in post-World War I political forums in order to inscribe Catalonia in discussions on national minorities. Figures like Lluís Nicolau d'Olwer (1888-1961) or Joan Estelrich (1896-1958) unsuccessfully fought to have their claims heard at organisations such as the League of Nations. This has been considered a form of protodiplomacy (Núñez-Seixas 2010). This paper will explore the ways in which Catalan politicians and intellectuals, such as the abovementioned Lluís Nicolau d'Olwer and Josep Puig i Cadafalch (1867-1956), engaged in forms of protodiplomacy in the same period, in the context of the Byzantine Studies Congresses that were organised in South-Eastern Europe in 1924 and 1927. This engagement is significant for a number of reasons. Firstly, it shows that territorial entities with conflicting agendas (separatist, in the case of Catalonia; agglutinating, in the case of Romania) could build narratives that reciprocally reinforced each other's nationalist objectives. Secondly, it alters the conventional narrative according to which Josep Puig i Cadafalch, former president of the Catalan Mancomunitat (1917-1923) retired from politics after General Primo de Rivera's coup d'état, and devoted himself to merely academic practices (e.g. Balcells 2013). Instead, his participation in those Congresses should be framed in the both implicit and explicit political character of those meetings (Maufroy 2010). Finally, the approach of this paper highlights the eminently transnational character of the spaces in which those nationalist narratives and claims where discussed and negotiated (Alcalde 2018).

Keywords: Protodiplomacy, Transnational History, Academic Congresses, Interwar History, Catalonia

Introduction

Between 1924 and 1934, a series of Catalan historians and art historians became regular participants in the International Congresses of Byzantine Studies held in Bucharest (1924), Belgrade (1927), Athens (1930) and Sofia (1934).[1] They spoke, in different ways, of the connections between Catalan and Byzantians in the Middle Ages. The group was led by Josep Puig i Cadafalch (1867-1956), an architect, art historian and politician who served as President of the *Mancomunitat* (a federation of Catalan provinces) between 1917 and 1923. Puig's art historical work dealt with the evolution of Romanesque style in medieval Europe, and the Byzantinology Congresses gave him a chance to explore similarities between Western Romanesque and Moldavian art. Puig was joined by Lluís Nicolau d'Olwer (1888-1961), a medievalist historian and politician who studied the Catalan settlements in the Byzantine Empire during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Nicolau was student of Antoni Rubió i Lluch (1856-1937), who also influenced the work of the Romanian historians Constantin Marinescu (1891-1970) and Nicolae Iorga (1871-1940), who organised the first Congress. Like Puig and Nicolau, Iorga was also politically active, and he became Prime Minister of Romania in 1931 and 1932. This article explores the ways in which those scholarly engagements across the Mediterranean may be considered a form of protodiplomacy. In the aftermath of the First World War, international academic gatherings became privileged spaces in which the aspirations of small nations and national minorities were showcased. This was especially significant in the Balkans, where the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian and the Ottoman Empires had produced several new states. In Spain, the coup d'état of General Primo de Rivera in 1923 brought an end to Puig's Presidency at the *Mancomunitat* and blocked the road of Catalonia's autonomy. In this context, the First Congresses of Byzantine Studies offered an arena in

which to discuss conflicting views of the future of the Balkans, and in which to present Catalonia's nationalist struggles.

The existing scholarship has considered that Primo's coup was a turning a point in Puig's life (despite the fact that he initially supported the coup) and that he abandoned his political career and turned to art historical research.[2] In contrast to that, the present article reads Puig and Nicolau's engagement in South-Eastern Europe as a form of protodiplomacy, that is, a type of international engagement employed by regional or local actors that cannot use conventional channels of international diplomacy and seek the emancipation of a stateless nationality.[3] This can sometimes be intertwined with para-diplomacy, that is, the use of non-explicitly political channels to reach an international audience.[4] As Seixas argued, culture-based diplomacy was a preferred course of action to internationalise the Catalan nationalist struggle in the interwar period. Joan Estelrich (1896-1958), for instance, argued that political demands would better reach an international audience through the promotion of Catalan language, literature, and culture abroad.[5] Other activists, like the abovementioned Lluís Nicolau d'Olwer, attempted to have their voices heard at international political forums such as the League of Nations.[6]

This article draws on previous research that has defined the First Congresses of Byzantine Studies as diplomatic events. The attendance, behaviour, and contributions of the participants, especially those from countries who had played a prominent part in the war, such as France and Germany, were closely watched.[7] This article analyses the Catalan participation in the first two International Congresses of Byzantine Studies held in Bucharest (1924) and Belgrade (1927). It takes into account the different layers that attached political and ideological meaning to the meetings. To do so, it first discusses the significance of Iorga's concept of South-Eastern Europe, and it then analyses the participation of Puig, Nicolau, Iorga and Marinescu in the

abovementioned events, and the connections that emerged from them, including Iorga's trips to Spain in 1927 and 1929.

The Politics of Nicolae Iorga's 'South-Eastern Europe'

Nicolae Iorga has been considered one of the most influential Romanian historians of the twentieth century and, according to Marius Turda, it was him who 'successfully provided Romanian nationalism with the essential notions of historical continuity and cultural unity'.[8] Between 1890 and 1894 Iorga studied History in Paris and in Leipzig, and shortly after became a professor at the University of Bucharest.[9] He collaborated with the Commission for Historic Monuments which, like elsewhere in Europe, aimed at recording and protecting the country's historical heritage. He contributed to the awakening of Romanian nationalism through the magazines *Sămănătorul* (1901-1910) and *Neamul Românesc* (1906-1940). The modern Romanian state had only been created in 1878 with the independence of the United Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia from the Ottoman Empire, which had ruled the region since 1541. Meanwhile, Transylvania, a region historically connected to the Romanian lands, remained part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.[10] Iorga was involved in the movement that sought the establishment of 'Greater Romania' through the incorporation of Transylvania in the Romanian Crown, something that eventually happened at the end of the First World War, which entailed the disintegration of both the Ottoman and the Austro-Hungarian Empires. In 1910 he founded the conservative Democratic Nationalist Party (PND), and held several positions in the Parliament and Romanian Government until he became Prime Minister in 1931-1932. He was murdered in 1940, allegedly by members of the Iron Guard – Romania's fascist party – following his criticism of the country's fall within the Nazi sphere of influence. During his lifetime, Iorga's prestige extended beyond Romania: he was awarded *honoris*

causa doctorates by several European universities including Oxford and Paris, and served as a member of different academic societies and institutes and as a corresponding member of national academies throughout Europe.

Iorga's ideas were notably influenced by the German historian Karl Lamprecht (1856-1915), with whom he studied during his years in Leipzig. Lamprecht has been considered 'one of the key intellectual influences in East Central European historiography in the early twentieth century overall'.[11] One of the most important elements of his historiographical method was the belief that each individual nation's history had to be studied in the context of the influences and interconnections developed with other countries and regional spheres.[12] In line with Lamprecht, Iorga believed that supra-national territories were crucial to creating and disseminating each individual nation's voice into the wider world. It was through broader regions that nations such as Romania could contribute to the global development of humankind, and it was through the study of those regions that a nation's true past could be unveiled.[13] 'The life of a people', he wrote,

> is continuously enmeshed with the lives of other peoples, depending on and continuously influencing them. Each nation is an energy with its own sources and particular circumstances, its special character and mission. But none of these energies can be absolutely isolated for study and must not be isolated in this way.[14]

Iorga used Lamprecht's ideas to build his concept of South-Eastern Europe, the supra-national region that integrated the countries that emerged from the former Byzantine and Ottoman Empires. He identified a historical continuum bonding Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbs, Romanians, Albanians and Turks. This common history could be traced back to the times of the Thracians, was developed under Byzantine and Ottoman

rule, and reached the early twentieth century with a need for political reconstruction in the aftermath of the First World War.[15]

In Iorga's conception of South-Eastern Europe, Romania appeared as a natural regional leader. This was due to its central geographical location, but also because of its alleged ability to integrate both regional (South-Eastern) and national (Romanian) values.[16] In doing so, Iorga confronted other scholars, like the Bulgarian ethnographer Ivan D. Shishmanov (1862-1928) or the Serb geographer Jovan Cvijić (1865-1927), who put forward competing versions of the 'Balkans'.[17]

The reconstruction of a modern 'Byzantium' was indeed one of Iorga's most important intellectual drives throughout his life.[18] He discussed it in numerous publications, such as *Byzance après Byzance* (1935).[19] He also founded several organisations to that end, such as the Institute for Southeast European Studies, created in 1913 in Bucharest. He also established specialised journals such as the *Bulletin de l'Institut pour l'Étude de l'Europe sud-orientale* (in 1914) and the *Revue historique du Sud-Est européen* (in 1924).[20] In April 1924 he organised the First International Congress of Byzantine Studies, held in Bucharest. It is in the context of this intellectual project that we must understand Iorga's interest in Catalonia's history and historiography, and the participation of Catalan scholars in the International Congresses of Byzantine Studies.

Bucharest, 1924: Political Representation and Brotherhood Across the Mediterranean

When Josep Puig i Cadafalch first visited Bucharest in 1924, he was already familiar with the situation of national minorities at the borders of Europe. Puig participated in Spanish politics during a period known as the Restoration, which began with the restoration of the Bourbon

monarchy in 1874 and ended with the coup d'état of General Primo de Rivera in 1923. This was a time of political stability that was characterised by the rotation of the conservative and the liberal parties in the government.[21] This was also the context in which Catalan nationalism acquired political representation for the first time. The conservative nationalist party *Lliga Regionalista*, of which Puig was a founding member, won the Barcelona municipal election in 1905, and in 1907 Puig was elected as a deputy to the Spanish Congress. The *Lliga* also ruled the Barcelona provincial government (*Diputació de Barcelona*) and the *Mancomunitat*, a federation of Catalan provinces that was established in 1914. Enric Prat de la Riba (1870-1917) was the first President of this commonwealth between 1914 and 1917, and Puig took over between 1917 and Primo's 1923 coup.[22] He initially supported the coup, but eventually left Catalonia and spent part of Primo's dictatorship (1923-1930) abroad.[23]

In a speech that he gave in 1907 at the Spanish Congress, Puig used examples of nationalist movements in Europe, from Norway to the Finns, the Czechs, the Serbs, the Greeks and the Turks, in order to outline Catalonia's singularity within the Spanish context.[24] In 1912 he participated in the 'Congrès des Nationalités', a short-lived initiative that aimed at widening the voice of sub-state nationalisms in Europe.[25] When he was re-elected as President of the *Mancomunitat* in 1919, he gave a speech in which he defended the creation of an 'Institution of Propaganda of Catalonia' (*Institució de Propaganda de Catalunya*) to counterbalance the fact that the region was little known abroad. He complained about the fact that the Spanish state rarely sent Catalan representatives to foreign lands, and suggested that Catalan 'science' had a greater chance at succeeding at international conferences than its Spanish counterpart.[26] During the 1920s he travelled to many of the newly created countries that had caught his attention in the previous decade. After Bucharest in 1924, he attended Congresses in Serbia in

1927, in Norway in 1928, and in Greece – including a trip to Istanbul – in 1930.[27]

Despite the fact that Puig no longer held a formal political position after 1923, his stays in those countries were never purely academic. The different facets of his life and career were always closely intertwined. In a letter that he sent to Iorga on 7 November 1922, Puig used stamped paper from the Presidency of the *Mancomunitat*, even though he only addressed academic matters.[28] When Iorga invited Puig and Rubió to the Bucharest Congress, he did it so on the grounds that 'Catalonia could be represented by a scholar of your importance and a tireless researcher of the Catalan studies in Greece like M. Rubió i Lluch'.[29] In line with that, during the opening ceremony Puig paid his respects to the organising country on behalf of Catalonia and not Spain.[30] And during the closing event, he expressed his satisfaction with the attention given to Catalonia during the Congress.[31] However, this affiliation was not always consistent: in the 'List of Members' of the Congress he and Rubió appeared under the headline 'Spain', and during the closing event he reportedly spoke as a 'representative' of his 'Spanish colleagues'.[32] Considering conference participants as 'representatives' of the countries they belonged to was common in the first Congresses of Byzantine studies. Delegates participated not only as individual researchers but also as representatives of their countries, and thus their presence, attitudes and scholarly ideas could also be read as 'diplomatic acts'.[33] In line with that, no German, Austrian or Hungarian scholars were invited to the Bucharest Congress but, in Belgrade, French and German delegates shared expressions of fraternity.[34]

Figure 1: *Dimineața*, 23 April 1924, front cover, UC 2542, Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya. Fons Puig i Cadafalch. The interview 'De vorbă cu d. Puig i Cadafalc, preşedintele Uniunei provinciale catalane' can be seen on the top right corner.

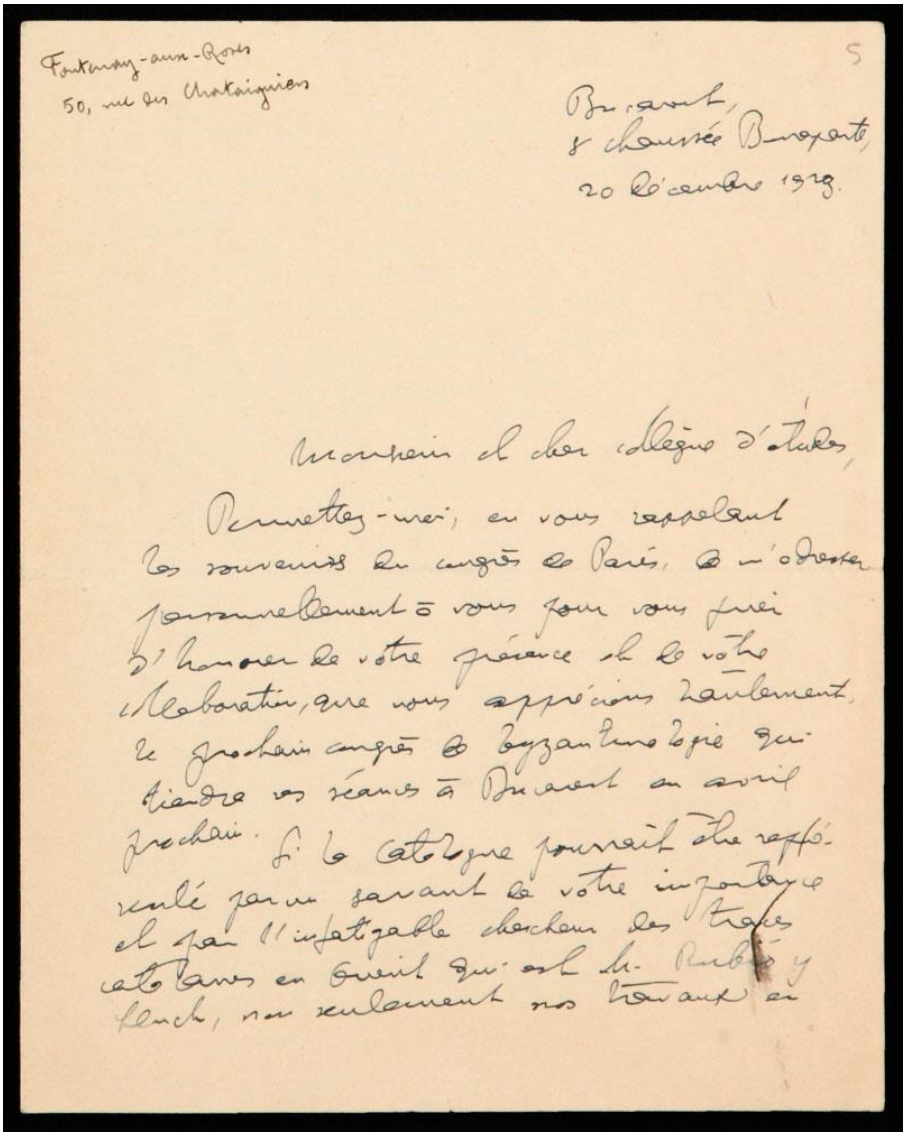
Puig's 'representative' role extended beyond the conference, as shown in an interview that he gave to the Romanian newspaper *Dimineața* during his stay in Bucharest [Figure 1].[35] Although he had been deposed as President of the *Mancomunitat* a few months earlier, in the interview he was presented as the 'president of the Catalan provincial union' that was 'suspended' at the time. There was in fact another President, Alfons Sala i Argemí (1863-1945), appointed by Primo and who would hold the position until the *Mancomunitat* was finally dismantled in March 1925. However, Puig did not seem to recognise that authority. In the interview, he also expressed his will with regards to Catalonia's autonomy: he argued that Romania's 'national culture' would be a model for 'ourselves' and argued that Catalonia found itself in a 'struggle for more autonomy'. Puig made clear that he did not aspire to Catalonia's independence, but to wider recognition and strength of the region within the Spanish state: 'we understand our autonomy but still within the Spanish federation. But we want a stronger affirmation of our national character [which] made us create a Catalan cultural movement for encouraging and supporting patriotism'.[36]

It has been argued that the first two International Congresses of Byzantine Studies contributed to the 'affirmation of the young Balkan countries in the international stage'.[37] The gatherings did not only consist of academic conversations, but also included official receptions presided by heads of state, museum visits, and excursions.[38] During the Bucharest Congress, delegates went on a one-week trip to key heritage sites that highlighted the medieval past of the modern Romanian state, and reinforced the role of the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia in the construction of the nation. The outline included visits to Iași, former capital of the Principality of Moldavia; Curtea de Argeș, the first capital of the Principality of Wallachia; and the Cozia monastery, the burial site of King Mircea the Elder of Wallachia (d. 1418), renamed 'Mircea the Great' by Iorga.[39] The monastery of Curtea de Argeș had a crucial role in

the construction of Romania's modern identity in the late nineteenth century.[40]

The Congresses contributed to building a neo-byzantine cultural and political space in which, according to Iorga, Catalans also played a role. In his invitation letter, Iorga stated that Catalonia and Romania were 'brother' and 'sister' [Figure 2]. If Puig and Rubió, he wrote, accepted the invitation to the Bucharest Congress, 'the foundations would be laid for a cultural exchange between your beautiful and brotherly Catalonia and its Romanian sister'.[41] These were perhaps polite words, but they were also inscribed in a broader narrative that connected Catalans to the medieval history of the Balkans. This narrative was first developed by Iorga's student Constantin Marinescu (1891-1970), who was interested in the presence of the Crown of Aragon (to which the Principality of Catalonia belonged in the Middle Ages) in the Eastern Mediterranean during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[42]

In a series of articles that he wrote during the early 1920s, Marinescu built a narrative of fraternity between Catalans and the different communities that had inhabited the Balkans during the Middle Ages. Catalans arrived in the Eastern Mediterranean in the early fourteenth century when the Byzantine Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos (1259-1332) hired the company of mercenaries known as *Companyia Catalana* to fight Anatolian rulers. Those fighters eventually settled in Greece and in 1319 they established the Duchy of Neopatras, which was annexed to the Crown and existed until 1390.[43] In addition to that, the Kings of Aragon established numerous diplomatic contacts with the Palaiologos dynasty, who ruled Constantinople until 1453, and other Eastern monarchs.



Fontenay-aux-Roses
50, rue des Châtaigniers

5

Bucarest,
8 chaussée Bonaparte,
20 Décembre 1923.

Monsieur et cher Collègue d'études,

Permettez-moi, en vous rappelant les souvenirs du congrès de Paris, de m'adresser personnellement à vous pour vous prier d'honorer de votre présence et de votre collaboration, que nous apprécions hautement, le prochain congrès de byzantinologie qui tiendra ses séances à Bucarest au avril prochain. Si le catalogue pourrait être rapporté par un savant de votre importance et par l'infatigable chercheur des traces catalanes en Orient qui est M. Rubió y Lluch, non seulement nos travaux en

Figure 2: Letter from Nicolae Iorga to Josep Puig i Cadafalch, 20 December 1923, UC 1414, Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya. Fons Puig i Cadafalch.

These exchanges were the focus of many of Marinescu's works. At the piece that he presented in the Bucharest Congress, he explored the diplomatic relations of the Kings of Aragon Martin V the Humane (1356-1410) and Ferdinand I of Antequera (1380-1416) with the Byzantine Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos (1391-1425).[44] In other works, he depicted the Aragonese kings as supporters of different Eastern communities that fought against imperial rule, such as the Armenian king Oshin (1282-1320) and the Albanian leader Skanderbeg (1405-1468).[45]

Marinescu often discussed his work with Catalan scholars, such as Lluís Nicolau d'Olwer, with whom he corresponded and exchanged publications for almost a decade, between 1926 and 1934. Nicolau was an internationally renowned medievalist – on one occasion, Marinescu called him 'the best connoisseur of the Catalan expansion in the Orient'.[46] He was also a prominent politician: initially a member of the *Lliga Regionalista*, he later became a minister in the first government of the Second Spanish Republic, in 1931.[47] Nicolau was a key figure in the dissemination of the Catalan cause abroad during the 1920s. He lived in Geneva, where he acted as President of the *Union Académique Internationale*, and in 1924 he became an observer to the League of Nations together with other Catalan activists such as Manuel Massó i Llorens (1876-1952).[48] At the League, he unsuccessfully tried to include Catalonia's struggle for autonomy in the discussion on the protection of the national minorities that emerged after the First World War.[49]

Nicolau's correspondence with Marinescu reinforced the abovementioned narrative of companionship between Catalans and Romanians. In 1926 Marinescu rejoiced at the fact that Nicolau had sent him some of his works on the Catalan military man and writer Ramon Muntaner (1265-1336), a prominent figure in the medieval expansion of the Crown of Aragon.[50] One of the works was probably *L'expansió de Catalunya en la Mediterrània oriental*, one of Nicolau's most important

books, published earlier that year.[51] *L'expansió* was reviewed in the 1927 spring issue of the *Revue historique du Sud-Est européen*. The review, probably by Iorga, highlighted that the book included 'completely unknown information on every page'.[52] In his letter, Marinescu claimed that it had been his long wish that Catalan scholars also contributed to the study of the Eastern expansion of the Crown. This, he argued, contributed to 'highlighting the role of the Catalans of the past in the history of the Middle Ages'.[53]

Belgrade, 1927: Conflicting Views of South-Eastern Unity

In Bucharest, Puig had presented a paper on the connections between late medieval Moldavian churches and eleventh-century Romanesque art.[54] This was connected to his major research project in the 1920s, which traced the evolution of Romanesque style through Europe.[55] He further developed the topic three years later, during the Second International Congress of Byzantine Studies in Belgrade in April 1927.[56] During the Congress Marinescu and Nicolau presented two papers that developed the connections between 'Catalans and Byzantians', in the words of the Byzantinist Sévérien Salaville (1881-1965). Marinescu's paper explored the relationship between the King of Aragon Alphonse V the Magnanimous (1396-1458) and the Byzantian Emperor John VIII (1392-1448), also from the Palaiologos dynasty. In turn, Nicolau recalled a Catalan account of the siege of the Greek island of Rhodes by the Mamluk Sultanate in 1444.[57] Marinescu discussed his research with Nicolau before the Congress and used the latter's work to build his research on Alphonse V.[58]

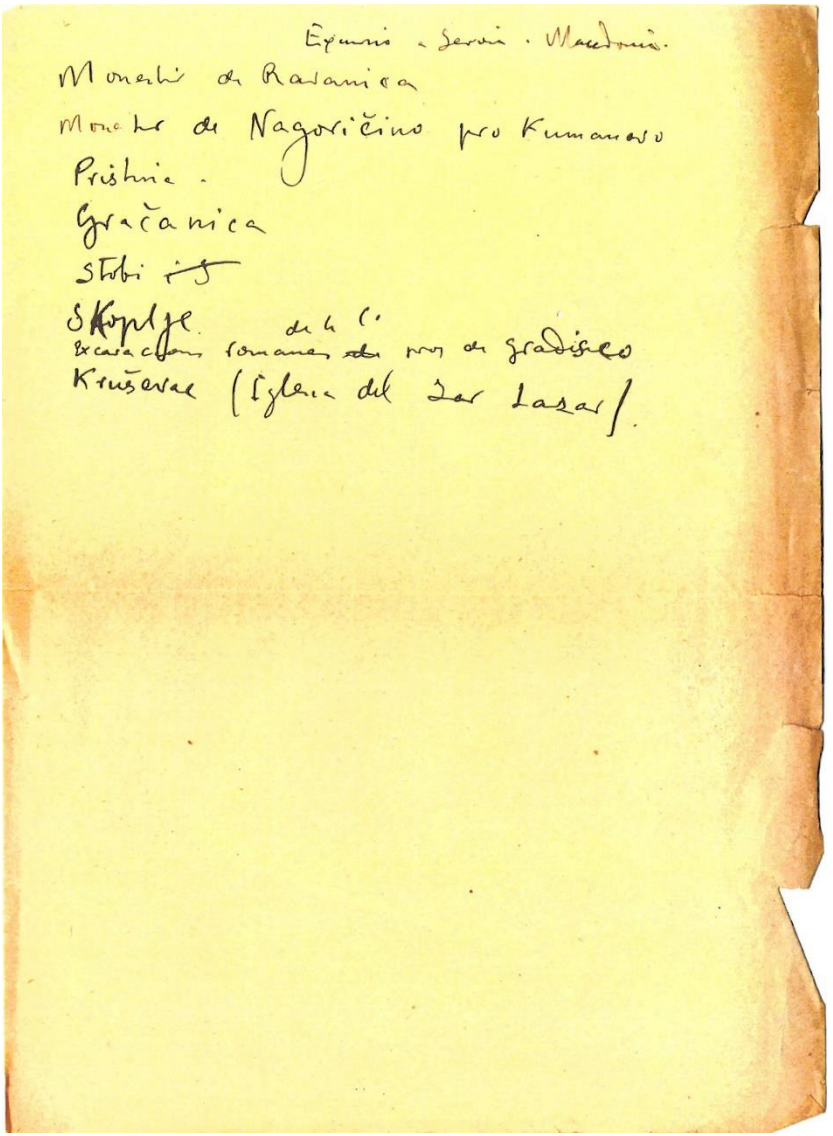


Figure 3. Handwritten note detailing the excursions programme of the Belgrade Congress, UC 2543, Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya. Fons Puig i Cadafalch.

In Belgrade Puig was warmly received by Fernando Alcalá Galiano, Count of Torrijos (1883-1958), who was at the time the Spanish ambassador to the then Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.[59] Alcalá Galiano addressed Puig as 'President of the Catalan Mancomunitat' and argued that he 'personified and represented' the aspirations of the region.[60] In a subsequent letter, Alcalá Galiano corrected himself and referred to Puig as 'Former President of the Mancomunitat'.[61] All the while, he sought Puig's help in granting a summer position in Barcelona for a friend of his, a young Serbian Jew with Spanish ancestry named Bosco Davitcho. Alcalá Galiano also shared explicit concerns about the political situation in Spain and wished for 'better times', and conveyed that he hoped that Puig could eventually return to formal politics.[62] The fact that an embassy delegate sympathised with a political outcast like Puig reflects, perhaps, the weaknesses of Primo's regime in the period 1925-1930. The diversity of the political families that conformed it led to instability and the eventual collapse of the dictatorship.[63]

Puig's political past permeated his academic participations both in Romania and in Serbia, and this was in line with the general ethos of the events. One of the opening speeches of the Belgrade Congress expressed regret that the original unity of worship of southern Slavs had been broken during the Middle Ages, and reclaimed a 'Byzantine influence', safeguarded by Serbs, as expression of the spiritual unity of the south Slavic 'people'.[64] This challenged Iorga's idea that Romania was meant to have a hegemonic role in South-Eastern Europe. Catalan delegates glimpsed that cultural unity was a concern for the organisers of the Congress, and thus Nicolau spoke of the 'binders' of the 'Yugoslav people' in an interview that he gave to the Catalan newspaper *La Publicitat* a few weeks after the event.[65] During the Congress, delegates visited a collection of copies of medieval frescoes gathered by the King, Alexander I, in honour of 'the Serbian Kings of the Middle Ages'. The collection included sites in Serbia, Macedonia and Kosovo, and participants

received a printed copy of the collection as 'souvenir'.[66] As in Romania, delegates were also taken to key heritage sites such as the Ravanica monastery near Belgrade; the town of Kruševac, founded by the national hero Lazar Hrebeljanović (1329-1389), who died in the Battle of Kosovo; the church of Staro Nagoričane and the city of Skopje (in Macedonia); and Pristina (in Kosovo) [Figure 3].[67] The outline of the trip was in line with the policies towards Serbian hegemony that shaped the Yugoslavian nation-building process during the interwar period.[68] It highlighted sites related to Serbia's medieval history and disregarded locations in Croatia and Slovenia, the other two countries that formed the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, renamed Kingdom of Yugoslavia after 1929. The Serb geographer and ethnologist Jovan Cvijić, who died a few months before the Congress, in January 1927, was crucial in academically grounding Serbia's claims for territorial expansion. By presenting Serbia's hegemonic role in the Balkans, the Belgrade Congress also challenged Iorga's idea that Romania was the natural leader of the South-Eastern European region.

After the Congress, Puig continued to be assimilated to Catalonia as a nation. One of the organisers, the Serbian Byzantinist Dragutin Anastasijević (1877-1950), thanked Puig for his 'truly Catalan kindness' which, he argued, did justice to his 'country'.[69] And, when the Russian Alexander Soloviev (1890-1971), a historian of Serbia, sent Puig an art historical enquiry in 1932, he began his letter congratulating him on the declaration of the Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia which, he said, opened 'a new era of prosperity for the proud Catalan nation'.[70]

In the same year of the Belgrade Congress, Iorga published two pieces on the Eastern Mediterranean engagement of the Crown of Aragon that were crucial to this articulation of South-Eastern Europe as a cultural space in which Catalans also played a part.[71] Using the *Chronicle* (1325-1328) of Ramon Muntaner as a source, he claimed that Catalans had been to Wallachia (one of the principalities that formed the modern Romanian

State) in the Middle Ages.[72] He was also interested in the medieval short novel *Història de Jacob Xalabín* (ca. 1404), set in the Ottoman Empire, which he believed was meant to be consumed by the community of Catalans that settled in Greece in the fourteenth century.[73] Thus, Iorga saw Catalans as one of the communities that inhabited South-Eastern Europe during the Middle Ages, and this made them part of the cultural space that he aimed to recreate (and lead) in the early twentieth century. With Marinescu, Iorga contributed to establish a narrative in which medieval Catalans fought together with other Balkan peoples against enemies that were perceived as foreign, such as the Ottoman Empire. Such a narrative of struggle against an external, powerful enemy could be easily transported to the 1920s, a period in which national minorities in South-Eastern Europe were struggling to establish independent states following the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian and the Ottoman Empires, all the while Catalonia's proto-autonomous institutions disappeared under Primo's regime.

Epilogue: Barcelona, 1927 and 1929

Iorga showed sympathy for Catalonia's differentiated identity both during and after the Bucharest Congress, but his views on the political implications of that difference varied over time and depended largely on the audience he was addressing. This shows the utilitarian character of his interest in Catalonia, and the extent to which it was entangled with his interest in the consolidation of Greater Romania after the First World War. This was not always easy, as Romania's and Catalonia's nation-building processes were almost opposed phenomena: one aiming for cultural and political centralisation, the other one seeking fragmentation. When academic exchanges between the two countries began shortly after the First World War, Romania was a relatively young state – founded in 1859 – that had just incorporated the region of

Transylvania, formerly in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and with an important presence of Hungarian, Germanic and Roma minorities. Iorga was one of the advocates of a unified and homogeneous Greater Romania, and a promoter of cultural and academic centralisation that prioritised the role of the capital, Bucharest, vis-à-vis that of other regional centres such as Cluj-Napoca – formerly Koloszvar – in Transylvania. In contrast, the Catalonia of the *Mancomunitat* sought the redefinition of the Spanish State to allow for a greater autonomy and leading role of Catalonia and its capital city, Barcelona. Catalan nationalists, like Puig, were challenging the centralisation and cultural homogeneity of the Spanish State, while Iorga was promoting that centralisation and cultural homogeneity in Romania.

Iorga's changing discourse is especially visible in the texts published after two visits to Spain, in 1927 and 1929. In 1927, Iorga used the history and character of Spain to sustain his own nationalist agenda in Romania. The Spanish *'Reconquista¡* (the Christian conquest of Al-Andalus between the eighth and fifteenth centuries) were used to build a narrative of historical continuity in early-twentieth-century Romania, drawing a parallel with the medieval expansion of Wallachians and Moldovans in Transylvania.[74] In this text Iorga also claimed that Catalonia's landscape and built environment were not different from the rest of Spain, and thus argued that the nationalist claim for autonomy was weak. 'The land, he wrote, is the same as in the rest of the Peninsula'.[75]

The second time, Iorga took the chance to visit the 1929 Barcelona International Exposition, which was designed, in its initial phases, by Puig.[76] Iorga recalled the visit in yet another book, *O mică țară latină: Catalonia și expoziția din 1929. Note de drum și conferințe* ('A small Latin country: Catalonia and the 1929 Exposition. Travel Notes and Lectures'). There, his discourse changed slightly: he argued that there was indeed a 'Catalan nationality, different to the nationality that conforms Spanish

nationality' and that this should not 'disturb anyone'. But he connected this specificity exclusively to the existence of a distinct Catalan language and literature.[77] Catalonia and Romania could be deemed 'brother and sister' in a specialised, academic environment as the 1924 Bucharest Congress. But, perhaps, the danger of promoting Catalan separatism became apparent when reaching a wider, more popular audience, in a moment in which Romania was in the process of asserting its power over the recently annexed Transylvania.

Conclusions

The Congresses of Byzantine Studies provided Catalan scholars with an excellent environment in which to showcase not only Catalonia's research, but also, and more importantly, Catalonia's quest for autonomy and national recognition within the Spanish and the European contexts. Puig's participation in the conferences extended the interest on national minorities that he had shown during the years in which he was politically active. His role as President of the Catalan *Mancomunitat* was recalled both in Bucharest and in Belgrade, even if by 1927 the institution had already been abolished. His participation as 'representative' of Catalonia was outlined both in the Bucharest's official programme and in Iorga's invitation letter to the Congress. This echoed a general ethos that read academic engagements as diplomatic events, and which was shared by the first Byzantinology Congresses. At the same time, Nicolau's contribution in the conferences was parallel to his participation in political forums such as the League of Nations, where he attempted, unsuccessfully, to enforce a change in the approach of Primo de Rivera's government to the Catalan question. Catalan activists believed that the broader framework of the discussion of the political status of the national minorities that had once belonged to the Empires that were dissolved at the end of the First World War could benefit the Catalan

quest for autonomy and national recognition. In line with that, the Catalan participation in the Byzantine Congresses also contributed to create a narrative according to which Catalans were part of a broader community of nations that had once inhabited the Balkans. According to Iorga, Catalans had been part of the cultural space of Southern-Eastern Europe through the involvement of the Crown of Aragon in the region in the Middle Ages. This thesis was developed in his own works and in those of Marinescu and Nicolau. However, Iorga's adhesion to the Catalan autonomist project was not consistent throughout the 1920s. While he supported Catalan's differentiated identity in his protodiplomatic exchanges with Puig and when he discussed Catalan literature, he was reluctant to affirm the singularity of the Catalan character when he addressed a broader Spanish audience or the Romanian public at home. This arguably reflected the differences in the challenges that the Romanian and the Catalan nation building processes presented in the interwar period. While the former faced the task of consolidating Transylvania's incorporation to the Romanian state after the war, the later was fighting against the centralisation of Primo's regime in Spain. In both cases, the participation in the International Congresses of Byzantine Studies contributed to the building of narratives that supported claims in the sphere of politics, and which can therefore be considered a form of protodiplomacy.

Endnotes

[1] Archive research for this article was carried out in Bucharest in August 2019 thanks to a travel grant from Fritz Thyssen Stiftung. I am grateful to the staff of the Academia Română who helped me navigate through Nicolae Iorga's correspondence. I am also indebted to the New Europe College, Institute of Advanced Study of Bucharest, who facilitated my research stay. I am most thankful to Ada Hajdu (1978-2020), whose help in accessing archives and

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[2] See, for instance, X. Barral i Altet, 'Puig i Cadafalch: le premier art roman entre idéologie et politique', in A. C. Quintavalle (ed.), *Medioevo: arte llombarda. Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi Parma 26-29* (Milano, 2003), 33–41; A. Pladevall i Font, 'Puig i Cadafalch i la difusió de la coneixença de l'art romànic a Europa', in A. Balcells (ed.), *Puig i Cadafalch i la Catalunya contemporània* (Barcelona, 2003), 69–74.

[3] N. Cornago, 'Paradiplomacy and Protodiplomacy', in G. Martel (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Diplomacy* (West Sussex, 2018), 1–8.

[4] F. Aldecoa & M. Keating (eds.), *Paradiplomacy in Action: The Foreign Relations of Subnational Governments* (London, 1999).

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[6] A. Balcells, 'Catalanism and National Emancipation Movements in the Rest of Europe between 1885 and 1939', in: *Catalan Historical Review* 6 (2013), 94–95.

[7] S. Maufroy, 'Les premiers congrès internationaux des études byzantines: entre nationalisme scientifique et construction internationale d'une discipline', in: *Revue germanique internationale* 12 (2010), 232.

[8] M. Turda, 'Historical Writing in the Balkans', in: S. Macintyre, J. Maiguascha & A. Pók (eds.) *The Oxford History of Historical Writing: Volume 4: 1800-1945* (Oxford, 2011), 352; see also C. Teacă, 'In Search of National Traditions: Art History in Romania', in: M. Rampley, T. Lenain & H. Locher (eds.), *Art History and Visual Studies in Europe: Transnational Discourses and National Frameworks* (Leiden, 2012), 455.

[9] The following biographical account of Nicolae Iorga is based on W.O. Oldson, *The Historical and Nationalistic Thought of Nicolae Iorga* (1969), 3–10. See also N.M. Nagy-Talavera, *Nicolae Iorga: A Biography* (Iași, 1998).

[10] On the tensions between Romania and Hungary in the process of modern nation-building, see B. Trencsényi et al. (eds.), *Nation-Building and Contested Identities: Romanian and Hungarian Case Studies* (Budapest, 2001).

[11] B. Trencsényi et al., *A History of Modern Political Thought in East Central Europe. Volume I: Negotiating Modernity in the 'Long Nineteenth Century'* (Oxford, 2016), 569.

[12] For an introduction to Lamprecht's historical thinking, see R. Chickering, *Karl Lamprecht: A German Academic Life (1856-1915)* (Leiden, 1993).

[13] D. Mishkova, 'On the Space-Time Constitution of Southeastern Europe', in: S. Rutar (ed.), *Beyond the Balkans: Towards an Inclusive History of Southeastern Europe* (Münster, 2014), 61.

[14] N. Iorga, *Doua conceptii istorice* (Bucarest, 1911); cited in Mishkova, 'On the Space-Time Constitution of Southeastern Europe', 62.

[15] Mishkova, 'On the Space-Time Constitution of Southeastern Europe', 60.

[16] H.-C. Maner, 'The Notion of Europe from the Perspective of Romanian Historical Studies', in: V. Neumann & A. Heinen (eds.), *Key Concepts of Romanian History: Alternative Approaches to Socio-Political Languages* (Budapest, New York, 2013), 233; see also D. Mishkova, 'The Politics of Regionalist Science: The Balkans as a Supranational Space in Late Nineteenth to Mid-Twentieth Century Academic Projects', in: *East Central Europe* 39 (2012), 289–90.

[17] D. Mishkova, 'The Balkans as an Idée-Force. Scholarly Projections of the Balkan Cultural Area', in: *Civilisations. Revue Internationale d'anthropologie et de Sciences Humaines* 60/2 (2012), 39–64.

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[20] Mishkova, 'On the Space-Time Constitution of Southeastern Europe', 59.

[21] S. Jacobson & J. Moreno Luzón, 'The Political System of the Restoration, 1875-1914: Political and Social Elites', in: A. Shubert & J. Alvarez Junco (eds.), *Spanish History Since 1808* (New York, 2000), 93–109.

[22] For an introduction to the life and works of Puig, see A. Balcells (ed.), *Puig i Cadafalch i la Catalunya contemporània* (Barcelona, 2003).

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[24] 'Respuesta del Sr. Diputado Josep Puig i Cadafalch al discurso de la corona', in: *Diario de las sesiones de Cortes. Congreso de los Diputados* 33 (22 June 1907): 679–85.

[25] J. Puig i Cadafalch, 'El Congrés de Les Nacionalitats', in *La Veu de Catalunya*, 16 July 1912, 3; Núñez Seixas, *Internacionalitzant el nacionalisme*, 57.

[26] J. Puig i Cadafalch, 'Als diputats de la Mancomunitat de Catalunya en prendre possessió de la presidència per a la qual fou novament elegit', in: Núria Mañé & J. Massot i Muntaner (eds.), *Memòries* (*by Josep Puig i Cadafalch)* (Barcelona, 2003), 227–28.

[27] On Puig's engagement in the North, see L. Mallart, 'Josep Puig i Cadafalch in the Nordic Countries: Transferring Art Historiographic Knowledge between North and South in the Interwar Period', in: S. Kallestrup & C. Ashby (eds.), *Nordic Design in Translation: The Circulation of Objects, Ideas and Practices* (Bern, 2022).

[28] Letter from Josep Puig i Cadafalch to Nicolae Iorga, 7 November 1922. Academia Română, Bucharest. Correspondence of Nicolae Iorga, volume CCXCIX.

[29] 'Si la Catalogne pourrait être représenté par un savant de votre importance et par l'infatigable chercheur des études catalanes en Grèce qui es M. Rubió i Lluch, […]'. Letter from Nicolae Iorga to Josep Puig i Cadafalch, 20 December 1923, UC 1414, Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya. Fons Puig i Cadafalch. It must be noted that, even though Rubió accepted the invitation and appeared in the Congress' programme, he was eventually unable to travel and his paper was read by Puig. See C. Marinescu, *Compte-rendu du premier Congrès international des études byzantines: Bucarest, 1924* (Bucharest, 1925), 66.

[30] 'MM. H. Grégorie, au nom de la Belgique, B. Filow, au nom de la Bulgarie, J. Puig i Cadafalch, pour la Catalogne, E. Peterson, pour les États Unis, N. Vulić, au nom de la Yougoslavie, A. Guarneri Citati, au nom de l'Italie, N. Kondakov, au nom de la science russe, et M. Murko, au nom de la Tchécoslovaquie, apportèrent le salut

de leurs pays à la Roumanie.' Marinescu, *Compte-rendu du premier Congrés international des études byzzantines*, 15.

[31] '[…] l'attention si souvent attirée au cours du Congrès sur la Catalogne'. Marinescu, *Compte-rendu*, 81.

[32] 'Premier congrès international d'études byzantines. Liste des Universités et Corps savants représentés. Liste des Membres', 1924, UC 2542, Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya. Fons Puig i Cadafalch.

[33] Maufroy, 'Les premiers congrès internationaux des études byzantines', 232.

[34] Maufroy, 233.

[35] *Dimineaţa* was a daily newspaper published between 1904 and 1937, reaching a print run of 100,000 copies in 1927, one of the highest in the country.

[36] 'Ceia ce ma simi dator sa relev din observaţiile mele este cu am găsit aici la dvs. [dumneavoastra] o direcţie de cultură naţională, pe care o urmam noi înşine. La noi se lupta inca pentru a avea o autonomie mai larga decât aceia ce s'a acordat încă de vre-o zece ani Uniunei provinciale catalane, suspendata în funcţionarea ei pentru un moment, şi al cărei preşedinte am fost 7 ani în sir, fiind reales de 4 ori. Autonomia noastră o înţelegem însă tot în cadrul federatiei spaniole. Vrem însă o afirmare mai puternica a caracterului nostru naţional, ceia ca ne-a făcut sa cream o mişcare culturala catalana pentru incurajarea şi susţinerea patriotismului.' 'De vorbă cu d. Puig i Cadafalc, preşedintele Uniunei provinciale catalane', *Dimineaţa*, 23 April 1924, UC 2542, Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya. Fons Puig i Cadafalch.

[37] Maufroy, 'Les premiers congrès internationaux des études byzantines', 232.

[38] Maufroy, 235.

[39] Marinescu, *Compte-rendu*, 85–87.

[40] Cosmin Minea, 'The Monastery of Curtea de Argeş and Romanian Architectural Heritage in the Late 19th Century', in: *Studii de Istoria Şi Teoria Arhitecturii* 4 (2016), 181–201.

[41] '[…], non seulement nos travaux en profiteraient d'une façon considérable, mais les premiers jalons seraient posés d'un échange culturel entre votre belle et frère Catalogne et entre la Roumanie sœur.' Letter from Nicolae Iorga to Josep Puig i Cadafalch, 20 December 1923.

[42] For an in-depth analysis of Marinescu's and Iorga's contributions on the Crown of Aragon, see L. Mallart, 'Researching the Medieval Past between Catalonia and Romania. Josep Puig i Cadafalch, Nicolae Iorga and the Transnational Writing of National History (1921-1935)', in: *Nations and Nationalism* 27/1 (2021), 148–61.

[43] For an introduction to the Crown of Aragon, see T.N. Bisson, *The Medieval Crown of Aragón: A Short History* (Oxford, 1986).

[44] C. Marinescu, 'Manuel II, paléologue et les rois d'Aragon: commentaire sur quatre lettres inédites en latin, expédiées par la chancellerie byzantine', in: *Académie Roumaine, Bulletin de la Section Historique* 11 (1924), 192–206.

[45] C. Marinescu, 'Alphonse V: roi d'Aragon et de Naples et l'Albanie de Scandenberg', in: *Mélanges de l'Ecole roumaine en France* I (1923), 1–135; C. Marinescu, 'Catalogne et l'Arménie au temps de Jacques II (1291-1327): envoi par le roi Ochine des reliques de sainte Thécla à la cathédrale de Tarragone', in: *Mélanges de l'Ecole roumaine en France* II (1923), 1–35.

[46] '[…] du meilleur connaisseur de l'Expansion Catalane en Orient'. Letter from Constantin Marinescu to Lluís Nicolau d'Olwer, 29 December 1928, Arxiu de l'Abadia de Montserrat. Arxiu Lluís Nicolau d'Ower.

[47] On the work of Nicolau as a historian and philologist, see M. Vilà i Bayerri, *Lluís Nicolau d'Olwer, medievalista (1904-1938)* (Barcelona, 2009). For an approach to his political activities, see R. Navarro García, *Lluís Nicolau d'Olwer. Biografia política i d'exili d'un intel·lectual català, 1917-1961. Cultura, republicanisme i democràcia* (Ph.D. Thesis, Barcelona, Universitat de Barcelona, 2017).

[48] Navarro García, *Lluís Nicolau d'Olwer*, 48–96.

[49] Núñez Seixas, *Internacionalitzant el nacionalisme*, 121–29.

[50] Letter from Constantin Marinescu to Lluís Nicolau d'Olwer, 13 September 1926, Arxiu de l'Abadia de Montserrat. Arxiu Lluís Nicolau d'Ower.

[51] Lluís Nicolau d'Olwer, *L'expansió de Catalunya en la Mediterrània oriental* (Barcelona: Barcino, 1926).

[52] '[…] on trouvera à toute page des renseignements absolument inconnus'. 'Chronique', in: *Revue historique du Sud-Est européen* IV 4–6 (April 1927), 149.

[53] '[…] mise en valeur de ce que les Catalans d'autrefois ont du faire dans l'histoire du Moyen-Âge'. Letter from Constantin Marinescu to Lluís Nicolau d'Olwer, 13 September 1926. Arxiu Lluís Nicolau d'Ower, Arxiu de l'Abadia de Montserrat.

[54] J. Puig i Cadafalch, 'Les églises de Moldavie: contribution à l'étude des origines de leur forme décorative, une école parallèle pendant le XIe siécle dans l'Europe Occidentale', in: *Académie Roumaine. Bulletin de la Section Historique. Congrès de Byzantiologie de Bucarest. Mémoires* 11 (1924), 76–89.

[55] E. Riu-Barrera, 'El primer romànic, el projecte europeu de Josep Puig i Cadafalch en temps d'entreguerres', in: *Lambard. Estudis d'art medieval* XXVII (2016-2018) (2019), 57–106.

[56] J. Puig i Cadafalch, 'Les périodes successives de l'influence byzantine en Occident. Premier art roman. Architecture Mudéjar. Églises de Moldavie', in: M. Lhéritier (ed.), *Mélanges Charles Diehl. Études sur l'histoire et sur l'art de Byzance* (Paris, 1931), 161–69.

[57] S. Salaville, 'Le IIe Congrès International d'études Byzantines à Belgrade (11-16 Avril 1927)', in: *Échos d'Orient* 27/149 (1928), 93. See also *Programme des travaux du congrés [II Congrès International des études bizantines, Belgrade, 1927]* (Belgrade, 1927).

[58] Letter from Constantin Marinescu to Lluís Nicolau d'Olwer, 13 September 1926.

[59] On Alcalá Galiano, see K. Budor, *España y Croacia entre diplomacia y política: el diplomático español D. Fernando Alcalá Galiano y Smith, Conde de Torrijos (1883-1958)* (Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 2004).

[60] 'Presidente de la Mancomunidad Catalana, para mí tan estimable y estimado como la misma región de la Península cuyas aspiraciones personifica y representa'. Letter from Fernando Alcalá Galiano to Josep Puig i Cadafalch, 15 March 1927, UC 1072, Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya. Fons Puig i Cadafalch.

[61] Letter from Fernando Alcalá Galiano to Josep Puig i Cadafalch, 7 May 1927, UC 1072, Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya. Fons Puig i Cadafalch.

[62] '[...] a una España al fin menos inerte e inconsciente que la de ahora. Sólo cabe esperar que vendrán días mejores y que V. no habrá dicho la última palabra, no sólo en Cataluña, sino en España entera'. Letter from Fernando Alcalá Galiano to

Josep Puig i Cadafalch, 11 June 1927, UC 1072, Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya. Fons Puig i Cadafalch.

[63] J. López Iñíguez, *La Unión Patriótica y el Somatén valencianos (1923-1930)* (València, 2017), 125.

[64] P. Gravić and D.N. Anastasijévić, eds., *Deuxième Congrès international des études byzantines, Belgrade, 1927. Compte-rendu* (Belgrade, 1929), XXIV.

[65] 'El poble iugoslau, malgrat de les seves diferències i les seves lluites polítiques incessants, té un aglutinant: la política exterior'. 'Una interviu amb en Lluís Nicolau d'Olwer', in: *La Publicitat*, 21 May 1927, 1.

[66] 'Souvenir de la visite à la collection de S. M. Le Roi (le 14 avril 1927)', 1927, UC2543, Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya. Fons Puig i Cadafalch.

[67] Handwritten note detailing the excursions programme of the Belgrade Congress, UC 2543, Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya. Fons Puig i Cadafalch.

[68] P. Troch, 'Yugoslavism between the World Wars: Indecisive Nation Building', in: *Nationalities Papers* 38/2 (2010), 227–44.

[69] '[…] une gentillesse vraiment catalane qui de tout en tout honore votre pays'. Letter from Dragutin Anastasijević to Josep Puig i Cadafalch, 8 March 1927. UC 1085, Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya. Fons Puig i Cadafalch.

[70] 'Je vous prie d'accepter mes félicitations chaleureuses à l'occasion de la proclamation de l'autonomie, qui ouvre une nouvelle ère de prospérité pour la fière nation Catalane'. Letter from Alexander Soloviev to Josep Puig i Cadafalch, 10 October 1932. UC 1730, Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya. Fons Puig i Cadafalch.

[71] The pieces are titled 'Ramón Muntaner et l'empire byzantin' and 'L'histoire romantique de Yakoub-tchélébi' and they were jointly published in N. Iorga, *Contributions catalanes à l'histoire byzantine* (Paris, 1927). In 1961 the first piece was published independently in a Catalan translation. See N. Iorga, *Ramon Muntaner i l'Imperi bizantí* (Barcelona, 1961).

[72] L. Sánchez Rodrigo, 'Las relaciones literarias entre Cataluña y Rumanía', *Revista de lenguas y literaturas catalana, gallega y vasca* 19 (2014), 191.

[73] J. Miguel Ribera Llopis, 'Presencia de los Balcanes en la cultura catalana', *Revista de Filología Románica* 16 (1999), 91.

[74] For a detailed account of these comparisons, see M. Anghelescu, 'Viajeros rumanos en España, en busca de las raíces comunes', in: *Revista de Filología Románica* IV (2006), 282.

[75] N. Iorga, *Cîteva zile prin Spania* (Bucharest, 1927), 75; translated into Spanish and cited in J. José Ortega Román, 'Nicolae Iorga: viajero por España', in: *Revista de Filología Románica* 20 (2003), 157.

[76] For an in-depth discussion of Iorga's travels in Spain, see L. Mallart, 'Architectural Conversations across Europe's Borderlands: Transnational Exchanges between Barcelona and Bucharest in the 1920s', in: E. Gantner, H. Hein-Kirchner & O. Hochadel (eds.), *Interurban Knowledge Exchange in Southern and Eastern Europe, 1870-1950* (London, 2020), 219–36.

[77] N. Iorga, *O mică țară latină: Catalonia și expoziția din 1929. Note de drum și conferințe* (Bucharest, 1930), 51; translated into Catalan and cited in X. Montoliu & D. Moţoc, 'Quatre apunts sobre les relacions entre la literatura romanesa i la catalana', in: *Visat* 15 (2013), n.p.

List of Figures

Figure 1. *Dimineața*, 23 April 1924, front cover, UC 2542, Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya. Fons Puig i Cadafalch.

Figure 2. Letter from Nicolae Iorga to Josep Puig i Cadafalch, 20 December 1923, UC 1414, Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya. Fons Puig i Cadafalch.

Figure 3. Handwritten note detailing the excursions programme of the Belgrade Congress, UC 2543, Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya. Fons Puig i Cadafalch.

Archival Review: The Scottish Political Archive – A Contemporary Collection

ROSIE AL-MULLA and SARAH BROMAGE

The Scottish Political Archive (SPA) was established in October 2010 as a research project in the Division of History and Politics (now History, Heritage and Politics) at the University of Stirling. It was intended to create a publicly accessible archival research repository to support the division's research relating to devolution within Scotland – with emphasis on the referenda of 1979 and 1997 – and the campaign for a Scottish Parliament.[1]

When SPA was established Dr Peter Lynch, a Senior Lecturer in Politics, was instated as the director of the archive and Sarah Bromage as the archivist. Sarah had a previous wealth of experience in the creation of oral histories, a practise which was very much embedded into SPA's collecting from the outset. There was a scarcity of material for the period that SPA wanted to collect around in other existing collections and both referenda were sufficiently far enough in the past that it was unlikely a general call out for material would yield much. Oral history, therefore, was seen as a natural way to fill in the gaps by speaking to those who were there at the time and might remember all that was missing from the physical record. As with many oral history projects, Sarah soon found that interviewees often owned items which they were happy to donate to the archive and so SPA was able to accession physical material to accompany the interviews.

SnM

Rosie Al-Mulla and Sarah Bromage, 'Archival Review: The Scottish Political Archive – A Contemporary Collection', in: *Studies on National Movements* 7 (2021).

Campaign to save Gartosh Steel Works which eventually closed in 1989
'How many Scottish jobs must be lost before you vote for self-government?'

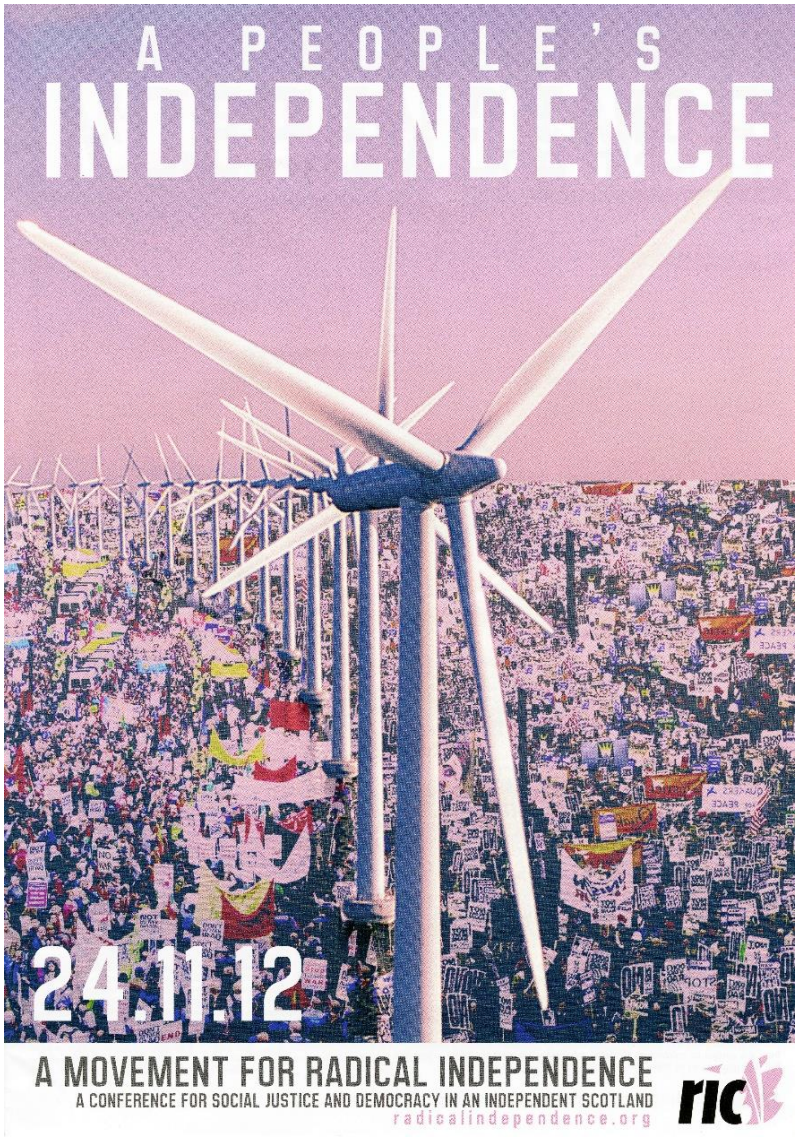
The first complete collection that came to SPA was that of George Robertson, MP for Hamilton (1978 – 1999) and Secretary General of NATO (1999 – 2004). Owing to his long career in politics, much of his professional papers cover the pre-devolution period and illuminate the road to Scotland re-establishing its own Parliament.

SPA has very much continued in this vein of collecting, creating oral history interviews for personal insights and first-hand accounts, supplementing this with ephemera, publications, speeches and photographs and taking in the professional papers of Scottish Politicians

who have worked closely with issues of initial and further devolution, Scottish Independence and the creation of a Scottish Parliament. In this way SPA can evidence official reasoning and actions in contemporary Scottish Politics as well as attest to the contextual public opinion.

October 2012 was a significant period in Scottish politics, particularly with respect to SPA's collecting focus – it was announced that Scotland would be holding a referendum in 2014 to decide whether or not Scotland would become an independent country. Collecting around this event was the natural progression of the archive whose existing collections often touched on the issue of Independence, so closely entwined with devolution as it is. The announcement gave SPA the opportunity to consider what material it wished still existed from the referenda of '79 and '97 and set out to try and preserve something similar for the run up to 2014 and that referendum's immediate aftermath. Volunteers were sent out to events to take copies of pamphlets and flyers, take photographs of campaign stalls, demonstrations, billboards and posters and by creating a wide network, SPA aimed to document both the grassroots Yes and the No campaigns, and evidence messages from across the whole of Scotland, not just the big cities.

Indeed, the varying of political messages from place to place across Scotland had long been something SPA was interested in preserving. After consulting with various institutions across Scotland who also collect around Scottish Politics SPA realised that material which evidenced regional messages was a huge gap in these collections and set out to remedy this, beginning with the 2011 Scottish Election. Ever since, a network of volunteers and donors from across Scotland send in party pamphlets, leaflets and campaign letters relating to election periods. In this way researchers can see parties' succinct policies and evidence whether messages vary across Scotland.



Radical Independence conference leaflet, 2012

This kind of collecting practise is now called contemporary collecting and has swept the record-keeping profession particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. What began in SPA as a gut instinct solution to capture ephemera which, by its nature, often ends up in the bin very quickly or billboards and public posters which are often overlooked as evidential material, has become a widespread way for archives to record the effect the pandemic has had on their communities. At the heart of doing contemporary collecting well is the task of creating strong links with a motivated community. Contemporary collecting the way SPA does it, asks for material time and time again, for every election, peaceful protest and rally. Because of this, it is important to us to build a community of people working *together* to preserve and make Scotland's political history accessible.

During the period of the 2014 referendum, SPA took in the papers of former First Minister of Scotland, Lord McConnell of Glenscorrodale (now the Chancellor of the University of Stirling). Not only was he a student at the University where his political career arguably began as President of the Student's Association, but he also served on the Stirling District Council before becoming an MSP in the first Scottish Parliament in 1999. The archive of Scotland's first First Minister Donald Dewar did not survive and thus Lord McConnell's archive provides a unique insight into the establishment of the Parliament and the first decade of this institution.

Rosie Al-Mulla came on board as a second part time archivist in 2019 as SPA launched their Holyrood Graphic Novel crowdfunder. The goal of this project is to create a graphic novel illustrating the road to a Scottish Parliament - touching on the referenda of '79 and '97 and the processes and practices of the new Parliament that SPA had originally been formed to document – in a bright and striking medium, employing a Glasgow based illustrator and small amounts of text from lecturers in the Division of History, Heritage and Politics. After a period of fundraising, SPA raised

enough money to begin putting this book together, to commission the illustrator and create the graphic novel in PDF form. The ultimate goal is to print physical copies and provide every school and public library in Scotland with one, not only to provide an innovative and easy way to explain how Scotland's Parliament was formed and what it does, but also to highlight the wonderful archive collections from whence the novel's original source material comes. SPA is still a way from its target of being able to provide all these free copies so please do support the crowdfunder if you too would like to see a printed version of our graphic novel!

Jack McConnell, then President of the Student's Association at the University of Stirling addresses crowds on campus during the 1981 anti-cuts demonstrations.

Creating the Holyrood Graphic Novel appealed greatly to the team behind SPA who are always keen to provide alternative means of accessing the collections to encourage engagement not only from the researchers we have come to expect but also by people who might not be used to accessing archives at all or find politics as a subject inaccessible, difficult or boring.

Photographs from SPA collections have been used by illustrator Jules Scheele to create new and vibrant art work for the Holyrood Graphic Novel

For those with an interest in visual evidence, a vast amount of our photo collection is available on Flickr and we have an upcoming section relating

to Bus Party material on the University of Stirling's Archives and Special Collections' digital collections page on JSTOR.[2]

SPA proactively works with volunteers from across the University community – from Politics students at every level to University alumni – and their work is integral to the cataloguing of our collections. Through their work, the volunteers also gain skills which will prepare them for undertaking archivist qualifications or enhancing their research skills. As archivists at SPA, we also teach on a number of courses, discussing collecting practises, exhibition skills, digital marketing and research and dissertation writing techniques.

Sometimes our work with students and staff collide, as is the case with our partnership with MicroPasts, an open-source platform co-created by staff at the University of Stirling which crowdsources tasks that general members of the public are able to easily perform from their own homes such as transcribing, geo-tagging and describing cultural heritage collections to increase accessibility. This has been particularly wonderful for our volunteers during the pandemic while they were not able to come onto campus and engage in their usual tasks. Following a very successful project transcribing leaflets from the 2014 Independence Referendum collection, we now have an ongoing project to tag photographs from the same collection. Here, volunteers can learn digital heritage skills whilst also greatly improving the accessibility of our collections for a variety of users, collecting and recording additional information on items in our collection.

As archivists, Sarah and Rosie come from quite different heritage backgrounds. Because of Sarah's background working in art collections and museums, she has an eye for active outreach between the archive and the public, taking the form of exhibitions, research projects and events. Rosie, coming from a purely archives professional background has, since joining SPA, focused on catalogue arrangement, archive

policies and sharing SPA with the record-keeping sector. Together, they are excited for the next chapter of the Scottish Political Archive and a continuation of our collaboration with NISE.

The collections of SPA are available through the reading room at the University of Stirling's Archives and Special Collections. If you have any further questions or comments, you can contact us on scottishpoliticalarchive@stir.ac.uk

Endnotes

[1] These two referendums were key to the creation of the Scottish Parliament. In 1979, the referendum was held to decide whether or not there was sufficient support for a Scottish Assembly as was proposed in the Scotland Act 1978. As fewer than 40% of the Scottish electorate voted 'Yes' (51.6% voted in support of a Scottish Assembly but as there was only a turnout of 64%, the equivalent vote was 32.9%) the Act was repealed. In the intervening years the case for a devolved Parliament was strengthened and in 1997 the new Labour Government announced a referendum. In this referendum, a majority voted 'Yes' in favour of a Scottish Parliament with devolved powers and for the Parliament to have tax varying powers. The Scottish Parliament was subsequently established in 1999.

[2] The Bus Party toured around Scotland in 1997 to encourage political debate and a good turn out for the Referendum irrespective of party preference. In 2014, The Bus Party toured as The Listening Lugs Tour, travelling around 16 communities in Scotland over the course of a week, encouraging discussion about communities' hopes for a future Scotland. Again, the goal was not to support a particular vote or standpoint but to embrace all viewpoints and have faith in a future Scotland.

Archival Review: The Archival Holdings of the Centre de recherche bretonne et celtique

MARIE-ALICE LE CORVEC

The Centre de recherche bretonne et celtique[1] (CRBC for short, Kreizenn an Enklaskoù Breizhek ha Keltiek in Breton) is a research center established in Brest (Brittany, France) in 1969. Associating scholars from various academic fields, a research library (the Yves-Le-Gallo library) and a publishing team, the CRBC specializes in the study of the Celtic nations and specifically of Brittany.

The Yves-Le-Gallo library (named after the first director of the research center) is a unique institution: monitoring publications in France, it aims at collecting copies of every published material related to Brittany as well as the other Celtic nations. Its specificity also lies in the numerous private archives it preserves, which are key to understanding the history of Brittany and of the Breton language and culture.

SnM

Marie-Alice Le Corvec 'Archival Review: The Archival Holdings of the Centre de recherche bretonne et celtique', in: *Studies on National Movements* 7 (2021).

The foundation of the Yves-Le-Gallo library and the coincidental origin of its archival holdings

[Antoine Borzeix©]

The Centre de recherche bretonne et celtique was primarily founded as a hub for interdisciplinary research on Brittany and the Celtic nations. Under the guidance of the Université de Bretagne occidentale, in which buildings the center is now located, the CRBC aimed to unite academics in archeology, ethnology, history, linguistics and sociology. But, for such multidisciplinary studies to succeed, it quickly became clear that the research center also needed to provide its own documentary resources.

As a result, in 1969, the CRBC opened its library with its first acquisitions, the private collections of two prominent figures with a known interest for Breton culture and language: Daniel Bernard, scholar, and Francis Even, notary and bard involved in the Parti national breton. The acquisition of Even's private library was a key moment for the Center as it also offered the opportunity to preserve Even's personal papers, which became the library's first archival fonds.

In time, 69,000 books (mainly in French and Breton, but also in other Celtic languages) were collected. Together with the various studies led in Brittany by CRBC's researchers, this active gathering of documents has drawn the Yves-Le-Gallo library into an active network of people involved in Breton language and culture.

Consequently, owners of archival documents have found the insurance that their material will be studied and made easily accessible to both the academic community as well as the general public if preserved by the library. The library's specialization and its location at the heart of the city of Brest and inside the University's premises are often seen as key strengths for the preservation of specific archives. And although the library was not meant to become an archive, many private donations were and are still made every year, leading to the slow but steady growth of the library's archival holdings. In 2021, there were approximately 150 archival fonds either donated, preserved for keeping, purchased or digitized by the CRBC.

A glimpse in the archives

The aims of the CRBC's name to include both Brittany and the Celtic nations notwithstanding, the archival fonds preserved in the library focus mostly on the social and cultural history of Brittany, although links to other Celtic nations (such as Ireland and Wales) can also be found in the documents. Through the archives of political activists, writers, scholars or journalists, researchers and the general public can access a great variety of material ranging predominantly from the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twenty-first century.

For example, the cultural history of Brittany can be explored through the archive of Anatole Le Braz, a folklorist who published collections of traditional tales and songs in Breton, taking part in the rising interest for Breton language and culture in the nineteenth century. Contemporary approaches to Breton language and identity can be found both in the archives of writers, such as Pierre-Jakez Hélias whose work on the social shift in Brittany in the twentieth century echoed that of other French rural areas, or academics, such as Donatien Laurent, a sociologist in whose archive audio recordings of Breton language made between the 1950s and the 1970s can be found. A more political history of Brittany can be accessed in the fonds of Célestin Lainé, which gives a unique insight into the national Breton movement and its military collaborationist actions during the Second World War. Some archives also concern the social and environmental movement of the 1970s, which prevented for example the implementation of nuclear power plants in Brittany.

The chronological span of archival fonds is not only relevant with regard to the study of Breton language and identity, it also highlights the great variety of media which the Yves-Le-Gallo library is working to preserve. While the majority of archival fonds is made of paper (textual and iconographic documents such as maps, posters or postcards), the library also holds many audiovisual archives.

The CRBC preserves photographic collections showcasing Brittany and its changes throughout the twentieth century as well as audio records such as wax cylinders (early twentieth century) or magnetic tapes with recordings of Breton language. In that respect, the archival holdings showcase a multitude of approaches to Breton language and culture through diverse themes and ideas along with a variety of technologies and techniques.[2]

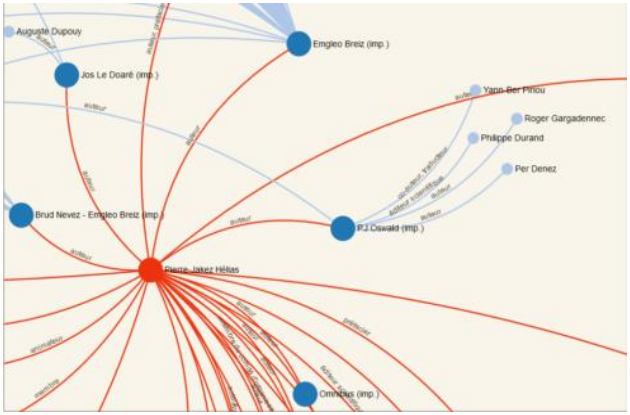
Archives and research: the growth of digital access

While physical access to the archives requires the submission of a motivated letter to the Director of the CRBC[3], the library is actively working to share the content it preserves through digital technologies.

The CRBC Open Science project contains a variety of databases focused on promoting the library's archival materials or the information held within. The aim is to give greater digital access to research sources while also providing in-depth and informed descriptions of them.

Many archival documents have thus been made accessible online via the research center's digital library[4], thanks to the library team working alongside researchers tasked with providing a thorough description and contextualisation of the digitized resources. CRBC Dataset[5] is another iteration of the online promotion of archives. It is an open data aggregator which allows for the query of the CRBC finding aids as well as of multiple databases created by the center's researchers and built from information found in its holdings and that of partnering institutions.[6]

The *Projet de recherche en littérature de langue bretonne* or Breton-language literature database (also known as PRELIB[7]) can be considered a prime example of such databases, highlighting the research opportunities enabled by the specific framework of the CRBC. The project, led by two academics with the support of a database engineer, endeavors to showcase the networks of identified actors in Breton literature (individuals or collectives) based on information found in either published or archival documents. Through various means such as lists and graphs, the project structures for each actor a combination of sourced facts linking back the material to where the information was found. It has become a fruitful resource to explore and understand interactions inside the Breton literary sphere, from its first manifestation in the Middle Ages up till today.[8] This still ongoing project was made possible thanks to the substantial relation between researchers and information professionals within the CRBC.



The relevance of the collections preserved by the library and the work led by the library team in relation with researchers has been increasingly recognised on a national level. While the Yves-Le-Gallo library has been a mixed research unit of the Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS) since 1983, it was recently awarded the Collex – Collections

d'excellence[9] label. This label acknowledges the value of the preserved heritage, both in terms of books and archival fonds. The research center has shown throughout the years the importance of its existence both as an academic hub and as a heritage institution working toward the preservation and communication of historical sources on Brittany and the Celtic nations.

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[3] For more information on access, check the website. The staff can also reply to enquiries and guide users in their search (contacts: bibliothequeCRBC@univ-brest.fr).

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State of Nationalism (SoN): Nationalism and Empire

YESIM BAYAR

St. Lawrence University, New York

Works on nations and nationalism often include an introductory chapter on empires before more substantive matters are examined. Conversely, books on empires typically conclude with summary reflections on the rise of nations. This reveals a particular perspective in the larger literature where the worlds of empires and nation-states have long been clearly differentiated from each other, and have at times been treated as antithetical in nature. It has also been typical that when nationalism is studied within an imperial context the examination focuses primarily on minority nationalisms. Recently more thoughtful readings of history have started to produce a rich literature that reveals the complex relationship between empires and nationalism. The present essay will seek to introduce the main contours of such rethinking.

Before we move on any further it is best to clarify the conceptual universe we will inhabit. Empire has been a contentious and ambiguous concept whose connotations changed over time.[1] For the purposes of this essay an empire will be defined as a hierarchical political entity where 'the dominant metropole, exerts political control over the internal and external policy … of the other, the subordinate periphery', and where peripheral societies cannot act together.[2] Empires have also come in different shapes and forms.[3] The focus here will be on modern empires, and the discussion will include both continental land empires such as the

SnM

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Ottomans, Habsburgs and the Russian Empire, and the overseas empires of the Spanish and the British kind. The conceptualization of nationalism has perhaps been even more contentious. Here, I will refer to nationalism primarily as a form of political ideology, and as a basis of political legitimacy.

Imperial(ist) versus National(ist) Universes

There exists a long tradition going back to the 18th century where empires and nations have been treated as naturally incompatible. Herder, for example, famously envisioned a future where empires would eventually collapse and be replaced by the 'natural' form of nations.[4] The literature on nations and nationalism has been drawing from this tradition. While, and until recently, contemporary scholars have continued to treat the imperial and national universes differently, they no longer consider them in antithetical terms.[5]

There are obvious differences between empires and nation-states which deserve highlighting. While empires are characterized by hierarchical structures, nation-states are founded on the ideals of freedom and equality. Empires champion universalism whereas nation-states are based on particularisms. Empires are characterized by heterogeneity whereas nation-states revolve around the logic of homogeneity.[6]

Some of the classic theoretical works in the literature similarly accentuate the differences between these two worlds. Ernest Gellner's works are relevant here. In his definitive study on Gellner's thought, Hall observes a 'tension between the major analytical expectation that multinational polities are doomed and the hope that they might somehow survive' in their more benign forms.[7] In his later writings, Gellner did consider Austria-Hungary as a morally appealing option, and

an example of indirect rule where cultural autonomy was protected. Yet, his more characteristic treatment of empires can be found in his *Nations and Nationalism*. In this work Gellner considers the rise of industrial society as a watershed moment in human history. The preceding agrarian systems were small in scale and characterized by a clear separation between the majority of the population and the ruling elite. Despite their size, empires were also part of this agrarian world. It was the coming of the industrial society and its requirements that shifted everything and relegated empires to history. Gellner further limited his attention to secessionist nationalism famously exemplified by Ruritanians in Megalomania.

Gellner's perspective which clearly differentiates the two universes as well as his focus on minority nationalisms are echoed in countless works in the literature. And it is on these two scores that recent works distinguish themselves. Accordingly, these latter works pay attention to similarities and continuities between empires and nation-states. They also seek to understand nationalising efforts by imperial centers as opposed to primarily or exclusively focusing on minority nationalisms. As a result, a burgeoning body of works offers a more nuanced outlook on the complex dynamics of imperial rule and the role of nationalism within imperial contexts as well as the mechanisms of transformation from empires to nation-states.

Imperial Dynamics, and Explaining the Transformation from Empires to Nation-State

Different from earlier works, scholars are now careful not to assume the inevitability of the transformation from empires to nation-states.[8] They consequently devote considerable attention to understanding the imperial dynamics in order to explicate the mechanisms of

transformation. One such mechanism involves war-making. Here, one immediately recalls to mind Tilly's classic work where he argues that nation-states are by-products of war-making.[9] Other, more recent works, take this relationship seriously but treat it partly, and not exclusively, linked to the modern 19th century empires and forces of imperialism. In this vein, for example, Hutchinson offers an alternative explanation where the emergence of national communities is traced back to the Middle Ages.[10] In his account these communities shape, rather than are shaped by, state-building and war-making.

Modernist narratives, however, occupy a larger part in the literature. These narratives propose a variety of angles in looking at empires and nationalism. Wimmer's work has been one of the more influential additions to this literature. According to Wimmer, the transition from empire to nation-state is a result of nationalist movements that emerged and strengthened inside empires. In this framework, nationalism delegitimizes imperial rule, and consequently nationalist organizations play a critical role in imperial collapse. There could be some exceptions, Wimmer concedes, such as the Ottoman Empire where the interference by the Great Powers was a more decisive factor in explaining collapse. Nevertheless, secessionist nationalist movements remain the core reason in the creation of nation-states where nationalism is almost inextricably tied to violence.[11] While Wimmer's methodology, which combines statistical data with case studies, is a praiseworthy endeavour, his treatment of nationalism as the major cause of warfare has been rightly criticized.[12] Furthermore, his narrative limits nationalism exclusively to secessionism without sufficient consideration to differences in imperial dynamics.

Alternative explanations propose a more balanced and nuanced reading of history, reminding us that while the power of ethnic nationalism should be recognized inside imperial contexts, its significance should not be blown out of proportion. In fact, recent research reveals the limits of

the nationalization of the masses even during the apogee of nationalism of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Judson's brilliant research on the Austrian parts of the Dual Monarchy, for example, examines the indifference of local populations toward nationalist ideas.[13] Similarly, the burgeoning historical research on central and eastern Europe pays particular attention to the concept of 'national indifference', and reveals that 'far from being a premodern relic, national indifference was often a response to modern mass politics'.[14] Admittedly, it is quite difficult, if not impossible, to measure the extent of 'national indifference' with great accuracy. However, it still is a useful and significant concept. Further research along these lines would deepen our understanding of how nationalism operated (or failed to operate) inside empires, and how 'national indifference' changed forms in different imperial contexts over time.

A related caution should be issued about connecting nationalist movements to imperial collapse in a causal manner. Reynolds' (2011) examination of the borderlands of the Ottoman and Russian empires, for instance, powerfully reveals the role of geopolitical competition, as opposed to the strength of nationalist movements, in bringing about the fall of empires.[15] In the Balkans local rebellions have long been interpreted as tied to nationalism and imperial collapse. Yet, a revisionist look at these unrests convincingly establishes the actors involved as opportunistic local elites, and disgruntled peasantry rather than ideologically driven nationalists. Identities in such 'movements' often lacked clear definition and articulation.[16] What was observed more consistently inside the Ottoman Empire, for example, was an 'indifference to nationalist categories among the Sultan's Christian subjects' which 'reflected their sense of belonging to a community defined by religion, where linguistic differences between Greek and Bulgarians mattered less than their shared belief in Orthodoxy'.[17] Nationalist movements did eventually develop in the Balkans; but the

process was much slower and uneven than sometimes presented. As well, nationalism often emerged as a result of violence and war-making rather than the other way around.[18] Finally, and as it is suggested by these recent works, an explanation of imperial collapse should more seriously consider the broader framework of capitalist development and the modernisation attempts by the imperial centres as well as Great Power interference and rivalries.[19]

In such imperial contexts, when national movements did emerge, they were not always secessionist. Their demands typically included calls for imperial reform and autonomy as opposed to independence.[20] Nationalist intellectuals and activists were often demonstrating their loyalty to their empire rather than their wish to separate. Ottoman Armenians, for example, sought institutional and administrative reform with a clearly articulated desire to remain within the empire. National consciousness remained relatively weak during the 19th century, and was mostly limited to intellectual circles.[21] It would be the imperial policies and at times the ruling elite's indifference which turned out to be the decisive factors in strengthening nationalist movements. In the Habsburg Empire too, nationalist demands which were often articulated around institutional reform in language, courts, schools etc. fundamentally sought 'political solutions within the legal framework of the empire'.[22]

The situation was similar in non-contiguous imperial contexts such as the French case. In her study of the French Empire, Lawrence considers secessionism as only one of a number of possible outcomes.[23] Her analysis shows that the demands of the colonial elite were initially about political equality. Nationalist secessionist mobilization eventually came about and only as a reaction to exclusion from democratic institutions. The decolonization process thus should not be exclusively understood in relation to anti-colonialist nationalist movements. Spruyt's study of the process of decolonization further suggests that the particular

configuration of political elites in the metropolitan core mattered. 'The more fragmented the decision-making in the core', he argues, 'the greater the resistance to change in territorial policy and decolonization'.[24] While the French case, for example, demonstrates the difficulty of decolonization of Algeria due to multiple factions (or 'veto points') amongst the political elite, the relatively unified position of the metropolitan elite in Britain eased the final outcome. In a slightly different yet complementary vein, Lieven points out that in the British case, democracy at the core severely limited the legitimation of colonies making the appeasement of the public opinion progressively more difficult.[25] We should also add the financial burden of holding on to the empire as another consideration influencing the decolonization decision inside the metropole.[26]

Nationalising Empires, Geopolitics and Nationalism

Most current scholarship has recognized the need to study not only minority nationalisms in imperial contexts, but the nationalist policies of the imperial cores themselves. This perspective also parts ways with earlier works where empires and imperial policies were seen as inhibiting nationalism and nation-building.[27] As Lieven put it succinctly, with the exception of Austria, 'in 1900 … European empires … were sustained … by the strength of metropolitan nationalism'.[28] Inside the European imperial cores the political elites did not only see nationalism as a threatening force, but also as a tool to cement a sense of solidarity amongst the metropolitan populations.[29] Imperialism and nationalism could and did coexist inside modern empires where nationalist policies provided imperial elites with a justification for their expansionism.[30] In the hands of the political elite national pride became tightly attached to the strength of the empire; and nationalist sentiments were preferred to the less palatable radical ideologies such as socialism. In the British case,

for example, Darwin's work powerfully demonstrates how the 'empire evoked, or was used to invoke, what … we might see as a distinctively ethnic dimension of Britishness'.[31] More particularly, he demonstrates how the British Empire created 'imperial ethnicities' in an effort to garner loyalties to the empire through the creation of a common high culture. A definition of Britishness which comprised an ethnic dimension was essentially linked to the imperial, and not to the local, level.

The efforts to understand the actions of imperial elites add to the complexity of the relationship between nationalism and empires. It is true that sometimes national movements preceded the rise of 'official nationalisms'.[32] However, as Hall powerfully demonstrates, more often than not it was the 'actions of states [that] actually created nationalist movements where none existed before'.[33] Hence, the 'general idea is that nationalism has a great deal to do with the way empires behave'.[34]

It is equally important to incorporate the role of geopolitics, and inter-imperial or interstate competition into this picture. In the Ottoman-Russian borderlands, Reynolds argues, nationalism is 'best understood as a form of geopolitics … [and] is better seen as a by-product of interstate competition than as the stimulus for competition'.[35] More particularly, Reynolds talks about how the national idea increasingly crystallized as a principle around which the competition of the Great Powers was shaped. In many instances, local violence was not the consequence of nationalist movements, but was contingent on Great Power rivalries.[36] Hence, the argument that nationalism is inextricably tied to violence is revised. In accounting for the outbreak of World War I, for example, a more complex picture is suggested which involves geopolitical competition, and the failure of states to act rationally as more critical variables than nationalist mobilization.[37] In fact, some accounts highlight the War as the catalyst of such mobilization through 'exposing both the brutality and fragility of imperial states'.[38]

Other works remind us that oftentimes nationalist policies were implemented as a check on a possibly expansionist policy of rival entities. For instance, the promotion of Latvian and Estonian nationalisms by the Romanovs could be understood as an effort to limit the power of Baltic Germans.[39] It was also not uncommon inside contiguous empires to encourage nationalist feelings in different communities as a controlling device on nationalist mobilization. Austrians, for example, encouraged Ukrainian identity inside their empire to limit Polish mobilization. Similarly, the Russian imperial elite supported Lithuanian nationalism in order to control the Polish one.[40] These and similar actions by the imperial elite affected the emergence and development of minority nationalisms in return. In the case of Ukrainian subjects of the Austrian empire, for example, the imperial policies led to their political mobilization.

After Empire

The 20th century was about the ending of formal empires. Yet, arguably, the imperial form could still be considered as a relevant category in a world dominated by nation-states.[41] Such recent works arguing for their relevance have typically focused on the Soviet and post-Soviet worlds as well the United States.

Perhaps more interesting, however, is the sustained attention in the current scholarship on similarities and continuities between empires and nation-states.[42] Institutional and administrative practices, it is demonstrated, underwent significant revisions and rebuilding under the nation-states. However, some imperial institutions and practices have continued to cast their shadow in their redefined forms. The persistence of the Ottoman millet system (albeit in a transformed format) under the Turkish Republic is an example of such continuity. Relatedly, Malešević's

longue durée approach to the rise of nation-states suggests historical continuity in the areas of organization and ideology where empires 'provided the necessary scaffolding for the nation-states'.[43] After the fall of empires, the nations which were built from the imperial cores had to find ways to manage the residual heterogeneity of populations. This was not a smooth process by any means. Writing about the Habsburgs, Judson notes that after World War I, 'the Habsburg Empire was gone, but the production of politics around cultural difference as the primary way for people to make claims on their state continued with a vengeance'.[44] Future research along these lines promise to add to our understanding of the processes of social and political change.

This review is part of
The State of Nationalism (SoN), a comprehensive guide
to the study of nationalism.
As such it is also published on the SoN website,
where it is combined with an annotated bibliography
and where it will be regularly updated.

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are responsible for overall management
and co-editors-in-chief.

https://stateofnationalism.eu/article/nationalism-and-empire/

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Book Review

Jelle Krol, *Minority Language Writers in the Wake of World War One: A Case Study of Four European Authors.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020, xii+346pp., 8 illustrations.
ISBN 9783030520397

At the core of Jelle Krol's book *Minority Language Writers in the Wake of World War One* are four writers from small or minority languages: the Frisian Douwe Kalma, the Welshman Saunders Lewis, the Scottish Hugh MacDiarmid, and Roparz Hemon from Brittany. Krol's scholarly origins are in Frisian literature: in 2006, for example, he co-authored the still-authoritative history of Frisian literature, contributing the chapter on the two World Wars and the interwar period. The acknowledgements to this book suggest *Minority Language Writers* started out as a study on Kalma, whose first publications appeared in the years 1915 and 1916, and then became a comparative analysis of four European authors.

Krol has not chosen his four authors randomly. All of them were born in the period 1892-1900 and thus came of age just before and during the First World War. In Krol's characterization, they are 'typical vanguard writers' (p. 4) who entered their language's respective literary fields in the period 1915-1925 and who wanted change. Krol convincingly captures Europe's Wilsonian moment – the promise of national sovereignty offered by the American president as Europe's continental empires collapsed, burdened by the destruction of the war – and how

SnM

Jesse van Amelsvoort, 'Book Review: Jelle Krol, *Minority Language Writers in the Wake of World War One: A Case Study of Four European Authors*', in: *Studies on National Movements* 7 (2021)

these young artists pushed for more recognition of their language and their culture. Perhaps national independence was not on their mind: after 1918, it quickly became clear that new nation-states were only really created in Central and Eastern Europe, mostly out of the ashes of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Even though most of these writers became politically active (only Hemon did not), they mainly directed their energies to linguistic and literary means.

Krol's approach is largely literary-sociological, in the vein of Pierre Bourdieu and Pascale Casanova. In each chapter, he describes the writers' literary field and the genesis of their habitus as prominent individuals within those fields. Time and again, Krol addresses the problem how to define the literary field in case of a minority language literature. Where Welsh found itself in a rather strong position, paradoxically due to Wales' close connection with dominant England, for the other languages the situation was more difficult. Scottish literature, by contrast, 'generally means literature written in Scotland or by Scottish writers'; however, this is 'mainly in English with a little Gaelic and Scots' (p. 154). At the time of a national awakening, this situation becomes problematic. Meanwhile, Kalma worked to demarcate the borders of the Frisian literary field from the Dutch one (p. 67) and thus establish a certain literary autonomy.

Casanova provides a second set of methodological tools. Refreshingly, Krol does not draw on her work on the 'world republic of letters' (2004), but rather her later monograph on *littératures combatives*, or combative literatures. These literatures 'became a central terrain to national existence' (2011, 129), and thus differed from dominant, national literatures, which could separate the political and the aesthetic. In each chapter, Krol describes the writers' 'combative' entrance into the literary field, often in the form of polemical essays, manifestos, and other visionary texts. Through these writings, the writers Krol studies both carved out a space for themselves as representatives of a new sound and

a new generation, and expressed a specific literary-political desire related to the minority language they advocated for and the cultural community formed around that language.

From Casanova, Krol also takes four strategies that minority language writers employ while arguing for their language's cultural autonomy. These are distancing, connecting, unifying, and mobilising. Each writer attempts 'to distance themselves from the dominating language and its influences' (p. 304): although politically part of the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and France, respectively, Frisian, Welsh, Scots, and Breton were in the minds of these authors very different, both culturally and historically. Indeed, all four writers connected their present with the Middle Ages (p. 304), since during those times these minority languages were still widely used. Another connection consisted in emphasizing links with 'foreign' languages (p. 305): as he distanced Frisian from Dutch, for example, Kalma moved it closer to English, German, and the Scandinavian languages. None of these writers went at it alone: they wanted to 'unite the inhabitants of the regions in which they lived' (p. 306), which explains their efforts in both politics and education. Lastly, from this desire to unify also followed their attempts to mobilise fellow authors and speakers of their language (p. 307).

The first years after the war were marked by great artistic experimentation and innovation, and the four writers Krol discusses were no different. They experimented with new genres, which addressed the added literary-political goal of bestowing additional capital – in the Bourdieuian sense – on their literary fields. At the same time, their desire to modernise existed next to their harking back to the past. '*Reculer pour mieux sauter*', Krol calls it: taking a step back in order to make a 'substantial leap' forward (p. 321). The past, especially the medieval past, proves to be not only a rich imaginative source, but also a reminder of when times were better, linguistically speaking. This made the need to take a step back 'inevitable', in Krol's words (p. 321). Grounded in a

reimagined history, they could reposition their languages and their literatures in the world as it was changing and unfolding post-1918.

Krol's book is highly readable and brings four writers who, because of the language they wrote in, have often been peripheralized, into important discussions on the complex cultural politics of the post-war moment. The discrepancy between their nationalist convictions and the lack of concrete results for minority groups in Western Europe at the time is made all the more glaring by Krol's work. One wishes, however, that he would have pushed his conclusions a bit further than is currently the case. Here, a comparison with Ireland—the only Western European country that did achieve independence in the period Krol attends to—and Casanova's 'Irish paradigm' is instructive.

In *The World Republic of Letters*, she discerned a pattern in which literatures go from inventing a tradition and recreating a national language to receiving autonomy. Casanova based this pattern on the case of Ireland. Krol, however, has found no 'straightforward imitation … in Frisian, Welsh, Scots or Breton literatures' (p. 321) of this pattern. That is a fine observation, but one wishes that the point would have been pressed more – that it would have led to a more sustained critique of Casanova's work. What is a pattern, if it is not imitated? What does the case of Ireland mean when it is not followed? Is it perhaps the world-historical exception, rather than the rule?

This feeling – that Krol undersells what his book does – is felt at more moments in the concluding pages. His work shows that the national movements Kalma, Lewis, MacDiarmid, and Hemon were active in 'coincides' with Miroslav Hroch's phase B of nationalism, and that these writers' strategies are 'in line' with John Hutchinson's work on the importance of the past for nationalist movements (p. 323). This is true, but it does more than confirm and provide empirical evidence for what others have already theorized. These four case studies ultimately ask

how work done in minority studies relates to the disciplines of European studies and world literature. That is a connection waiting to be made.

Jesse van Amelsvoort

University of Groningen

Book Review

Krisztina Lajosi and Andreas Stynen (eds.)*, The Matica and Beyond: Cultural Associations and Nationalism in Europe.* Leiden: Brill, 2020, xvi+367 pp.,

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In the over-theorised field of nationalism studies, recent research that has paid close empirical attention to the fine grain of the historical record has been a very welcome addition. Such studies have revealed the story of nationalism across the long nineteenth century as a profoundly uneven one, varying according to geographical location, existing power structures and the related political opportunities available for national mobilisation, competing political agendas, etc. Drawing also on an 'imperial turn' that revised earlier accounts of empires, especially those in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, as increasingly obsolete entities in the nineteenth century, such research has been very helpful in complicating accounts of nationalism and nation-building that the dominant 'modernist' paradigm had simplified. The attention to detail has helped debunk teleological narratives that conferred a certain inevitability to nationalism and the nation-state form of statal organisation, as well as a developmental paradigm centred on the struggle for emancipation, progress, and their eventual triumph.

SnM

Raul Cârstocea, 'Book Review: Krisztina Lajosi and Andreas Stynen (eds.)*, The Matica and Beyond: Cultural Associations and Nationalism in Europe*', in: *Studies on National Movements* 7 (2021)

If the now extensive literature on national indifference has shown the limits of national mobilisation by looking at people who were not swayed by nationalist rhetoric and at the numerous and fluid modes of (self)-identification that defied fixed notions of (national) identity, the present volume reveals the complexity of nationalism while focusing on the very people for whom the nation was all-important. It does so, as Joep Leerssen emphasises in the Introduction, by drawing attention to the intricacies of the *institutional* aspects of national mobilisation, at once dependent on and having consequential ramifications into a wide array of social, cultural, and political factors. The focus of the volume on cultural associations – epitomised by the *matice* ('beehives'), a prototypical type of such organisation whose scope is shown to have overlapped (more or less) with both the area of the Habsburg Empire and a number of nationalisms associated with various Slavic groups – provides it with much-needed coherence, although this can be at times less convincing in the chapters going 'beyond' the *matica* form itself. Considering the two together is however very important, and not just for expanding the (impressive) geographical range of the volume, but also for exposing significant divergences that prompt the reader to consider the complexity, or 'vexed calibration between the translational and the situational' (p. 8) dimensions of such transnational phenomena. In other words, if the chapters dealing with *matice* point at transfer and translation of a specific institutional form from the original *Matica srpska* (Serbian beehive), those exploring the 'beyond' are rather cases of situational parallels arising in widely different political and cultural contexts.

Following an excellent first chapter authored by Zsuzsanna Varga on the Buda University Press that acted as the logistical framework for several movements of national awakening, including the original *Matica srpska*, and which provides some useful transnational context, the structure of the volume follows for the most part the title. Chapters on the various

national *matice* are grouped in its first part, while the second deals with the 'beyond', in the shape of similar (but not quite the same) cultural institutions in Western Europe and the Romanov Empire. Considering this structure, the placing of the Galician-Ruthenian Matica (Chapter 14, by Iryna Orlevych) in the second part of the volume appears a rather odd editorial choice, at least to this reader. As its name suggests, this constitutes a rather typical *matica* institution established in the Habsburg province of Galicia and 'modelled on other Slavic Maticas' (p. 319), and thus very much a translational case that seems stranded between two articles dealing with cultural associations in the Romanov Empire, a very different, and considerably more repressive political context than the Habsburg one. In turn, the glaring absence of a chapter devoted to the first such cultural association and the model for the subsequent *matice* appears regrettable, with the *Matica srpska* covered only briefly – although in very nuanced manner for such a short presentation – in a subsection of Varga's chapter on the Buda Press.

As is often the case with edited volumes, the chapters vary widely in terms of foci, level of detail provided, and the degree of critical approach to the subject at hand. The very good chapter on the Slovenian Matica by Marijan Dović and the rich and insightful analysis of the interplay of regional and territorial factors with nationalising efforts and transnational entanglements in the case of the Dalmatian/Croatian Matica by Daniel Baric are both critical of the self-referential tendencies in both the productions and the historiography of the *matice* (pp. 113-114, 123). Such a critical perspective appears to be completely lacking in the chapter on the Czech Matica by Magdaléla Pokorná, which, styled more as an essay, seems to unreflexively reproduce the self-aggrandising triumphalist narrative projected by the institution itself. A potentially very interesting chapter by Liljana Gushevska on Macedonian societies in the complex setting provided by the 'Macedonian Question' falls short of the opportunity for critical engagement with the intricacies of

competing claims to 'Macedonia' in the 1890s and falls back instead on essentialist tropes of national struggle (of a putative 'Macedonian nation' whose existence is questionable during the respective period) against 'foreign' (Bulgarian or Serbian) 'propaganda'.

Such simplistic narratives can be contrasted with the exquisitely nuanced and reflexive approach of Miloš Řezník, whose excellent chapter on the Sorbian maticas in Lusatia and the Czech Opavian Matice in Austrian Silesia is the most compelling of the first part of the volume. The chapter shows in great detail the complexity of such institutions in cultural spaces much smaller than even the 'small nations' that the volume, following Miroslav Hroch, mostly focuses on. It also brings to the fore the 'disunity' engendered within the Sorbian movement 'by linguistic, traditional, and confessional differences' (pp. 83-84), eventually leading to the creation of a separate Lower Sorbian Matica (*Mašica Serbska*). The comparative perspective between the Sorbian and the Czech case, and of both with other regional (Moravian) and national (Czech) *matice* provides further nuance, drawing attention to the 'differing forms of regionality' (p. 82) they expressed. These were dependent on internal factors (such as the social composition of the respective movements) as well as external ones (the political opportunity structures available), while varying also according to the different influences they were exposed to. In turn, this diversity of the types of regionalisation involved is employed to draw conclusions of broader validity for the understanding of the relationship 'between nationality (ethnicity) and territoriality (regionality) [that] can be considered as characteristic of the role of regions as a mediatory "foil" of nationality and vice versa', and to argue that 'it was this mediation that made the incorporation of abstract national categories into the social and cultural discourse of regional or local communities possible' (p. 79).

The insights we can draw from Miloš Řezník's chapter are in many ways similar to those that can be inferred from the volume as a whole,

especially when factoring in the case studies that refer to other cases of cultural associations than the *matica* type, i.e., those of 'small' national/regional movements in Western Europe and the Romanov Empire. As with the *matice*, we encounter intersections and entanglements between multiple reference points, from sub-national through national to supra-national ones, with the importance of the – still under-researched – pan-movements coming to the fore. Both the co-existence of these different reference points and the tensions between them help us complicate a too-straightforward narrative of nationalism where a particular territorial-cultural unit, 'the nation', is somewhat naturalised as either the exclusive or at the very least the most viable one. We are also exposed to the asymmetrical encounter and occasional confrontation of 'small' or 'minority' nationalisms, regionalisms, or otherwise cultural '-isms' with better established, 'majority' nation-building projects – from the Galician case analysed by Xosé M. Núñez Seixas and Alfonso Iglesias Amorín, through the Welsh one presented in great detail by Marion Löffler, to the extraordinarily rich story of the 'Félibrige, or the Impossible Occitan Nation' offered by Philippe Martel.

The diversity of cases covered in the second part of the volume highlight the importance of political context in shaping the nature and activities of cultural associations. These range from the favourable one in Dutch-speaking regions, presented by Jan Rock, where the Habsburg administration established an Imperial Academy in Brussels as early as 1772; through the highly politicised context in Ireland analysed by Roisín Higgins, where such cultural associations had to grapple not only with imperial authorities but also with salient – and partly competing – nationalist political agendas; to the repressive political regime in the Romanov Empire, itself played out differentially in the Baltic provinces explored by Jörg Hackmann and the Tatar cultural and educational organisations and charities examined by Diliara M. Usmanova. Not only is there a striking chronological difference of more than a century

between the beginnings of such cultural mobilisation in the Habsburg Netherlands and the two cases in the Romanov Empire, but the cases show how the divergent political contexts responsible for this difference also influenced decisively the forms such associations eventually took. The stories are further complicated by internal divisions, whether they were over the nature of the activities, with cultural activists confronting those in favour of more politically militant and even violent action in Ireland, based on competing nationalisms as in the Baltic states, where Latvian and Estonian activists vied with German ones while all of them had to engage with the Russification policies of the Romanov Empire, or between more progressive and more conservative activists in the case of Tatar organisations.

As with Miloš Řezník's contribution in the section on the *matice*, Philippe Martel's excellent chapter provides a sophisticated analysis covering all the intricacies associated with the activity of cultural associations that the volume focuses on, and it does so by exploring the microcosm of the Félibrige, the main institution promoting the attempts at an Occitan revival in nineteenth-century France. Showcasing an example of *failed* national mobilisation, Martel's chapter is exemplary in providing an illuminating comparative context spanning national movements across Europe, doubled by detailed analysis of the social composition of the Félibrige and of the effects of an uneven process of urbanisation on the geographical distribution of the movement. A transnational outlook that crosses 'national' boundaries with the discovery of the links between Occitan and Catalan confers the analysis 'spatial amplitude' rendering it 'no longer a provincial problem, but something far broader' (p. 191). A keen eye for divisions along the lines of class and for patterns of social mobility whereby many of the Occitan activists sought their recognition in the French capital rather than the 'Midi' allows accounting for the paradoxes of a national movement on behalf of an Occitan-speaking population that it failed to reach. The politics of the respective activists

are given due attention, from an initial alignment with the *Ancien Régime* (more visible though for Breton or Basque) to the diversity of political positions that could be encountered within its ranks at the end of the century, from the notions of direct democracy espoused by the Communard Louis-Xavier de Ricard to the reactionary and later far-right politics of Charles Maurras. The typical 'ingredients' of nation-building – 'a proper language with a rich literary heritage, and a territory, an ancient province with long-established historical boundaries' (p. 200) – are shown to be present in the Occitan case, but not sufficient for large-scale mobilisation, given the *presence* and strength of a not so much competing as over-arching nationalism, the majority French one, and the *absence* of a specific social dynamic that would have rendered the emerging middle class losers rather than winners of France's economic modernisation. All of these insights provide richness and depth to our understanding of nationalism and its protean character, able to accommodate left- and right-wing politics, and to the importance of a confrontational context (or the absence thereof in the Occitan case), itself shaped by class dynamics as much as by cultural or religious differences.

Throughout the volume, despite the diversity of the cases it covers, the role of religion appears all-important, just as many of the cultural activists are revealed to be men of the cloth. The inclusion of a chapter on Tatar organisations is all the more useful along these lines, as it shows this pattern to not be limited to the different Christian denominations, but present within Islam as well. Against prevailing notions of nationalism accompanying processes of secularisation and the decline of religion (pivotal for example to Benedict Anderson's 'imagined communities'), this calls for renewed attention to the importance of religion, understood as a dynamic factor fusing with national mobilisation rather than a static and increasingly obsolete contestant in terms of communities' primary allegiance. Long recognised to have

played a role in many national identities, religion is shown in this volume to be more than a cause for confrontation associated with confessional differences, with cases such as that of the Slovak *matica* analysed by Benjamin Bossaert and Dagmar Kročanová exposing how 'the initiative of forming a literary society was taken first by the Catholics, then by the Protestants, and sometimes they worked together' (p. 58). Such cases of inter-confessional cooperation are in need of more attention, as is the role played by clergy in the development and spread of nationalist ideas. Rather than the static image of religion as a cultural resource nationalism could draw on, or as a model for nationalism as 'political religion', scholars of nationalism would do well to factor in the active role it played in national mobilisation in conjunction with a process of secularisation that was highly uneven – not just geographically, but also according to social class and the urban/rural divide – and quite questionable for some spaces (e.g., nineteenth-century Eastern and South-Eastern Europe).

Another common feature that comes through from the cases covered in the volume is that of the two main aims of the *matice* and similar institutions elsewhere. Scholarly pursuits related to the 'study of history, language (including spelling), and literature' (p. 204) were accompanied by campaigns to spread national culture among the 'masses' through affordable publications, as well as to improve literacy and eventually to educate new national elites, by providing stipends to students, for example. As many of the chapters in the volume reveal, these different aims were not always in tune and their co-existence could be less than harmonious, just as the actors associated primarily with one or the other could themselves be at odds. Alongside the seemingly successful National Eisteddfod of Wales which appears to have combined both, and the many interesting hybrid institutions (literary competitions and prizes, cultural festivals), we encounter many cases where cultural activists failed to reach their intended audience, or where the dominance of scholarly pursuits hampered efforts at popularisation. In turn, this

hints at the ambivalence of nationalism itself, where projects of social emancipation coexisted, often uneasily, with the attempts to canonise a suitable high culture and national history.

The fact that most of the chapters explicitly refer to Miroslav Hroch's paradigm is salutary not only for providing an additional layer of coherence to a volume that otherwise covers a wide array of cases in very diverse settings, but also due to the attention it devotes to the social factors at play in the passage from one phase of national mobilisation to another. In a volume dealing with cultural associations, this is a useful reminder of the broader social context, acting as a (quasi)-constant corrective to 'culturalist' interpretations focusing almost exclusively on elites. The attention to ideas of 'Slavic reciprocity' and the essential role of pan-Slavism in engendering and bolstering different nationalisms provide another unifying factor, in this case limited to the chapters dealing with *matice* institutions proper. The insightful afterword by Alexei Miller places the *matice* (but not the other cultural associations covered in the volume) in yet another important context, that of imperial studies, showing how inter-imperial rivalry as much as internal transformations within empires (especially of the Habsburg after the *Ausgleich*, but also of the Romanov after 1905) influenced the trajectories of 'small' nationalisms therein. Miller answers the important question of why the *matice* 'developed primarily in the Habsburg Empire' (p. 357), which the respective chapters mostly eschewed, and the answer is yet another indication of how imperial policies could have unintended consequences that ended up undermining the imperial administration, serving 'rather to trigger nationalist mobilization than to promote reconciliation' (p. 361). It would have been interesting if the eminent imperial studies scholar that is Alexei Miller had brought his vast expertise to bear on the relationship of the cases of cultural mobilisation in Western Europe presented in the volume with their respective imperial settings. Similarly, the insight of reading the *matice*

and similar cultural associations elsewhere within the framework of centre-periphery relations is an important one, holding the promise of a history of peripheral nationalisms in Europe that would manage to bridge a still-persistent East/West divide.

To sum up, this is an important volume, rich in detail and coherent enough despite the diversity of the case studies it covers to make a valuable contribution to nationalism studies, revealing a European dimension to the emergence of cultural associations with national agendas during the long nineteenth century. An interesting read for historians, with individual contributions highlighting the complexity of what are typically seen as the prototypical institutions promoting cultural nationalism, the many meaningful insights the volume provides might be slightly under-theorised for other scholars working on nationalism. While some of the chapters themselves emphasise the mutual influences and contacts between such institutions, as well as engaging in interesting comparisons, and while the case studies are framed by excellent introductory and concluding considerations about the transnational and inter-imperial contexts in which these associations emerged, some proper conclusions are still lacking. These could have been brought out more and rendered more relevant for nationalism studies and related fields, as I believe they are. More direct editorial intervention could have been useful here, as it would have been for providing consistency within the volume, where some chapters, for example, needed better language editing. Beyond such technical considerations, the fact that both the introduction and afterword are written by guest scholars, with no general commentary offered by the two volume editors, appears as a shortcoming, despite the considerable effort that must have gone into assembling such a rich collection. The interested reader will find a lot of valuable, thoroughly researched material within the pages of this volume, as well as inspiring insights of broader validity than the respective case studies. To do so, however, she

will have to dig deep into the individual contributions, with little guidance from the volume editors; perhaps this review will be of some help toward that.

Raul Cârstocea

University of Leicester