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Prohibition, tolerance, co-option: Cultural Appropriation and Francoism in Catalonia 1939-75

Dictatorships, autocracies and authoritarian regimes require adaptation if they wish to survive. What produced the circumstances that led to the construction of the regime in the first place, is unlikely to be salient twenty years later. Long lasting regimes, such as the Franco dictatorship in Spain (1939-75) can, with the passage of time, adopt ‘different ways of responding to societal interests and opposition’.¹ Thus ‘not all autocratic regimes are alike in their respective practices’ and can choose from a repertoire of mechanisms to maintain control.² Francoist Spain went through a series of responses during its almost forty years of existence. Binary positions around supporters and opponents held sway in the early phase of the regime yet by the 1960s a more complex picture emerges. In the case of Catalonia, social activism and mobilisation around nationalism tended to decline in the final years of the dictatorship, whilst social protest in a general sense greatly escalated. In fact the final phase of the relationship between Catalan culture and the dictatorship brings into question the view that ‘social movement actors are engaged in political and/or cultural conflicts meant to promote or oppose social change’.³ Historical inquiry into the intermediate spaces between opposition and collaboration can facilitate our understanding of the evolution that can occur

¹ Barbara Geddes, *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003), 48-51 and Jessica Weeks, ‘Autocratic Audience Costs: Regime Type and Signaling Resolve’, *International Organization*, 62, 1, 2008, 35-64.

² C Davenport, ‘State Repression and the Tyrannical Peace’, *Journal of Peace Research*, 23, 4, 2007, 593-601 and Jennifer Gandhi and Adam Przeworski, ‘Cooperation, Cooptation and Rebellion under Dictatorship’, *Economics and Politics*, Vol. 18, No. 1, 2006, 954-85.

³ Mario Diani and Donatella della Porta, *Social Movements: An Introduction* (Malden: Blackwell, 2006), 7.

in long lasting dictatorial contexts. By the final part of this regime, a re-framing of the regime's postulates in many areas became apparent. Francoism was of course not a static phenomenon and underwent substantial internal variation. The Francoist variant of Spanish nationalism was not immune to this development, undergoing its own process of 'hybridisation'.⁴ This can be partly explained by the fact that in the case of Spain the state was not taken over by fascism, rather fascism was taken over by the state.⁵

The initial political project of the Franco Regime, which included the destruction of its social and political enemies, lasted until the end of the Second World War. The second phase, marked by a failed autarkic experiment, ended in 1959. Over the course of the 1960s, the regime only executed six individuals, a transformation from the tens of thousands slaughtered in the early phase of the regime. Yet other aspects of the coercive power of the state remained unchanged until its very end, including the apparatus of a one-party police state, as well as regular manifestations of casual brutality and torture. The social basis of the regime changed over the course of decades as did its essence and ideological basis. As Malefakis has argued, this was a bifurcation which marked a change between different types of dictatorship which can be traced to the late 1950s.⁶ This is not to assign a false pluralism to

⁴ Raúl Moreno Almendral, 'Franquismo y Nacionalismo Español: Una Aproximación a sus Aspectos Fundamentales', *Hispania Nova: Revista de Historia Contemporánea*, 12, 2014.

⁵ Joan Maria Thomas I Andreu, 'La configuración del Franquismo: El Partido y las Instituciones', *Ayer*, 33, 99, 41-63.

⁶ Edward Malefakis, 'The Franco Dictatorship: A Bifurcated Regime?' in Nigel Townson, ed., *Spain Transformed: The Late Franco Dictatorship, 1959-1975* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007), 248-54.

a police and military state but rather to account for a shift from proto-fascism to a form of authoritarian and dictatorial technocracy in the 1960s.⁷

This article examines a further facet in the evolution of the Franco regime which initially sought to impose a monolithic national identity (Spanish) by means of the repression of its national minorities (Basque, Catalan, Galician and so on). Due to the absence of a violent political movement as existed in the Basque Country in the form of ETA, Catalonia is a particularly fruitful source to examine the shifts that took place in the Franco regime's policy towards Spain's historic nationalities. This article will centre on the intermediate spaces that came to exist in the final phase of the Franco regime and its evolving policy towards Catalan culture, in its broadest sense. We find three main phases in the regime's strategy: repression, followed by tolerance and a final phase of the co-option of Catalan culture, for the purposes of regime legitimisation. The evolving strategy of the regime can be contrasted with its policy in both the Basque Country and Galicia, and can be usefully compared to shifts in tactics and policies in territories including Germany, Turkey and the Soviet Union.⁸ In the Catalan case, we see a more complex repertoire of responses employed

⁷ Carme Molinero and Pere Ysàs, *La Anatomía del Franquismo: De la Supervivencia a la Agonía, 1945-1977* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2008); Abdon Mateos and Álvaro Soto, *El Franquismo: Desarrollo, Tecnocracia y Protesta Social, 1959-1975* (Madrid: Arlanza, 2005); José Reig Cruaños, *Identificación y Alienación: La Cultura Política y el Tardofranquismo* (Valencia: Universitat de València, 2007) and Borja de Riquer, *La Dictadura de Franco* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2010).

⁸ Edward Allworth, *The Nationality Question in Soviet Central Asia*, New York: Praeger, 1973; Lubomyr Hajda and Mark Beissinger, eds., *The Nationalities Factor in Soviet Politics and Society* (San Francisco: Westview Press), 1990 and Robert Lewis, *Nationality and Population Change in Russia and the USSR* (New York: Praeger, 1976); Jeffrey Herf, 'Post-Totalitarian Narratives in Germany: Reflections on Two Dictatorships after 1945 and 1989', *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 9, 2, 3, 2008, 161-86; Åsa Lundgren, *The Unwelcome Neighbour: Turkey's*

than elsewhere in Spain. Political appropriation of the native culture went beyond anything in any other area of Spain, in marked contrast to an earlier phase of restriction, discrimination and persecution. As will be seen, in this sensitive area, the regime moved away from the ideological absolutes of a previous era.

Francoism and Catalonia

Franco's Spain exhibited a 'martialist conception of patriotism'.⁹ The war of national salvation that was the civil war required the construction of a new 'symbolic universe' in the New State.¹⁰ A Spanish nationalist imaginary was a unifying element where patriotism, nationalism, the state and the nation were inter-changeable. The Franco regime sought the appropriation of its concept of Spanishness. Processes of nationalisation are used to strengthen the 'core nation'.¹¹ For Francoism, Spain was as an eternal nation: whose essence, territorial integrity and sovereignty was found in the regime's conception of a new political

Kurdish Policy (London: IB Taurus, 2007), and Henri J. Barkey and Graham E. Fuller, *Turkey's Kurdish Question* (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998).

⁹ Karma Nabulsi, *Traditions of War: Occupation, Resistance and the Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 105-6.

¹⁰ Zira Box, *España, Año Zero: La Construcción Simbólica del Franquismo* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2010), 88-95 and 'Secularizando el Apocalipsis: Manufactura Mítica y Discurso Nacional Franquista: La Narración de la Victoria', *Historia y Política*, 12, Jul.-Dec. 2004, 133-60.

¹¹ Rogers Brubaker, 'Nationalizing States in the Old "New Europe" and the New', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 19, 1996, 411-4, 37; *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999) and 'The Manichean Myth: Rethinking the Distinction Between "Civic" and "Ethnic" nationalism', in Hanspeter Kriesi et al., eds., *Nation and National Identity: The European Experience in Perspective* (Zurich: Ruediger, 1999), 55-71.

identity. Thus all who lived within the frontiers of the new Spain were ipso facto Spaniards. This was not a racial conception or ideology. State and people were as one and historiography was given a key role in crafting a new past for Spain.¹²

The Francoist state embarked on a number of political projects as it sought to obliterate dissent, some pursued with brutal violence, including the violent repression of organised labour and the Republican supporting peasantry.¹³ Cultural and linguistic repression was but one further element in this process.¹⁴ To be achieved, a process of purification was undertaken of all deemed to be ‘anti-Spanish’. For our purposes, this includes the purging of the sub-national identities within Spain amongst Basques, Catalans, Galicians and others. This was a process of ‘state-led cultural homogenisation’.¹⁵ The programme of the full incorporation of Catalonia into the Spanish fatherland began with the prohibition of all that marked out Catalonia as culturally and politically distinct from the rest of the Spanish state. The overwhelming fact of the period immediately after 1939 was a

¹² Ismael Saz, *España Contra España: Los Nacionalismos Franquistas* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2003); Carolyn Boyd, *Historia, Patria: Politics, History, and National Identity in Spain, 1875-1975* (N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997) and Antonio Cazorla Sánchez, *Fear and Progress: Ordinary Lives in Franco's Spain, 1939-1975* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2010), 90-2.

¹³ Antonio Cazorla, *La España Masacrada: Las Políticas de la Victoria: La Consolidación del Nuevo Estado Franquista (1938-1953)* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2000); Michael Richards, *A Time of Silence: Civil War and the Culture of Repression in Franco's Spain, 1936-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) and Helen Graham, ‘The Memory of Murder: Mass Killing and the Making of Francoism’ in *War and its Shadow: Spain's Civil War in Europe's Long Twentieth Century* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2012), 25-49.

¹⁴ Claudio Hernández Burgos and Miguel Ángel del Arco Blanco, ‘Más Allá de las Tapias de los Cementerios: la Represión Cultural y Socioeconómico en la España Franquista (1936-1951)’, *Cuadernos de Historia Contemporánea*, 33, 2011, 71-93.

¹⁵ Daniele Conversi, ‘We Are All Equals! Militarism, Homogenization and “Egalitarianism” in Nationalist State-Building (1789-1945)’, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 31:7, 1286-314.

public erasure of Catalan culture and language.¹⁶ This was the language then used by over 80 per cent of the population.¹⁷

Repression and Catholicism

Francoism in its early conception was a homogeneity seeking ideology. In general terms, the period between 1939 and 1950 represented the destruction of a range of cultures in Catalonia, whether nationalist, republican or anarchist: those which had explicitly challenged the rightist conception of the nation and its cultural space. The first phase in the regime's policy was simply the systematic destruction of Catalan language and culture in the public sphere.¹⁸ This can be termed the phase of forced assimilation. In this sense, in the early years of the regime, with a public discourse seeking to overcome the anti-Spain, outside of the key bastions of bourgeoisie and landholders, the Church and traditionalist peasantry, the regime did not seek legitimacy. Rather the regime had, as with other radical political projects, an 'illusion of omnipotence . . . they believed they could remake their social world as they chose'.¹⁹ Yet, from early in the regime, some expressions of Catalan culture, usually folkloric and imbued with conservative and Catholic mores, were promoted by the dictatorship. Thus

¹⁶ Josep M. Solé i Sabaté and Joan Villaroya, *Cronologia de la Repressió de la Llengua i la Cultura Catalanes 1939-1975* (Barcelona: Curial, 1994).

¹⁷ Lluís-Anton Baulenas, *El Català no Morirà: Un Moment Decisiu per al Future de la Llengua* (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 2004), 203.

¹⁸ Angela Cenarro, 'Matar, Vigilar y Delatar: La Quiebra de la Sociedad Civil Durante la Guerra y la Posguerra en España (1936-1948)', *Historia Social*, 2002, 44, 65-86.

¹⁹ Edward Ross Dickinson, 'Biopolitics, Fascism, Democracy: Some Reflections on our Discourse about "Modernity"', *Central European History*, 2004, 37, 1, 1-48.

prohibitions, as will be seen, were lifted at various stages by the regime and its control was increasingly limited to any political manifestation.

The first phase in the utilisation of Catalan culture and language by the dictatorship we can term religious appropriation. A rapid co-option of a Catalan religious culture took place.²⁰ It was an indication that pious, Catholic and conservative components in Catalan culture could be instrumentalised or escape proscription if they embodied regional or local features. Thus the building of a monolithic political and repressive structure still allowed scope for some local expression. Changes can be first detected towards the end of 1943 as indigenous folkloric elements were adopted by the *Obra de Educación y Descanso* (Education and Leisure) of the Falange who identified ‘culture with propaganda’.²¹ This apparent unpolitical expression of folklore was in fact rapidly incorporated within official regime bodies. It was a search for ‘an emotionally appealing “national” identity’.²² As an indication of the opening undertaken by the regime after the end of the Second World War, some of the propaganda for the referendum on the Law of Succession of July 1947 was produced in Catalan. Emblematic of the lifting of restrictions imposed at the beginning of the dictatorship was the re-emergence of the *Orfeò Català* (Catalan Choral Society), most of whose repertoire was sung in Catalan and in December 1946

²⁰ Andrew Dowling, ‘The Catholic Church in Catalonia: From Cataclysm in the Civil War to the “Euphoria” of the 1950s’, *Catalan Review*, XX, 1, 2006, 83-100.

²¹ Gemma Pérez Zalduondo, ‘Música, Censura y Falange: El Control de la Actividad Musical desde la Vicesecretaría de Educación Popular (1941-1945)’, *ARBOR*, 187, Sept.-Oct. 2011, 875-86.

²² Cf. the case of East Germany: Jan Palmowski, ‘Building an East German Nation: The Construction of a Socialist Heimat, 1945-1961’, *Central European History*, 37, 3, 365-99 and Antonio Méndez Rubio, ‘Popular Music as Cultural Criticism’, *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies*, 2:119-26, 2001, Xosé Manoel Núñez Seixas and Maiken Umbach, ‘Hijacked Heimats: National Appropriations of Local and Regional Identities in Germany and Spain, 1930–1945’, *European Review of History/Revue Européenne d’Histoire*, 15, 3, Jun. 2008, 295–316.

it was allowed its first public performance.²³ This cautious evolution from total prohibition was recognised by Catalan nationalist opponents of the regime: ‘Franco has decided to offer us concessions . . . and certain “cultural” freedoms’.²⁴ The emblematic figures of Catholicism in Catalonia were revived during the course of the 1940s. This was facilitated by a pre-existing climate of religious revivalism and a fervent Marianism. Furthermore, the figures revived were part of a tradition of Hispanic Catholicism, restoring the prime place of Barcelona in religious publishing in Spain.²⁵ 1945 was celebrated as the centenary of Jacint Verdaguer, poet, author and theologian, and 100,000 copies of his works were published during the year. As one religious publication noted: Verdaguer wrote ‘in the Spanish language of Catalan, without this ever meaning that he excluded from his heart the great common fatherland’.²⁶ These modest permissions were acknowledged internally and were explicitly termed ‘opening up’.²⁷ The context to this liberalisation was of course regime isolation in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. After the resolution condemning Spain was passed at the United Nations, the civil governor of Barcelona organised a pro-regime demonstration in the city, at which slogans in Catalan were shouted, including *Franco, els catalans estem amb vòs* (Franco, the Catalans are with you).²⁸ This was the first indication that the Catalan language could be appropriated for regime legitimisation, outside of a religious context.

²³ Falange Española, Departamento de Secretaría, Ref: Asociación Horta, Caja 1.263, Archivo Gobierno Civil de Barcelona, hereafter AGCB.

²⁴ Front Nacional de Catalunya, *Per Catalunya*, no. 12, 10 Nov. 1945.

²⁵ José Manuel Cuenca Toribio, *Nacionalismo, Franquismo y Nacionalcatolicismo* (Madrid: Actas, 2008), 157-61 and William J. Callahan, ‘The Evangelization of Franco's “New Spain”’, *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture*, 1987, 56, 4 and Santí Vila i Vicente, ‘De Torrasi Bages a Pujol, o la Deconstrucción de un Sustrato Integrista Común en Cataluña’, *Historia y Política*, 14, Jul.-Dec. 2005, 85-118.

²⁶ ‘Verdaguer’, *Cristiandad: Revista Quincenal*, Year 2, 34, 15 Aug. 1945. See also *Destino*, 28 Jul. 1945; *Esbart Verdaguer*, Feb. 1949. See also the issues from Jan. 1948 to Jan. 1949 and *Boletín de la Mare de Deu del Mont*, 2, 1953, devoted to Verdaguer, with articles and poetry in Catalan.

²⁷ Letter from Acedo Colunga to Francisco Salgado-Araujo, 3 Jun. 1951, Caja 3, no. 1.236, AGCB.

²⁸ Jaume Fabre, Josep M. Huertas and Antoni Ribas, *Vint Anys de Resistència Catalana 1939-1959*

Towards tolerance

The Francoist attempt at the complete extirpation of Catalan culture and the cultural submergence of Catalonia within Spain was being slowly abandoned. The cultural world of the 1950s was a fluid and evolving category, in contrast to its monolithic character in the 1940s. Cultural bodies were revived and closed with rapidity, sometimes existing in harmony with the Falange, at others times excluded.²⁹ Cultural entities experienced both adaptation to the regime and by the regime. The comparative weakness of the Falange as a mobilising agent ensured that the regime needed to adapt to attract support from the lower middle classes and other middling sectors in Catalan territory. By the mid-1950s, the leading opposition force in Catalonia, the communists, acknowledged that ‘*sardanas* are danced everywhere’ and that whilst the Catalan language was not recognised, it was tolerated. The Communist Party detected a clear break in policy, noting that the regime had ceased to pursue an explicitly anti-Catalan strategy.³⁰ The following year, a report from the Civil Governor of Barcelona, Felipe Acedo Colunga, spoke of ‘a Catalanism that continues to develop in a conservative and fundamentally religious context’.³¹ The process of modest Catalanisation was also reflected in a process of regionalisation of cultural groupings and movements of civic society. As a further significant step in the process of incorporation, from 1958, the

(Barcelona: La Magrana, 1978), 22.

²⁹ Falange Española, Institución Folklórica Montserrat, Informe 1.628, Caja 103, AGCB.

³⁰ Informe del Secretariat al I Congrés del Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya presentat pel Camarada Josep Moix, Fons PSUC, Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya, hereafter ANC.

³¹ Aspecto Político, Dec. 1958, Caja 506, AGCB.

Juegos Florales (Floral Games) of the Fascist Vertical Syndicates awarded a prize to the best poem written in Catalan.³²

Within both the opposition and the regime's security services, there existed the shared recognition that a distinct Catalan reality had survived the attempt at its suppression. The regime continued to institutionalise cultural phenomenon, in an attempt to control its development and, where possible, to co-opt aspects of it for the purposes of legitimation. The regime made much of its victory parade in Barcelona in May 1960, which included a homage to the *sardana* by the vertical syndicalist union. In official discourse this year became known as the 'Catalanist' spring of the regime and can be located within 'the pseudo-discourse of the integration of the defeated . . . by means of the rhetoric of peace'.³³ Permissive tolerance towards Catalan conservative culture culminated in the authorisation of Òmnium Cultural in July 1961, an organisation whose explicit aim was the promotion and support of all areas of Catalan language and culture.³⁴ Òmnium played a key role as an intermediate organisation, its directors brought together figures from both sides of the civil war, which allowed it to pivot between regime institutions and sectors of the opposition. The leading representative

³² Delegación Provincial de Sindicatos O.S. Educación y Descanso, Barcelona 1958, Juegos Florales Sindicales 1º de Mayo de 1958 and 'La Festividad de San José Artesano se Celebró con Extraordinaria Brillantez', *La Vanguardia Española*, 2 May 1958.

³³ Vicente Sánchez-Biosca, 'Las Culturas del Tardofranquismo', *Ayer*, 68, 2007, 89-110.

³⁴ *Escritura de Constitución de la Sociedad Civil 'Òmnium Cultural', Autorizada por Don. F. Trias de Bes Año 1.961*, AFH Maurici Serrahima Inv. 99, ANC. Letter from the president of Òmnium Cultural to Albert Manent, 5 Jul. 1962, in AFH Albert Manent Caixa 21, ANC; Copy of letter from Joan Cendrós, Correspondència, Anys 1961, 1962, 1963. Carpeta 1, Arxiu d'Òmnium Cultural, hereafter AÒC. See, for example letter to Vescompte de Güell from Frederic Roda, 10 Aug. 1968, Carpeta Música. Letters from Felix Millet to José M. Boix, 28 Nov. 1961; and to Josep M^a Cruzet, 1 Dec. 1961. Letter from the Conde de Godó to Antonio Garreta Olivella, 10 Jul. 1962. Correspondència 1961-63, Armari, AÒC.

within Òmnium, Félix Millet i Maristany, had been part of the Lliga Regionalista which had found refuge in Nationalist Spain during the civil war and became a key figure in a regime-led institutionalisation of Catalan culture. As a reflection of regime uncertainty towards the onward advance of Catalanism and a further example of the incorporation of some of its manifestations, in September 1964 Spanish Television announced the creation of a monthly Catalan language programme which in the words of the security services, ‘caused real euphoria’ amongst Catalanists.³⁵ Yet a few months earlier the regime had reversed permission for Òmnium Cultural and closed it down. The prohibition of Òmnium was an indication of the stop-start approach that reigned within the regime, as technocrats and reactionaries jockeyed for pre-eminence.³⁶ The Ministry of Information, in an extensive review of the cultural and linguistic situation, advocated a strategic shift in strategy, stating that Catalan grievances could only be addressed by ‘the complete de-politicisation of the Catalan language’.³⁷ This was partly expressed in the approach towards the incorporation of Catalanism, as the ban on Òmnium was removed in 1967 and the entity remained legal thereafter. A letter from the Bishop of Seu d’Urgell to the Francoist minister Manuel Fraga stated that a group of ‘good Catholics from Barcelona’, led by Felix Millet i Maristany, ‘do not want to see their dearly loved language again in the hands of the enemies of our faith and

³⁵Dirección General de Seguridad (hereafter DGS), *Asunto: La llegada del catalanismo a los programas de Televisión Española*, 19 Sept. 1964, AGCB; *El Noticiero Universal*, 17 Sept. 1964 and ‘*Libertad para la Lengua y la Cultura Catalanas: Declaración del Comité Ejecutivo del Partido Socialista Unificado de Cataluña*’, 15 Jan. 1964.

³⁶ In 1960 in an incident at the Palau de la Música, conservative Catalans produced a semi-spontaneous protest, which resulted in a wave of repression, see Joan Crexell, *Els Fets del Palau i el Consell de Guerra a Jordi Pujol*, Barcelona: La Magrana, 1982.

³⁷ Ministerio de Información y Turismo, *El Uso de la Lengua Catalana*, 10 Nov.1964, Fondo Laureano López Rodó, Archivo General de la Universidad de Navarra.

fatherland'.³⁸

A technocratic regime

The shift to dictatorial technocracy and bureaucracy in the 1960s meant the construction of a new form of police state in Spain. The internal cohesion of the regime, its doctrine and strategy was in flux as its tactical position evolved in response to new social and economic forces. By this time, the regime's ability to have contained and crushed its opponents gave it a new layer of apparent security. The regime sought to lay the foundations for its further endurance in a context of on-going economic development. The regime sought to achieve stability and social support through the improvement of material welfare. Political discourse shifted from one of salvation to one of economic improvement. This is not to suggest however that the Franco regime experienced a crisis of legitimacy rather than new approaches were adopted, as the construction of 'a renovated authoritarian conservative ideology' evolved.³⁹ Spaces of accommodation were sought between moderate sectors of the opposition to reduce the social strength of dissent. A generation younger than the traditional bastions of the regime, the technocrats led a new relationship between state, economy and modernisation. As elsewhere, 'the consolidation of economic reforms would to an extent legitimise the performance of an authoritarian regime'.⁴⁰

³⁸Letter from Mnsgr. Ramón, Bishop of Seu d'Urgell to Manuel Fraga Iribarne, 10 Sept. 1964, republished in *Nous Horitzons*, 7, 1966.

³⁹ Pedro Carlos González-Cuevas, 'La Derecha Tecnocrática', *Historia y Política*, 18, Jul.-Dec. 2007, 23-48.

⁴⁰ Carlos Huneeus, 'Technocrats and Politicians in an Authoritarian Regime: The ODEPLAN Boys and the Gremialists in Pinochet's Chile', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 32, 2, 2000, 461-501.

The technocrat-led modernisation of Spain resulted in the emergence of new tensions and new social forces. Thus a series of social and economic mutations began, which required ‘new legitimisation strategies, as the previous mechanisms had become ineffectual’.⁴¹ These tendencies fused together at a local level as the regime moved away from its rigid centralisation of local and provincial government, which had marked the first twenty years of the regime. From 1958, the highest provincial authorities obtained increased powers, which in time would provide the opportunity for a greater ability to respond to the demands of the region in an attempt to obtain greater social acceptance. A form of modest decentralisation took place.⁴² With the vast demographic pressures of the 1960s, local and regional governments were under sustained pressure, with the resultant expansion of the neighbourhood associations and ever greater labour protest. As a consequence, ‘open cultural and political dissent’ reappeared.⁴³ National questions re-emerged with great intensity and further threatened to undermine the regime.⁴⁴ In this context, it became possible for this administrative tier to respond with greater sensitivity to the cultural dynamic of the territory.

⁴¹ Salvador Cayuela Sánchez, *Por la Grandeza de la Patria: La Biopolítica en la España* (Madrid: FCE, 2014), 303 and 307.

⁴² Miguel Ángel Giménez, *El Estado Franquista: Fundamentos Ideológicos, Bases Legales y Sistema Institucional* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Políticos y Constitucionales, 2014), 141-3.

⁴³ Antonio Cazorla-Sánchez, ‘Did You Hear the Sermon? Progressive Priests, Conservative Catholics and the Return of Political and Cultural Diversity in Late Francoist Spain’, *Journal of Modern History*, 85, 3, 2013, 528-57.

⁴⁴ Xosé M. Núñez Seixas, ‘Nuevos y Viejos Nacionalistas: La Cuestión Territorial en el Tardofranquismo, 1959-1975’, *Ayer*, no 68, Issue 4, 2007, 59-87.

This opening at a local level, required ‘new collaborations in a range of areas’ and the co-opting of local elites.⁴⁵

The enemies of the regime came to be redefined. It had become increasingly necessary to indicate that a shift in terms of cultural and language policy was taking place if the regime could appeal to conservative sectors who remained deeply attached to Catalan culture and identity. Whilst the regime’s ideology and dogma adapted in this new terrain, certain signifiers remained beyond reform. This included any questioning of the unity of Spain. However, the planning models adopted in Spain, influenced above by French indicative planning, increasingly spoke of regional economic policies as the mechanism for achieving this unity. The technocrats, whilst committed to authoritarian modernisation, were concerned above all with economic stabilisation and growth whilst achieving social compliance. Whilst repressive violence continued against organised labour and the growing Basque insurrection, in Catalonia the regime intensified its revisionist strategy.⁴⁶ The founder of *Òmnium Cultural*, Félix Millet i Maristany wrote in the monarchist daily *ABC* of a ‘national Catalanism’ in 1964 whilst the opposition expressed concern at ‘Catalanist manoeuvres on the part of the regime’.⁴⁷ At Christmas 1964, the Ministerio de Información y Turismo launched a propaganda campaign to commemorate ‘the twenty-five years of peace’

⁴⁵ Martí Marin, *Els Ajuntaments Franquistes a Catalunya: Política i Administració Municipal, 1939-1979* (Lleida: Pagès Editors, 2000), 348.

⁴⁶ ‘Cataluña: Un Plan Regional’, *Triunfo*, 214, 9 Jul. 1966. In the Basque Country, far greater political polarization remained evident into the 1960s and beyond, see Fernando Molina, ‘Lies of Our Fathers: Memory and Politics in the Basque Country under the Franco Dictatorship, 1936-1968’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 2014, 49, 2, 296-319.

⁴⁷ ‘Lengua y Cultura Catalana’, *ABC*, 24 Oct. 1964 and ‘La Maniobra “Catalanista”’, *Endavant*, 140, Apr.-May 1964.

since the civil war and the promotional campaign included both the Basque and Catalan languages.

Further opening towards Catalan culture was facilitated by the modest liberalisation associated with the Press Law introduced in April 1966. In the same year, for the first time since 1939, the National Literature prizes of the state were opened to entries from the Catalan language.⁴⁸ The civil governor of Barcelona noted in a letter to the minister for Tourism and Culture, ‘as you well know, never in the past twenty-five years have there been greater opportunities for the expansion of Catalan culture’.⁴⁹ An extensive survey prepared for the civil governor of Barcelona captures the cultural and policy shift underway: ‘these days numerous publications and records in Catalan appear, as a result of official protection to publishers . . . yet the vast majority of Catalan cultural activities are not noted for their love of Spain’. Yet, in contrast to earlier phases of the regime, the policy adopted to address this alienation was to ‘urgently and carefully address this by means of a well channelled approach in athenaeums, cultural bodies, teaching centres etc’. More significantly, the report stated: ‘the teaching of Catalan can be authorised provided that teaching is entrusted to those who are loyal or apolitical [*indiferentes*]’.⁵⁰

Tactical adaptability and attempted absorption of conservative Catalan forces had to respond to their cultural demands. From 1965, growing social pressure was taking place for

⁴⁸ *Tele/Estel*, 1, 22 Jul. 1966.

⁴⁹ Letter from Antonio Ibáñez Freire to Manuel Fraga Iribarne, 7 Feb. 1966, Caja 506, AGCB.

⁵⁰ ‘Problemática Sobre Política de “Catalanismo” en la Actualidad: Precisión de Estudiarlo y Plan de Trabajo Conjunto para Conseguirlo’, Nov. 1965, Caja 506, AGCB.

the campaign known as ‘*Català a l’escola*’: the introduction of the Catalan language into the schooling system. Thus in January 1967, the Diputació of the province of Barcelona approved an ‘initial experimental period’ for the promotion of ‘the vernacular language’.⁵¹ A new phase in the relationship of the local representatives of the state in Catalonia with the Catalan language had begun, as this initial phase slowly expanded throughout the province.⁵² By 1974, the Diputació had provided financial support to over 100 courses occurring in over fifty locations.⁵³ Furthermore, a motion was passed which declared that ‘the final objective . . . should be that each Catalan or person residing in Catalonia, knows how to correctly speak and write in the Catalan language’.⁵⁴ It is here that we can locate the institutional emergence of a non-political regionalism, which was simply unimaginable a decade earlier.⁵⁵ In the referendum campaign of December 1966, 100,000 posters were produced in the Catalan language for the province of Barcelona which stated *Tu pots decidir el futur d’Espanya* (You can decide the future of Spain), *No barris el pas al progress del País. Digues si al futur* (Don’t halt the progress of the country. Say yes to the future).⁵⁶ This represented a final shift in regime policy moving beyond tolerance towards an increasing co-option of Catalan culture

⁵¹ Dictámenes y Mociones, 28 January 1967, Arxiu de la Diputació de Barcelona, hereafter ADB and ‘Fomento de la Cultura y la Lengua Catalanes’, *San Jorge, Revista Trimestral de la Diputación de Barcelona*, January 1967, no. 65.

⁵² ‘Cursos de Català als Municipis de la Provincia de Barcelona’, Carpeta E-213, Exp. 2, 1967-1969, ADB and ‘Los Cursos de Catalán de la Diputación de Barcelona’, *El Correo Catalán*, 14 April 1967.

⁵³ ‘Informe Sobre los Cursos de Lengua Catalana Organizados por la Excma: Diputación Provincial de Barcelona, 18 October 1974’, Carpeta: Antecedents Curs, 1973-74.

⁵⁴ Moción, Diputación Provincial de Barcelona, Carpeta Antecedents Curs, 1974-75.

⁵⁵ Carles Santacana i Torres, ‘L’administració Local Durant el Franquisme’, in Rafael Aracil and Antoni Segura, eds., *Memòria de la Transició a Espanya i a Catalunya, Vol. III: La Reforma de l’exèrcit i de l’administració Local* (Barcelona: Edicions Universitat de Barcelona, 2002), 185-202.

⁵⁶ El Delegado Provincial del Ministerio de Información y Turismo, Referendum 1966, Caja 70, AGCB.

in the public sphere. This clear evolution in position can be contrasted with the end of the semi-tolerance towards the new expressions of organised labour, the Workers Commissions, which was driven underground in 1967.

Regime crisis and the region

The late 1960s saw the intermediate administrative tiers of the regime in Catalonia, local and city councils, Diputaciones and official cultural bodies providing patronage to Catalan cultural activity.⁵⁷ It was noted that ‘the state too concerns itself with Catalan culture’.⁵⁸ The transformed status of Catalan culture was demonstrated throughout 1968 by the conferences and ceremonies in homage of Pompeu Fabra, the founding father of the modern Catalan language. Although the forces of Catalanism and Òmnium Cultural played central roles in the promotion of Pompeu Fabra, it was also notable that official aid and encouragement was given. Within the opposition to the regime this fact was noted with surprise: ‘It cannot fail to be curious, hearing all of the talk of a collective homage to a Catalan personage . . . that the governing authorities are not mobilising all of their repressive

⁵⁷The Diputación was the body in Spain that covered each of the country’s fifty provinces created in 1833. As well as responsibility for infrastructure, it played a key role in cultural patronage. *Festa de Maig de les Lletres Catalanes de Òmnium Cultural*, May 1969; *Assemblea General Ordinària d'Òmnium Cultural*, 24 Mar. 1969, Caixa 9, AÒC; ‘*Sospechoso Relación, Concomitancias e Incluso Cierta Asociación Económica entre Monasterio de Montserrat y Editorial Nova Terra*’, 23 Dec. 1967; JSP Asunto, *Editoras Antinacionales*, 10 Jun. 1966. See also DGS, Asunto, *Intelectuales Desafectos al Régimen*, no. 2348, 17 Mar. 1967; Carta de Julia, 29 May 1972, AHPCE Activistas, Caja 92, Carpeta 27; Untitled report, 1965, AHPCE, Nacionalidades y Regiones Cataluña, Caja 50, AGCB.

⁵⁸ *Tele/Estel*, Year 2, 30, 10 Feb. 1967.

apparatus to impede it.’⁵⁹ However, this regime activity regarding Pompeu Fabra had already been anticipated the previous year by the homage to Enric Prat de la Riba during which a central role had been played by the Diputación of Barcelona.⁶⁰ Prat de la Riba was not just a Lliga politician and conservative but was an intellectual and iconic figure for his writing, seen as fundamental to the crafting of a modern Catalan identity. Prat de la Riba held canonical status in the iconography of Catalan nationalism, yet the President of the Diputación, representative of the Francoist state, noted, in 1967, that ‘now many of his dreams have become reality’.⁶¹

The institutional revival of politically conservative Catalan figures from earlier in the century was a notable development. By the late 1960s, the pre-civil war political representative of Catalan conservatism, the Lliga Regionalista, was increasingly evoked by the local representatives of the regime in Catalonia. The reception given to the death of Fernando Valls Taberner, one of the leading figures of the pre-war Lliga, began this process, and he was termed the embodiment of a ‘national Catalanism’ on the front page of the monarchist daily ABC.⁶² The regionalist Right in Catalonia adopted Francesc Cambó, a strongly conservative figure, as their emblematic figure. The rehabilitation of the political

⁵⁹ *Tele/Estel*, 19 Jan. 1968; *ARA: Butlletí Interior del Front Nacional de Catalunya*, Jan.-Feb. 1968.

⁶⁰ *Tele/Estel*, Year 2, 51, 7 Jul. 1967 and 55, 4 Aug. 1967 and ‘Pompeu Fabra y la Lengua Catalana’, *Cuadernos para el Diálogo*, 55, Apr. 1968. Enric Prat de la Riba, an iconic figure in political Catalanism was subject to harsh political critique for his ‘bourgeois nationalism’ by the communist author Jordi Solé i Tura in his study *Catalanisme i Revolució Burguesa* published and widely discussed in 1967.

⁶¹ ‘Homenaje de la Diputación a Prat de la Riba’, *San Jorge*, no. 66, April 1967, 113-8.

⁶² ‘El Catalanismo Nacional’, *ABC*, 18 Jun. 1964 and ‘Recuerdo de Fernando Valls Taberner: Un Hombre de Diálogo’, *Cuadernos para el Diálogo*, 9, Jun. 1964.

project of the Lliga, a regionalist party, most of whose leading figures became advocates for the Spanish Nationalists during the civil war, can be contrasted with developments in the Basque Country where the main nationalist party, the Partido Nacionalista Vasco (PNV), remained beyond incorporation. This strategy occurred with much greater intensity in Catalonia than the other historic regions of Spain: Galicia and the Basque Country. As late as May 1975, the mayor of Galicia's capital city, Santiago de Compostela, said that the region's most famous Galician language writer, Castelao, was 'barely deserving of a public lecture'.⁶³ The comparative historical weakness of Galician nationalism can be seen as a key explanatory variable as can, in marked contrast to Catalonia, the generalised anti-Galicianist stance of the clergy.⁶⁴

The Lliga Regionalista participated on the side of conservative coalition in the Spanish elections of February 1936. As had occurred at previous moments in its history, in 1917 and 1923, and on the outbreak of the civil war in July 1936, and in marked contrast to the dominant force of Basque nationalism, the PNV, the Lliga's position on the left-right cleavage took precedence over its commitment to Catalan identity. The Lliga fractured during the war, as many of its leading figures actively collaborated with the new Francoist state, whilst its Basque equivalents in the PNV, maintained their loyalty to Republican Spain. The Lliga, though excluded from the higher echelons of the new state, played a pivotal role in the

⁶³ Carlos Fernández, *Franquismo y Transición en Galicia* (A Coruña, Edicións do Castro, 1985), 215 and Bernardo Máiz, *Galicia na II República e Baixo o Franquismo (1930-1976)*, (Vigo: Edicions Xerais de Galicia, 1988), 69-73. Daniel Rodríguez Castelao is traditionally known only by his last name.

⁶⁴ Ana Cabana Iglesia, *Xente de Ordre o Consentimento cara ao Franquismo en Galicia*, (Santiago: TresCtres, 2009), 209.

organisation of the local administration of Catalonia in the 1940s and beyond.⁶⁵ Town and city councils continued under the regime to be in the hands of the old political class, which tended to reflect the correlation of conservative forces before the war.⁶⁶ By renouncing all political activity, a certain restoration of their social prestige became possible. Whilst for almost thirty years, the tradition of the Lliga had been excluded, with the rapid change of the 1960s, some aspects of its ideology came to be revived and embraced. The regionalist constituency within the town councils and Diputaciones played prominent parts in this project of the rehabilitation of the Lliga and its postulates. In 1972, Barcelona City Council renamed the Avenida del Catedral after Cambó.⁶⁷ The revival of these figures closely associated with the proto-regional entity the Mancomunitat (1914-25) reflected the fact that the prospect of its restoration had entered regime discourse as a future regionalist solution.⁶⁸ In fact, as a report prepared in 1971 for the civil governor of Barcelona explicitly stated, given ‘the politicisation of everything associated with the region . . . the means towards [depoliticisation] should be the Third Development Plan’.⁶⁹ There was an increasing

⁶⁵ Josep Lluís Martín i Berbois, *La Lliga Regionalista de Sabadell o l'ocàs d'un Partit (1931-1945)* (Barcelona: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 2008), 180-1; Joan Garriga i Andreu, *Franquisme i Poder Polític a Granollers (1939-1975)* (Barcelona: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 2004), 276-7; Jordi Rubió i Coromina and Jordi Pujiula i Ribera, *El Franquisme a Olot* (Olot: Quaderns d'Història d'Olot, 2014), 26; and Borja de Riquer, *L'últim Cambó (1936-1947): La Dreta Catalanista Davant la Guerra Civil i el Franquisme* (Vic: Eumo, 1996), 191-2.

⁶⁶ Glicerio Sánchez Recio, *Los Cuadros Políticos Intermedios del Régimen Franquista, 1936-1959: Diversidad de Origen e Identidad de Intereses* (Alacant: Diputación Provincial, 1996), 38 and 114-5.

⁶⁷ ‘Barcelona: El Libro, la Rosa, la Canasta y Cambó in Memorium’, *Triunfo*, 501, 6 May 1972.

⁶⁸ Letter from ‘Catalanists’ to *Òmnium Cultural*, 30 June 1970, Correspondència, AÒC and JSP, Asunto: *Acto en el Palacio de la Musica Catalana, Con Motivo del Centenario del Nacimiento de Pompeu Fabra*, 21 Feb. 1968; DGS, Asunto: *Conferencia Pronunciada en la Residencia Universitaria de San Antonio, de los PP. Escolapios, Bajo el Título "Pompeu Fabra i la Llengua d'una Cultura"*, no. 1114, 14 Feb. 1968, AGCB. See also *Nous Horitzons*, 14, 1968.

⁶⁹ JSP, Notas sobre la Situación Político-Social en Cataluña, March 1971, AGCB.

regionalist rhetoric as a component to technocratic efficiency.⁷⁰ Of the eighty-six books published on the Spanish economy in 1968, twenty-six addressed regional problems. A ‘functional impetus for regionalism’ was increasingly apparent though the regime maintained a rigid administrative centralisation until its very end.⁷¹ However, we can clearly detect an opening up at a local level.

The wider challenge to Francoism was met by the declaration of the Estado de Excepción in February 1969 throughout Spain for a period of three months. In the Catalan case, what is significant is what did not happen. Òmnium Cultural was not closed and little or no impact was found in the Catalan cultural community, rather repression was firmly focussed on the communists, the far left and organised labour. A further wave of hardening by the regime in 1971 occurred when it closed the publications *Madrid* and *Triunfo*, yet Catalan cultural activity was largely unaffected though pressure was applied to some publications. The twilight of Francoism was marked at a state level by an increasingly erratic strategy: the application and lifting of censorship, tentative reform and harsh repression. In the same period regionalist technocrats intensified their co-option of elements of Catalanism. Symbolic of this was the event known as *Primer Festival Popular de Poesia Catalana* (First Popular

⁷⁰ Carlos Garrido López, ‘El Regionalismo “funcional” del Régimen de Franco’, *Revista de Estudios Políticos*, 115, Jan.-Mar. 2002, 111-28. See also ‘¿Ordenación del Territorio o Desarrollo Regional?’, *Triunfo*, 372, 19 Jul. 1969.

⁷¹ Michael Keating, *The New Regionalism in Western Europe* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 1998), 67-8 and Michael Keating and Silvia Pintarits, ‘Europe and the Regions: Past, Present and Future’, in Fredrik Englestad, Grete Brochman and Ragnald Kalleberg, *Regional Cultures* (Stanford: JAI Press, 1998), 33-63.

Festival of Catalan Poetry), in April 1970 in Barcelona.⁷² The festival was given official permission by the Mayor of Barcelona, José María de Porcioles, who followed this in 1971 by officially re-establishing *Els Jocs Florals* (The Floral Games of Barcelona), which until this time had taken place within the Catalan exile communities. This was represented as a profound symbol of cultural restoration.⁷³

Porcioles, mayor of Spain's second city, was a leading advocate of cultural appropriation (he had been a member of the Lliga during the Second Republic).⁷⁴ His policy divided the regime figures based in Barcelona, some of whom believed that concessions to this cultural and folkloric Catalanism would encourage the growth of political demands and a political movement.⁷⁵ Yet as a symbol of the fracturing of a once monolithic Francoist ideology, at the beginning of 1970 the Spanish Cortes debated a new educational reform. The General Education Law referred to 'the incorporation of regional peculiarities', and for the first time since 1939 spoke of the 'cultivation of the native languages' (ie. Basque, Catalan and Galician). This had been preceded by the extensive discussion that had taken place by the publication of the Libro Blanco (White Paper) on educational reform in early 1969. This shift on the part of the State was a reflection of the 'tolerated presence of the Catalan language in teaching'.⁷⁶ Although the specific clauses that would permit the teaching of the languages of

⁷²*Nous Horitzons*, 20, 1970.

⁷³José María de Porcioles y Colomer, *Mi Adiós a Barcelona* (Barcelona: La Polígrafa, 1973), 14.

⁷⁴José María de Porcioles, *Mis Memorias* (Barcelona: Editorial Prensa Ibérica, 1994), 129-30.

⁷⁵ Manuel Vigil y Vázquez, *Entre el Franquismo y el Catalanismo* (Barcelona, Plaza y Janes, 1981), 74-8.

⁷⁶Joaquim Arenas i Sampera, *Catalunya, Escola i Llengua* (Barcelona: La Llar del Llibre, 1987), 40 and 'Informe Sobre la Lengua Catalana', *Triunfo*, 415, 16 May 1970 and 'La Llei General d'Educació', *Treball*, 316, Feb. 1970.

the periphery were rejected at this time, the fact of their inclusion and debate was itself a landmark. Furthermore, the Spanish minister of Education declared that ‘the joyful reality of the experience of the vernacular languages, is not only recognised but is exalted as a linguistic manifestation of the rich cultural heritage of Spain’. The minister, José Luis Villar Palasí, a key figure within the technocratic faction, outlined the evolved position: ‘the regionalist problem needs to be addressed from a pedagogical and cultural point of view, not politically’.⁷⁷ This was a further indication of an officially approved discourse on issues, such as the promotion of Catalan that had once been seen as fervently oppositionist. It had become clear that the future inclusion of a provision for state teaching of Catalan could not be long delayed. As was noted by the Lawyers College of Vic, ‘this idea is completely different to what has been proposed before . . . that one of the principal aims of education in Spain is the incorporation of regional peculiarities’.⁷⁸ Both formal and informal symbols were subject to re-categorisation as was clear in the case of toponyms. The public erasure of the Catalan language post-1939 included the Castilianisation of toponyms. Cultural campaigns lobbied for the re-naming of the towns, villages and rivers of the territory.⁷⁹ As an indication of the language’s transformed status within the state, enquiries were received from mayors throughout the region.⁸⁰ A new cartographic representation of Catalonia, produced in 1975 after years of preparation, fully adopted the Catalanisation of place, a reversal of almost forty

⁷⁷ ‘Contesta Villar Palasí: Preguntas sobre la Ley de Educación’, *Triunfo*, 428, 15 Aug. 1970.

⁷⁸ *Dictamen Jurídic Elaborat per l'Il·lustre Col·legi d'Advocats de Vic, sobre l'Idioma Català a les Escoles de Catalunya*, in Carpeta Tramessos al socis, Caixa 119, AÒC. See also *Hoja Diocesana de Vic*, 12 Nov. 1972 and *Vida Parroquial*, Arenys de Mar, Jul. 1972.

⁷⁹ *Òmnium Cultural Assemblea Ordinària 1972*, 4 Mar. 1972, Caixa 9, AÒC.

⁸⁰ See, for example, letters from Salvador Comas i Lladó, 30 Mar. 1973; Jaume Planas i Palissa to Genari Martorell, 20 Nov. 1974 and *Informe sobre la Distribució de 80 Ejemplars del ‘Dossier’: Toponomia*, 11 Mar. 1974. All in Carpeta Toponomia Altres, Caixa 51, AÒC.

years of regime policy.⁸¹

Conclusions

By the end of the 1960s, Catalan culture no longer formed part of the anti-España and the cultural assimilation of Catalonia had been long abandoned. As the Catalan communist party put it: ‘the struggle for the national identity of Catalonia is a battle lost by the regime’.⁸² The Franco regime gave a clear preference for a monolingual and monocultural approach but the transition from semi-fascism to authoritarian technocracy facilitated the modest evolution of language and cultural policy. What began as initially symbolic concessions developed a momentum of their own and cultural activists pushed and tested the boundaries of tolerance. Cultural transformation meant that by the early 1970s Catalonia exhibited a number of expressions: regime-based folkloric regionalism, high cultural expressions of Catalan culture and the populist Catalanism closely linked to the left. These were not rigid categories but express the ability of the regime and those outside of it to mobilise their own cultural alternatives. The final phase is one of the expansion of a culture recognised by the state. By 1973, the Catalan language was being incorporated into the school system where collaboration was sought with the cultural organisation Òmnium Cultural to facilitate it. Leading figures within it described Òmnium in a meeting with the Spanish Minister of Education, Cruz Martínez Esteruelas, as an entity that ‘was completely de-politicised’.⁸³ As we have seen in this survey, Catalan cultural revival shifted over the decades from being excluded to inclusion. Much of the Catalan cultural elite neither

⁸¹ ‘El Nuevo Mapa de Cataluña’, *San Jorge*, 95, Jun. 1975.

⁸² *Treball*, 410, 18 Mar. 1975.

⁸³ Entrevista Celebrada el Dia 21 d’abril de 1975 pels Srs. Riera, Cendrós, Mas i Currulla amb el Ministre d’Educació i Ciència, D. Cruz Martínez, Caja 536, AGCB.

collaborated with the regime nor did they form part of the organised opposition.⁸⁴ In the final decade of Francoism they became a lobby and pressure group, fully operating within the bounds of regime legality. A new intermediate space was crafted between this sector and local elites who wished to ensure that they could neutralise any political momentum behind cultural campaigns. Thus *Òmnium Cultural* came to represent both formal lobbying of the Francoist institutions and a communication channel for activists. It came to embody the strategy of ‘move, countermove, adjustment and negotiation’.⁸⁵ The main concern of the Franco regime was of course its self-preservation but it also sought to maintain the economic boom and to prioritise the repression of the labour challenge. As we have seen, the regime began to utilise ‘the idea of region to validate national goals’, a strategy employed elsewhere by other rightists.⁸⁶

By October 1975, the state referred to all of the languages of Spain as ‘national languages . . . whose knowledge and usage will be protected and encouraged’.⁸⁷ The Spanish language, Castilian, continued to have a distinct and dominant status whilst Catalan,

⁸⁴ A useful examination of these intermediate spaces can be found in Mary Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship: Inside the GDR 1949-1989* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 271-4.

⁸⁵ Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 4. A useful comparison can be made with Brezhnev’s strategy of ‘indigenisation’ launched in the early 1970s, Sébastien Peyrouse, ‘Nationhood and the Minority Question in Central Asia: The Russians in Kazakhstan’, *Europe-Asia Studies*, 59, 3, 2007, 481-501.

⁸⁶ Samuel Goodfellow, ‘Fascism and Regionalism in interwar Alsace’, *National Identities*, 12:2, 133-45.

⁸⁷ Decreto 2929/1975, *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, 274, 15 Nov. 1975.

Galician and Basque remained ‘vernacular languages’.⁸⁸ The final phase of the Franco regime is marked by distinctive approaches. In the world of culture broadly defined, there was tolerance and co-option. However, with political opposition, with social unrest and trades union activism, the principal strategy remained a selective repression. In the same year, 1969, that representatives of the dictatorship were promoting Catalan language and the political tradition of the Lliga Regionalista, the full force of the regime had been used to attempt to crush the Catalan Communist Party.⁸⁹ Reformist sectors within the regime were, by the early 1970s, preparing ‘the new structure for the Spanish regions . . . administrative decentralisation and regional reorganisation’.⁹⁰ Tension over the question of a regional reform remained at the top of the regime until its end, with unreconstructed Francoists terming it ‘dangerous and potentially leading to the break-up [of Spain]’.⁹¹ However, popular pressure ultimately forced the transitional government in Spain to go further than projected and restore the full autonomy of 1931-39. The transition in Catalonia built on pre-existing cultural, economic and political trends, concessions and accommodations that had emerged by the late 1960s. In this period, ‘state legitimacy was moderately in crisis in Catalonia’.⁹² Resolution of the Catalan question post-1975 occurred with relative ease in the transition period, unlike the escalating conflict with the Basques. Though it would later fracture, a

⁸⁸ José del Valle, ‘La Lengua, Patria Comun: La Hispanofonia y el Nacionalismo Panhispanico’ in *La Lengua, Patria Comun? Ideas e Ideologias del Español* (Frankfurt and Madrid: Vervuert and Iberoamericana, 2007), 33–56 and *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, 156, 1 Jul. 1975.

⁸⁹ Pere Ysàs and Carme Molinero, *Els Anys del PSUC, el Partit de l’Antifranquisme (1956-1981)* (Barcelona: L’Avenç, 2010), 55 and 67.

⁹⁰ ‘Las Regiones Naturales’, *Triunfo*, 490, 19 Feb. 1972.

⁹¹ ‘La Descentralización Territorial del Poder Público’, *Triunfo*, 583, 1 Dec. 1973.

⁹² Daniele Conversi, ‘The Smooth Transition: Spain’s 1978 Constitution and the Nationalities Question’, *National Identities*, 4, 3, 2002, 223-44.

broad consensus on recognition towards Catalan culture and identity was visible, and this extended into former bastions of the regime.