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Oligarchic liberalism, caciquism and political democratisation between 1876 and 1923. The Catalan case

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Abstract

This article seeks to contribute to explaining how caciquism operated in Catalonia during the Bourbon Restoration and how it evolved within the context of the emergence of mass politics and society during the early decades of the 20th century from a comparative Spanish and European perspective. Specifically, it analyses how some regional power caciquates were formed in the Catalan districts in order to further explore the development and evolution of these relationships. It then spotlights the early process through which the dynastic rotation in Catalonia was destroyed through the campaigns to condemn caciquism, and to what extent this process entailed true progress for democracy within the transition from political liberalism to democracy in Europe at the turn of the 20th century.

Keywords: Catalonia, Political clientelism, Spain in the Bourbon Restoration, Political behaviour, Path to Democracy in Europe

Introduction

Generally speaking, historiography has not extensively analysed caciquism in Catalonia during the Bourbon Restoration. This is largely because it has been difficult and complex to explain the existence of this particular socio-political phenomenon in an industrialised and/or agro-industrial society, as Catalonia was at the time. In fact, in theory the most natural and logical thing would be to assume the full compatibility between political liberalism and capitalist development, along with the automatic relationship between caciquism and economic backwardness. Fortunately, today this debate – which was quite vivid during the 1980s – no longer makes sense because comparative and transnational studies have verified that caciquism – meant as a kind of political corruption that primarily takes shape in election fraud, although by other means as well – inherently accompanied the modernisation process of Western societies since the beginning of the contemporary era. Consequently, this phenomenon is concomitant with favouritism, political clientelism and patronage.[1] And it is at the core of one of the hypotheses guiding the leading European studies on the history of political corruption: the criticism of favouritism or political clientelism would have transformed power techniques, which renders it essential to analyse micro-politics and their modernisation in contemporary societies.[2]

Within this modernisation process, what were common and in no way exceptional were the constant tensions and contradictions between the new liberal regulatory frameworks governed by the values of freedom and equality and their practical application, which was subjected to the erratic dynamic of the interests of the new ruling elites on the state and local scale, along with a constant redefinition of these same values according to partisan convenience and the social mobility stemming from capitalist development. Therefore, these new perspectives refute the exceptionalism of the phenomena of caciquism, clientelism or the patronage system and instead integrate them into more inclusive explanations of the transition from liberalism to democracy. Within a political perspective, the 19th century is thus viewed from alterity itself instead of as a necessary, required step in the transition towards liberal democracy.

Since the 1840s in Spain, the word caciquism has referred to a negative conception of politics and the exercise of power. The most generic meaning of this word and its derivates in the same semantic field was the abuse of power. For this reason, it was readily equated with corruption. A quick survey of the different local Catalan newspapers from the 1880s reveals the different discursive contents of the word caciquism as a synonym of privilege, favouritism, arbitrariness, despotism, irregularity and tyranny, among others. Likewise, time and time again caciquism was labelled calamitous, oppressive, unbridled, denigrat-

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ing, immoral and despicable. It was viewed as a symptom of malaise, "a plague against which all parties and all independent people protest".[3] In short, it embodied the worst of politics, dirty dealing, politicking and political jockeying, which was opposed to an honest government and a sound administration, which are neither irregular nor arbitrary. This vision was broadly shared by the Catholic-regionalist sectors, Catalanism, Carlism, integrism and obviously the different republican families, anarchists and socialists. Despite being the leading beneficiaries of caciquism, even the parties of the regime criticised it.

The dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy added the word "cacique" a bit late, in 1884, defining it as a figure who exercises excess power in towns. Since the start of Spanish constitutionalism, this negative image had been attributed to a presumed selfishness in the territories and towns, which were more concerned with local finagling and power struggles than the general interest of the nation.[4] In short, the infamy of caciquism was taken to the territories, election districts, local administration and their elites. However, in the last few decades of the 19th century, caciquist behaviour continued to be reserved for the local elites, while "oligarchy" became the universal, disparaging word used to describe the state-wide ruling class whose malfeasance had denatured the liberal regime from the beginning and would have brought the nation to decline. The convergence between caciquism and oligarchy was the epicentre of the diagnosis performed by the regenerationist politician Joaquín Corta based on the results of the famous survey which he conducted in the Athenaeum of Madrid in 1901, a story which has long been told among intellectuals and historiographers even until today.[5]

In this article, we shall seek to contribute to explaining how caciquism worked in Catalonia during the Restoration and how it evolved within the context of the emergence of mass politics and society during the early decades of the 20th century. Specifically, we shall analyse how some regional power caciquates formed in the Catalan districts in order to further explore the development of caciquist relations; likewise, we shall explain the process through which the dynastic rotation in Catalonia was destroyed through the condemnation of caciquism, and to what extent this entailed true progress in democracy.[6]

Oligarchic liberalism, executivism and government fraud

Since the beginning of constitutionalism, the Spanish political system traditionally tended to place more weight on governability than on representativeness, even with the current regime designed by the 1978 Constitution in which the reinforcement of governability was once again chosen to counter the political instability of the Second Republic. This characteristic was quite pronounced in 19th-century Spain, when governability was guaranteed at the same time that citizen representativeness was being neutralised in the parliaments, a characteristic that is not exclusive to this country but instead can be found in other liberal regimes from that period.[7] This had a great deal to do with the model of liberal state which was being forged, which was quite similar to the uniform, centralised model in France that was supposed to oversee society as the sole legitimate representative of collective interests. However, it was also because of the importance of Catholicism in political practices.

In Spain during the Bourbon Restoration, just as in Portugal during the Regeneraçao, France during Napoleon III and Prussia under Bismarck, as well as the Romanian constitutional monarchy defined in its 1866 constitution, the struggle for political power centred around the executive power. Specifically, in France, Spain, Portugal and Romania, the division of powers was barely articulated and quite limited, as it relied primarily on the pre-eminence of the executive power, with a public administration that was heavily hierarchised and centralised.[8] What is more, in Spain during the Restoration, as the 1876 constitution had stipulated, the Crown was in charge of divvying up power among the political elites, such that the liberal consensus that Isabelline Spain had been incapable of reaching was finally achieved.

Despite this, the regime could only be stable if government fraud was systematically committed, as it was necessary to control the election processes from the official estates. Spanish liberalism would have fulfilled its aims with this mechanism, albeit at the expense of a notable deficit in political citizenship.[9] And its most scandalous consequence would have been the denaturalisation of the principle of representative government and the consequent contempt for the will of the electorate. This contempt would retain its impunity with the natural acceptance of what was considered its main benefit, namely the moral influence of the government. This guiding principle in the exercise of power allowed the citizens' electoral preferences to be guided at the discretion of the government, which was regarded as the guarantor and interpreter of collective interests.[10]

Along with the Basque Country, Navarra and the large cities like Madrid, Valencia and Bilbao, Catalonia was one of the places where the dynastic systems of the Restoration broke down the earliest and the most robustly. In consequence, we must identify not only the reasons why the dynastic parties in Catalonia were discredited at such an early date but also how the different political forces realigned and adapted to the new electoral scene which was characterised by plurality and competitiveness, and what kinds of mechanisms they used to obtain and later control their respective power shares, including the practices of mobilising clientele. At a time when the entrenched dynastic rotation and *encasellat* (ballot manipulation by the Ministry of Governance arranging the seats in advance) was more difficult to reproduce and impose, especially after the early 20th century, government inter-

ference was gradually disputed and replaced within the electoral districts through mobilisation and electoral competitiveness, although they, too, coexisted alongside corrupt habits.[11]

Attention has essentially been focused on the mechanisms of the oligarchic maintenance of political power, which can basically be explained by the intra-elitist consensus among the professional politicians from the centre in Madrid and the regional elites on the periphery.[12] In Spain and Portugal, the governments were able to modulate the pace of elitist succession with the moderating concurrence of the Crown, through dynastic shift in the former and rotation in the latter. This also held true in the liberal regime instated in Romania just after it gained independence from the Ottoman Empire; indeed, until World War I, no government lost the elections it had organised.[13]

The process of adapting this elitist pact to the social transformations and the consolidation of a civil society arranged around interest groups, given that the pact was guaranteed by government fraud and a social patronage system, is one of the major gaps that has not yet been fully explained. Nor do we know whether the dynastic parties adapted to competitive politics, or to what extent caciquist policies coexisted with a logic of vertical and horizontal clientele-based control of the vote exercised by dynastic and anti-dynastic candidates, conducted by partisan elites willing to compete for citizens' votes.

That is, we need to discover to what extent elections were no longer just another way to legitimise the social hierarchies at the turn of the 20th century, as they had been in the course of the previous century and as perfectly explained by the patrimonial concept of power, or conversely to what extent the competitive logic forced a confrontation among power groups.[14] These elites no longer relied on the natural order of society and/or on massive governmental fraud but instead on more or less rudimentary party machines and on the dialectic between the political centre and the regional peripheries, between Madrid and the local elites.

The old debate posed by Salvador de Madariaga – later cited by Raymond Carr – focused on ascertaining whether a brand-new system had died with the pronouncement of General Primo de Rivera, or whether a moribund old system – the oligarchic regime – had been finished off at the end of the Restoration is still undecided.[15] This debate has vacillated between weighing the vitality of the dynastic forces and the opposition parties, stressing their weaknesses and limitations, and highlighting the oligarchic, elitist and patrimonial behaviour of the parties in power which would have held onto it until the very end, thus impeding the democratisation of a regime that would conserve its liberal and oligarchic nature. We could further this debate with contributions around the origins of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship that pinpoint the political collapse of the system as the main cause for its authoritarian and praetorian leanings.

"Buffet" politics: Caciquism and caciquates in Catalonia during the Restoration[16]

Compared to the enormous vitality of studies of caciquism in Spain, primarily from the 1990s, in Catalonia this sociopolitical phenomenon has garnered considerably less attention by contemporary historiography. Without a doubt, it was a core component that served to identify, describe and characterise the political-electoral life of the Restoration and is therefore inseparable from analyses of the evolution of electoral sociology, yet historiography has not striven to explain its significance and functionality. As a whole, it has tended to be viewed a bit folklorically in the accounts of the trickery committed to falsify election results. Alternatively, it has been associated with local power relations, often missing plausible argumentation on the functioning or transformation of clientele-based mechanisms. For example, there has been considerably less interest in explaining the content of the electoral protests and their legal-political vicissitudes. Generally speaking, with the exception of a few notable monographs, caciquism has often been naturalised, thus rendering it invisible within the political scene of the Restoration in Catalonia.

Perhaps this scant attention is related to the survival of the interpretative thesis posited by Jaume Vicens Vives, which states that caciquism must have been somehow beneficial in Catalonia during the Bourbon Restoration, and therefore to some extent it must have been indulgent with the anti-dynastic oppositions. Generally speaking, this caciquism would have relied not so much on violence as on the neutralisation or attraction of the political adversary, and essentially, as Vicens states, "by exhausting and disillusioning the electors".[17]

According to this interpretation, Catalonia as a whole was not a land of foreign or carpetbagging government-placed candidates, as the Catalanists insist; instead, the ruling Catalan elite somewhat willingly subjugated itself to the designs of the government, despite the fact that they only felt like "minsters of Catalan affairs". The turn of the century, the state's financial and political crisis and its inability to assimilate the claims of the workers and regions, along with the push-back against government caciquism, led the workers to embrace anarcho-syndicalism and the middle classes to feel represented by political Catalanism. And generally speaking, this thesis has remained pretty much intact and readily embraced by Catalan historiography. However, it does not consider either the unique features of Catalan caciquism, if it existed as such, or how it adapted to a new scenario of political-electoral competitiveness – which had previously been non-existent, at least steadily over time – which was ushered in at differing paces in 1901-3 and 1907.[18]

Vicens Vives' interpretation was the subject of a profound discussion by the Italian historian Gabriele Ranzato in a pioneering study on the city of Sabadell, known as

the "Catalan Manchester" because of its specialisation in the wool textile industry.[19] This historian's hypothesis suggested that the bourgeoisie, in Catalonia as well, did not necessarily adopt liberal political attitudes, that is, that economic liberalism did not necessarily need to be accompanied by the values and practices of political liberalism. This non-automatic relation seems quite obvious today, but within the context of historians' intense debates on the bourgeois revolution in the 1980s, it was not at all so.

Ranzato claimed that the wool manufacturers in Sabadell preferred to become hosts of the State, mere subjects, in exchange for the protection of their textile businesses, for fear of the risks inherent in the free market. It is true that Borja de Riquer replicated this thesis, in an attempt to spark a debate, when he claimed that despite feeling removed from the professional politicians of the Restoration, the Catalan politicians engaged in ballot manipulation when it suited them. What is more, he argues that caciquism was a phenomenon of everyday life, neither a specific manifestation of the bloc holding political power, in allusion to Manuel Tuñón de Lara, nor simply an epiphenomenon of political life.[20]

After this debate, in the wake of the rise in local history, the tendency was to monographically analyse caciquism, albeit always in association with the dynamic of electoral processes and political representation in the districts. Studies of caciquism have only exceptionally been conducted within the framework of the social history of politics, situating them in the transition from the politics of notables to the politics of masses. There are very few monographs that examine Catalonia as a whole or the electoral districts; indeed, they only exist for Lleida and Tarragona, while in both Barcelona and Girona there are only a handful of analyses and reflections on the local level.[21] What is more, some studies seek to explain how local power worked as a specific methodology to analyse caciquism. A parallel approach that does indeed seek to be comparative is the one I have spearheaded on the political modernisation of Catalan cities during the reign of Alphonse XIII, which has allowed me to define a model of political change that had some common patterns, as well as few unique ones, spanning the shifting correlations of political forces in the struggles for local power.[22] The common features are the decline in dynastic forces, the hegemony of the oppositions (republican and especially Catalanist in the Lliga Regionalista), the re-adaptation of political clientelism to serve the inter-partisan struggle, the plurality and competitiveness of elections, electoral mobilisation, and the politicisation of the street as a public space of ongoing political-ideological confrontation between opposing political cultures.

Manuel Marin took this one step further in a radically different paradigm, the paradigm of the cultural and symbolic history of politics and therefore of caciquism.[23] It focuses on a case study of urban and industrial caciquism which was fuelled by the figure of the wool manufacturer

Figure 1. *La Campana de Gràcia*, 2 November 1901 - Satirical allusion to the electoral fraud consisting in providing false credentials bearing the name of deceased persons who were not removed from the census.

Pau Turull i Comadran. With this study – which was based on exhaustive research conducted in the extensive correspondence conserved in the Turull family's private archive – Marin introduced some of the keys that allow us to analyse caciquism as a natural, normal phenomenon adapted to urban and industrial settings in Catalan society during the Restoration.

Pau Turull was a prominent man who exerted a great deal of authority over the local community and acted as the banker of other prominent men of the City of Sabadell thanks to his immense fortune. This privileged position within the "natural" hierarchy of society led him to monopolise parliamentary representation through his ability to coalesce opposing complicities and interests, even from the very federal republicans whose political silence he managed to buy, when needed. However, when the time came for him to professionalise and take responsibility for the electoral machine – what was called the electoral "crank" or the "*manubrio*" in the terminology of the era – then his obstinacy worked against him and he did not manage to stop the mobilisation of the workers' movement, not because of his incapacity but because of his failure to adapt. The last dynastic MP elected in the Sabadell district was indeed his brother, Enric Turull,

who won the 1914 general elections thanks to fraud and the votes of the "pobles rabassaires" in the district.[24]

The regime needed professional politicians who could feed the ambitions of the governmental parties, not their own personal ambitions. The disparaging way that the civil governor of Lleida called the tactics pursued by the prominent men who did not want to bend to his will "buffet politics" in 1905 alludes precisely to prominent men's obstinate determination to conserve or expand their spheres of regional power at the expense of the political objectives of the parties they served, which were basically the government parties that had to organise the elections. Ultimately, two of these eminences, Miquel Agelet and Emili Riu, debated the political control of the province of Lleida after Sagasta's death and were faced with the threat of the republicans' ascent. They were both aligned within the liberal party yet were thenceforth in opposing factions, the former a follower of Eugenio Montero Ríos and the latter of Segismundo Moret.[25] Until 1919, the long-standing MP for Sort, Emili Riu, did not attain provincial leadership. The ministers of governance were forced to constantly struggle with personal demands, with the intentions of the opposition candidates, with those of other candidates not sponsored by the current government and willing to spend money to get elected, and with the claims and demands of the districts, such that government ballot manipulation particularly in Catalonia since the turn of the century was increasingly laborious to deal with until it became impossible. In 1914, the government considered Catalonia electorally emancipated.

The limitation expressed by the manufacturer and MP for Sabadell, Pau Turull, reveals how the "natural" caciquates transformed into machines serving the recruitment of clientele votes, through which the political regime of the Restoration sought stability and the most important undergirding of its survival. Sometimes these caciquates disintegrated as economic diversification increased, leading to the appearance of new elites willing to dispute the hegemony of the traditional prominent citizens. This is the story that Joaquim Capdevila recounted for the city of Tarragona, which revolved around the figure of the landowner Enric de Càrcer, a faithful follower of Canovism, who was capable of weaving and forging stable bonds with the provincial council and with other MPs in the Courts from the districts on the Lleida plain in a way that was totally alien to the political activism of the leaders of these institutions, despite the hegemony of the conservative party in the province during the first few decades of the Restoration.[26]

Following the conflict over irregularities related to the supply of electrical fluid and water, which was monopolised by a company owned by Enric de Càrcer, an extensive, heterogeneous coalition was formed which included liberals, Catholics, Catalanists and republicans, later joined by a faction from the conservative party that was at odds with that prominent man who had exercised political, social and symbolic caciquism for years. Ultimately, a political change was being hatched, one that was directly associated with the dispersion of new socioeconomic classes represented by the industrialists and merchants, who were not willing to remain tolerant of the power hegemony that the petty nobility had traditionally exercised since the 18th century. This small regional capital fully entered the era of the politics of mass mobilisation and competition for the vote alongside a dynamism in its social and cultural life, yet another expression of the burgeoning modern society.

Thus, we can see two phenomena shaping the caciquates in Catalonia during the Restoration. Two paradigmatic examples of the first one, the old guard, are the cases described above, which were either rural, such as Enric de Càrcer in Tárrega, or urban and industrial, such as the manufacturer Pau Turull in Sabadell. And the second was the caciquates which emerged later, partly in response to the need to stabilise the parliamentary representation of the electoral districts, a tendency which is comparable to what happened in the rest of Spain, albeit later, after 1914. One example of this in the Terrassa district is *Salisme*, named after the liberal Alfons Sala Argemí, who was ennobled by King Alphonse XIII with the title of Count of Egara. The early caciquates were more closely tied to homogeneous rural or industrial economic interests monopolised by patricians, and they were the political translation of social relations determined by patronage, paternalism and bonds of dependency more common and specific to traditional societies, with strong roots in local interests or with an impetus from industrialisation, yet with a mindset and imaginaries still anchored in the society still heavily dominated by communitarian values.

Yet on the one hand, the new caciquates obeyed the requirement of professionalisation of parliamentary representation, such that their ultimate purpose was not only to win legislative elections but also – and more importantly – to retain the seat, while on the other, they most likely also reflected a way to counter the masses' access to electoral life by neutralising partisan pluralism and electoral competition to the extent possible, consolidating a stable representation by the hegemony exercised by one party or by a cross-cutting power oligarchy, such as the *Salista* movement developed in the city of Terrassa.

Salisme illustrated the consolidation of an oligarchic political movement that cut across party lines yet at the same time was able to offer individual and collective responses. It revolved around the manufacturer Alfons Sala i Argemí, who monopolised the parliamentary representation of the district of Terrassa virtually nonstop between 1891 and 1923, first as an MP and later as a senator. He began his political career in the provincial council of Barcelona in 1883, and later he won the seat for Terrassa, which he gave up when he abstained from submitting his candidacy in the 1907 elections, which were easily won by the Solidaritat Catalana platform. *Salisme*, with its right-

Figure 2. *La Campana de Gràcia*, 14 March 1903 - Caricature referring to the republican electoral victory in Barcelona against the rightist forces.

hand men perfectly ensconced in the local, political, cultural and economic institutions of the city of Terrassa, was able to appease the workers' movement and deeply-entrenched conservative Catalanism, keeping them at a remove from Courts.[27]

The discussion over *Salista* dominance was gradual, as the powerful republicanism condemned the existing election machinations which usually took place in the rural towns within the district. One of the most irregular practices which sparked the most widespread rejection in public opinion in this district occurred in the village of Rellinars in the 1920 elections, where the voting resulted in Sala's victory over the Catalanist republican candidate, Domènec Palet i Barba. At that time, a huge snowstorm was cited as the reason why the report on election results was released with a completely unjustified delay. However, the reality of the situation was otherwise. As the chant goes – one of the many that circulates about Sala and his followers: "Sala said: Let all the dead of the village vote./ If you find a paralysed person / make him go vote, too / if he can't do it by himself / he will roll there with the snow".[28]

We could also shed light on other forms of regional political hegemony which sought to keep office through another example, namely the Marquis of Camps, his immense assets and the influence he exerted in different counties of Girona. The first Marquis of Camps, Pelagi de Camps, was the eighth largest taxpayer in Catalonia in the mid-19th century. His son, Carles de Camps i Olzinelles, who was affiliated with the Lliga Regionalista, could not shed the accusations levelled by the republicans at different times in his political career. During the voting in the 1916 elections, Camps met with the owners and manufacturers against the electoral college his village, Salt. In this town, according to the newspaper *L'Autonomista*, the Marquis persisted in his efforts to buy votes and provided ballots to his tenants and factory workers, "who were later watched over from the stairs of the electoral college to make sure that they did not change them to reflect their own way of thinking".[29]

Finally, we should also mention the kind of caciquist domination exercised by the Godó family in the district of Igualada, which had amplifying effects through the control they exerted over Catalan public opinion from *La Vanguardia* newspaper, which they owned. Pol Dalmau recounted this story quite skilfully in his doctoral thesis which was just published in book form. This historian seizes on the virtues of the social history of politics to shed light on the transition from the politics of nota-

bles to the politics of the masses in Catalonia, yet at the same time he stresses the symbolic components and cultural representativeness of this manufacturing family over a local community in the county of Anoia, as well as showcasing the readership of their newspaper, a rising source of power during the emergence of mass society in Catalonia.[30]

Despite the fact that the founders of the newspaper, Bartomeu and Carles Godó, fled from the industrial crisis that was besieging this region in the mid-19th century and moved to Bilbao, where they launched a new business line, they nonetheless kept up their family ties at all times (business and family were the flip sides of the same coin), as well as their ties with the region. The support of their kin and political friends in the district served as the foundation of their political influence and won them parliamentary representation. The family members held onto the seat until the 1914 elections. However, in July 1906 Ramón Godó Lallana, a member of the second-generation, decided not to run for re-election as a deputy for the Igualada constituency for fear of losing his seat to a broad anti-Cacique coalition made up by Carlists, Republicans and Catalanists. Ramon Godó detested caciquism, but at the same time he was in favour of "good caciques" like himself, as he regarded him-self as the "natural" MP from the district. This symbolic capital contributed to enhancing his authority and public image as a "good" notable, thanks to the social support he had in the district, as well as his newspaper.

Intense politicisation was unleashed after the end of the Godó family caciquate, just as in other districts, sparked by the crisis in the wine industry and channelled via associations which grouped together the interests of the landowning farmers and the smallholders, the sharecroppers who cultivated the vineyards. This politicisation has been studied in the town of Hostalets de Pierola in the comarca of *Anoia*.[31] The class interests were politically expressed via the Lliga Regionalista and republicanism in a scenario of electoral competition.

In short, in Catalonia during the Restoration, the existence of caciquates viewed as spaces of regional political domination by prominent families was a common thread, although it did not last over time. The caciquates or networks of regional power were characterised by a cluster of clienteles and loyalties woven around the economic preeminence of a prominent man, family or family line, which was sustained on the social influence they exerted over the local community, which then had a logical translation in the sphere of parliamentary representation. We cannot find more or less stable provincial pyramids of political leaders beyond the existence of politicians professionalised and engaged in government ballot manipulation.

To the contrary, under the control of the electoral influence that these professional politicians exerted, we can find a transformation of the networks of regional power as new economic interests emerged around the turn of the century, and as the middle classes organised themselves independently of the traditional elites, rendering the political representation of the districts and towns more plural. We could mention the appearance of republican movements with regional bases, such as most notably *Marcel·linisme* in the districts of Tortosa and Roquetes, as wonderfully studied by Josep Sancho, and the political control exercised by the lawyer from Manresa, Maurici Fius i Palà, over the industrial villages in the district of Manresa.[32] Republicans and Catalanists were the major beneficiaries of the breakdown of the dynastic rotation in Catalonia at the expense of the parties of the regime, which were not acquiescent but instead tried to readjust to the new situation, albeit to no avail.

Electoral protests, denunciations and the fight against caciquism: Political mobilisation in an emerging mass society

Despite the scourge brought about by accusations of corruption and the lodging of protests, the capacity to commit acts of corruption was paradoxically synonymous with the possession of power resources. So was the possibility of swaying a court ruling on the validity of the elections. Thus, the legal appeals of election fraud analysed by Josep Noguera in the district of Berga (Barcelona) reveal the drive not only to restore the offended honour caused by coercion, intimidation and even physical aggression, but also to publicly gain legitimacy.[33] A veritable symbolic battle for power was waged in the elections, and corrupt practices were yet another power technique consented to by the hegemonic cultural conception of the political liberalism of the Restoration.

Over time, the electoral protests shifted tactics, and were also most likely better grounded, although they often happened after the fact, not at the time of the vote-counting, and were even replicated by the protested can-

Figure 3. *L'Esquella de la Torratxa*, 1 September 1905 - Caricature referring to voting manipulated by the cacique in favour of the ministerial candidates.

Figure 4. Demonstration called by Solidaritat Catalana in front of Barcelona's Arc de Triomf on the 20th of May 1906. First large Catalanist mobilisation.

didates. The analysis of the electoral jurisprudence of the Supreme Court conducted by the lawyer Francisco Aguado in 1920 – which covers the period 1910-1916 – stresses first the high court's limitations on accepting the protests (it did when it found huge disparities in the distribution of the votes) and secondly how they diversified in terms of kind and intensity.[34] For the district of Barcelona, Jaume Muñoz has clearly demonstrated the lower frequency of physical violence and coercion from public servants, primarily in favour of the practice of buying votes, which was gaining purchase.[35] In some towns, even the mayors themselves bought votes. Likewise, fraud persisted in different guises: breaking the urns, adulterating the lists of voters or filling out the election reports in an arbitrary fashion. According to one protest from the 1916 elections, more voters voted than the number that appeared on the list in the towns of Sant Llorenç de Morunys, La Coma i La Pedra, Guixers and Navès in the district of La Seu d'Urgell.

The main problem inherent to studying electoral protests is their reliability, since they are often lodged after the elections were held. And they also increasingly came with counter-protests which sought to neutralise the possible effects of the protest. One example is the district of Puigcerdà in the 1916 elections, when the dynastic officeholder Joan Degàs was pitted against the candidate from the Lliga Regionalista, Eusebi Bertrand. Faced with an avalanche of protests lodged by Degàs, who requested that the elections be nullified, he attached a list of voters who claimed to agree with his ideas and the services provided in the district. However, the high court confirmed the validity of the elections.

Public opinion's gradual awareness of election fraud, the extremely powerful regenerationist diatribes after the crisis of 1898 and the strength of the anti-dynastic options in Catalonia led to a scenario in which intolerance of the abuse of power and administrative irregularities became an implacable engine of polarisation and electoral competition. In the Barcelona district, Manuel Planas i Casals, who oversaw the conservative dynastic interests in that province, considered this party's influence shattered after its failure in the May 1903 elections.[36]

Indeed, the conservatives had lost the districts of Mataró, Berga, Sabadell, Vilafranca and Vilanova despite having organised the elections. All told, only four conservative candidates were elected, along with two liberals, four from the Lliga Regionalista, nine republicans and one independent. The big winners were the republicans, who presented a united front and became the leading force in the Barcelona district, while the major losers were the dynastic candidates and the Lliga Regionalista. Planas argued that one of the causes of the disaster was "the noticeable weakening of the power of the conservatives, tenaciously combated by Catalanists and republicans and not effectively supported by the Government", which had remained neutral given the civil governor's refusal to intercede. They had to learn this lesson if they were going to continue having some kind of power in Catalan politics.[37]

The condemnatory or protesting tone shifted according to the diversification and plurality of interests and demands, and the desire for representativeness channelled by the anti-dynastic parties. The Lliga Regionalista constructed a corpus of thinking primarily through the writings of Enric Prat de la Riba, who legitimised its political action, whose epicentre was the destruction of what he called the "citadel of caciquism".[38] Thus, a new politics was constructed, true politics, politics that served the interests of civil society. And thus it became representative at the same time as a battle was being waged between the dynastic candidates and the Catalanists for the monopoly of Catalan political life. The condemnatory campaigns against caciquism became particularly visible in the Solidaritat Catalana elections held on the 21st of April 1907. Caciquism was equated with the dirty politics practised by the dynastic candidates, which led to a landslide victory for the candidates in the Solidaritat Catalana coalition, made up of all the parties except the dynastic candidates and the Lerrouxian republicans, who earned 41 of the 44 seats up for grabs.[39]

However, one thing was the discursive sphere and another was political practice. This tension was brutally reflected in the protest and revolt which is known as the Avalot dels Burots (revolt of the tax-collectors) in the village of Artés (Bages) on the 2nd of January 1917. In this case,

the caciquism it was combatting was not dynastic but came from the Lliga Regionalista in the Castellterçol district, where a fief owned by Francesc Cambó that did not have a district of its own was part of the village, which was also the bargaining chip in the negotiations with the government ballot manipulation.[40] In this case, the terms were inverted: the carpetbagging or hand-picked MP was an anti-dynastic politician, while the local authorities leaned towards the Lliga, as well as the landowner and provincial MP Antoni Abadal.

Furthermore, in the village of Artés, the Berenguer family were manufacturers who were essentially the owners and lords of the village, since they employed 30% of the villagers (800 workers were employed in their factory) and drove the local economy to such an extent that the village merged with the factory and the factory with the village, and the chaplain, the doctor and the town hall were dominated by the same family and their clientele. Even though the Canalejas government had eliminated the tax on consumer goods in 1912, it was still charged because many small towns were financially asphyxiated. In 1917, the purchasing power of the workers of Artés had dropped because of the increased cost of living during World War I, and because the monopoly led them to earn subsistence salaries.

In this context, the increase in this tax in order to pay off the debt caused by the failed attempt to channel largely unpotable water to the village, which also benefited the estate of the aforementioned provincial MP Antoni Abadal, was the spark that kindled the villagers' ire.[41] Ultimately, this protest was just the tip of the iceberg of a more structural problem: on the one hand, the end of the Berenguer family's textile monopoly and paternalistic politics, and on the other the condemnation of the lack of political representation channelled by the republicans through the mobilisation of workers and shopkeepers, who were the worst hit by the increase in fiscal pressure. The revolt ended with the resignation of the local corporation, the creation of an union (Associació Obrera d'Artés) and the establishment of an industrial cooperative which was later privatised (Tèxtil d'Artés), despite the six-month lockout decreed by the Berenguers. The consumer goods tax was reinstated, but it was now collected via local distribution, which was much less onerous to the local economy. The Lliga lost political control over the village forevermore.

Quite a different case was the rice conflict, also known as the rice war of the Baix Empordà (Girona), and its politicisation.[42] Here we can see the efforts of a dynastic candidate to keep his seat in the most mobilised and participative elections in Catalonia during the Restoration, specifically the April 1907 elections. The conflict was sparked by a new outbreak of malaria and its impact on public health. The Count of Serra and Sant Iscle, Robert de Robert, the conservative candidate, who had had the district of Torroella de Montgrí enfeoffed for years and who oversaw conservative politics in the province of Girona, sought to become the standard-bearer of anti-rice interests. Given the Girona political class's increasing distance from the state, it was essential for the government to keep hold of the fiefdom of Torroella.[43] If the seat were lost, conservative politics would be totally expelled from that district. For this reason, all the candidate's efforts were funnelled towards spreading the word among electors about the government's utmost zeal to care for public health.

However, internally the government was not clear about the total ban on rice cultivation to stop the cases of malaria; nor was the rival, the candidate from Solidaritat Catalana, the nationalist republican notary Josep Torras i Sampol, channelling the rice-growers' interests, as Robert claimed. It is curious how the anti-caciquist struggle ran a dynastic candidate who was purportedly against the rice-growers, that is, against an imposition of caciquism, when in reality Robert only aspired to satisfy the conservative government led by Antonio Maura and to secure a lifetime senate seat accompanied by a noble title as a Spanish grandee. The person who was actually valiantly defending the anti-rice struggle was his rival, who in a side election won the seat for the district of Torroella, a vacancy which had to be covered after Robert's sudden and apparently incomprehensible resignation. For the conservative politician, playing the anti-rice card had only been a pretext, although he had played it to the hilt, mobilising propaganda resources and undertaking a campaign to wear down his rival, who was at the helm of a powerful Solidaritat Catalana coalition. However, Torras only provisionally controlled this electoral district because he immediately returned to dynastic obedience.

Rotating coalitions, non-dynastic ministerial candidates, horizontal clientelism and fragmented oppositions

During the period 1876-1899, the hegemony of the dynastic parties was virtually absolute, and liberals and conservatives earned a shocking percentage of the disputed election returns, more than 86%. Between 1876 and 1886, they controlled more than 90% of the returns; between 1891 and 1905, 75%; and after that date only 28%, such that the hegemony shifted to the anti-dynastic oppositions, primarily the Lliga Regionalista, the different republican parties and the Carlists.[44]

After 1901, in the electoral districts where it was impossible to build or maintain permanent caciquates, the electoral dynamics matched the capacity and strength of the anti-dynastic oppositions. In the districts where they were strong, either the mandates of the Lliga and republicans were revived, such as the city of Barcelona, or – more likely – coalitions were established between opposing parties or their factions and the residues of the governing parties willing to continue the struggle. To the contrary, where the dynastic ruling parties or their clientele had the capacity to

lead coalitions, then the opposition parties buckled down and sought to garner whatever power shares they could.

These oppositions were heterogeneous, so it was difficult for them to join forces, except for the great experiment of the unique and exceptional Solidaritat Catalana, motivated by the famous events of *Cu-Cut* which led to the approval of the 1906 Law on Jurisdictions that so irritated both Catalanists and republicans because it eroded and limited freedom of expression and entrusted the supposed crimes committed against the state and its symbols to military jurisdiction.[45] Thus, Catalanism was fragmented into a large conservative party, which largely replaced conservative liberal dynasticism, the Lliga Regionalista, and leftist options represented by republican nationalism through different party platforms.[46] However, we should also note that the progress of the anti-dynastic oppositions was far-reaching and widespread in Catalonia, albeit not as uniform as in the rest of Spain, so this internal strength automatically translated into political weakness within Spain as a whole.

Secondly, some opposition parties were equally capable of adapting, being versatile and taking advantage of the breaches in the political system without disputing its underpinnings and the rules of play it afforded them. This would largely explain the diversified coalitionist dynamic around the existing power correlations in the districts, as well as the ability to impose a regional politics of alliances in Catalonia developed essentially by the Lliga Regionalista, which was always willing to negotiate "districts" with the government, the ministerial candidates and any other candidates with social and monetary power, regardless of whether they were Carlist, dynastic or even republican.

What is more, despite the recognition of universal suffrage for men over the age of 25 in 1891, in practice parliamentary representation was off-limits to a significant swath of the population because they did not feel motivated and expressed an intelligent indifference, or because they felt marginalised in practice as the political system revealed itself to be pusillanimous when politically integrating citizens because it actually did not believe in the true worthiness of suffrage.

In short, after the profound political crisis which was triggered by the loss of the last overseas colonies in 1898, the Catalan elite began to envision their own strategy, which entailed placing the Catalan question on the Spanish agenda. In order to do so, they had to gain legitimacy at the urns, that is, neutralise the mechanisms by which voting was adulterated. Catalonia was one of the sites where dynastic power disintegrated the most clearly and the earliest, where it was the most evident that the caciquist electoral machines stopped collecting the revenues meant for the party that governed. The fact that administrative fraud was gradually receding did not invalidate the pursuit of irregular means of getting votes at quite late dates, and both the dynastic and the opposition parties used these means to increase corrupt electoral practices.

Simultaneously, the status of ministerial candidate was devalued to the point that any candidate, not necessarily dynastic ones, could earn it if it was in the government's interest. For this reason, as the dynastic formations fragmented and the traditional dynastic rule was dismantled, another system developed which we call "coalitionist rotation" or "rotating coalitions", in which Carlists, Republicans and regionalists were involved alongside the dynastic factions.[47] This new rotation emerged in a scenario of increasing electoral competition, where alliances and oppositions could be multiform, not just limited to the rotation which arose in the Barcelona district between the Lliga Regionalista and the radical republicans. In consequence, voting authentication was both the cause and consequence of an increase in political mobilisation, although this phenomenon was in no way free of persistent fraud and corruption.

Despite the differences in criteria which separated the dynastic Catalan parties with respect to the state directions, they were grosso modo accommodated to the rules of game of the political regime ideated by Cánovas del Castillo. Today, nothing seems to deny the existence of caciquism in Catalonia, even though it had different characteristics and rhythms more befitting a much more urbanised, certainly more secular and also notably more autonomous and articulated society.

These elements which made Catalonia unique within Spanish politics include the irregular presence of regional caciquates in space and in time; a much less notable presence of carpetbaggers installed by the government, which was also more nuanced since many of the carpetbaggers from other regions had kinship ties or had purchased properties in Catalan districts and immediately became residents there;[48] what is called Catalan-style "ministerialism", which entailed the Catalan dynastic parties having some degree of autonomy with regard to the national directions dictated by the state and a reproduction of the peculiar dynastic rotation in the sense that Catalonia was not a priority in the development of ballot manipulation and that the major politicians of the Restoration did not have any districts there; the breakdown of the dynastic rotation at quite an early date, between 1901 and 1907; the existence of powerful anti-dynastic, Catalanist, republican and traditionalist oppositions with which the cabinets had to negotiate ballot manipulation; and finally, a negligible presence of article 29 of the 1907 electoral law which allowed candidates without rivals to be declared the victors immediately, a practice that was rather widespread in the regions of Galicia, the two Castiles and Andalusia.

And we could add yet another difference compared to Spain as a whole: the suspensions of town halls, mayors and city councillors agreed to by the civil governors, a recurring practice which the cabinets used on the eve of elections in order to influence the electoral results, was also negligible. Thus, between 1915 and 1923, only 102 city councillors (1.4% of the total in Spain), 11 mayors

(2.1%, and none in the Barcelona district) and 7 town halls (1.7% and none in Tarragona) were suspended.[49] The number of suspensions determined by the Minister of Governance was slightly higher, although equally negligible: 23 out of the 544 in Spain as a whole (4.2%), and they all took place in the last general elections held just before the Primo de Rivera dictatorship seized power.

Notes and references

[1] The scholarly literature on these sociopolitical phenomena is quite extensive. I shall choose just a few from the many that exist: the classic book by Samuel N. Eisenstadt and Luis Roniger, *Patrons, Clients and Friends: Interpersonal Relations and the Structure of Trust in Society*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 1984; Walter Little and Eduardo Posada-Carbó (ed.), *Political Corruption in Europe and Latin America,* London, Macmillan Press, 1996; Jean-Louis Briquet and Frédéric Sawicki (directors), *Le clientélisme politique dans les sociétés contemporaines*, Paris, PUF, 1998; Simona Piattoni (ed.), *Clientelism, Interests and Democratic Representation. The European Experience in Historical and Comparative Perspective*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001; Frédéric Monier, *La politique des plaintes. Clientélisme et demandes sociales dans le Vaucluse d'Édouard Daladier (1890-1940),* Paris, La Boutique de l'Histoire, 2007, and the books by Jean-Louis Briquet which focus on clientelism in Corsica. For Spain, I would highlight Antonio Robles (ed.), *Politica en penumbra. patronazgo y clientelismos políticos en la España contemporánea*, Madrid, Siglo XXI, 1996. Xose Veiga Alonso, "Anatomía del clientelismo político en la España liberal decimonónica: una realidad estructural" in *Hispania,* LIX/2, no. 202, 2000, pp. 637-661. Javier Moreno, "Political Clientelism, Elites, and Caciquismo in Restoration Spain (1875-1923)", *European History Quarterly* , vol. 37 (3), 2007, pp. 417-441. Recently, a comparative book on Spain and Portugal was published by Fernando Tavares and Javier Moreno (eds.), *De las urnas al hemiciclo. Elecciones y parlamentarismo en la Península Ibérica (1875-1926),* Madrid, Marcial Pons, 2015. An attempt to link caciquism with the concept of political representation can be found in Gonzalo Capellan, "A Long and Hard Process of Democratization: Political Representation, Elections and Democracy in Contemporary Spain" in Kari Palonen, Tuija Pulkk and José M. Rosales (eds.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to the Politics of Democratization in Europe. Concepts and Histories,* Farnham, Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2008, pp. 317-335.

[2] For example, Frédéric Monier "La corruption, fille de la modernité politique?" in *Révue Internationale et stratégique,* no. 101, 2016, pp. 65-73.

[3] *La Verdad. Diario político de noticias e intereses generales,* 29-IV-1883, a weekly from Tortosa.

[4] Gemma Rubi and Ferran Toledano, "Representación política y modernidades múltiples. Los diputados catalanes en las Cortes de Cádiz (1810-1814)" in *Revista de Historia constitucional,* no. 19, 2018, pp. 159-176.

[5] Joaquín Costa, *Oligarquía y caciquismo como la forma actual de gobierno en España: urgencia y modo de cambiarla,* Madrid, Los Hijos de M. G. Hernández, 1903.

[6] This work is part of the project entitled "La corrupción política en la España contemporánea en perspectiva comparada. Bases de datos, cartografía y análisis histórico (1810-2016)" financed by the Ministry of the Economy, Industry and Competitiveness (HAR2017-86545-P). It is also part of the research group "Política, Institucions i Corrupció a l'Època Contemporània" (PICEC) (2017 SGR 818), financed by AGAUR, Generalitat de Catalunya. Along with seven European and Canadian universities, our research team cofounded the international thematic network GDRI/CNRS-824 "Politique & Corruption. Histoire et sociologie comparées à l'époque contemporaine" coordinated by professor Frédéric Monier.

[7] Some of the issues which we examine in this article come from the reflections contained in my article "Coaliciones de turno. Corrupción electoral y política competitiva en la Cataluña de la Restauración (1900-1923)" in *Mélanges de la Casa de Velázquez*, 2013, vol. 43, no. 1, pp. 273-293.

[8] José Varela Ortega, "De los orígenes de la democracia en España, 1845-1923" in Salvador Forner, *Democracia, elecciones y modernización en Europa : siglos XIX y XX*, Madrid, Cátedra, 1997, pp. 129-202. The book overseen by this author: *El poder de la influencia. Geografía del caciquismo en España (1875-1923),* Madrid, Centro de Estudios Políticos y Constitucionales, 2001. For the case of Romania, see, among others, Alexandra Iancu, "Le pouvoir à l'abri des sanctions. Les débuts de contrôle parlementaire en Roumania" in Silvia Marton, Frédéric Monier and Olivier Dard (dir.), *Moralité du pouvoir et corruption en France et en Roumanie, XVIII-XXe siècle,* Paris, Presses de l'université Paris-Sorbonne, 2017, pp. 137-150.

[9] Jesús Millan "La doble cara del liberalismo en España. El cambio social y el subdesarrollo de la ciudadanía" in *Mélanges de l'école française de Rome. Italie et Méditerranée,* Vol. 114, 2002, pp. 695-710.

[10] Gemma Rubi "La représentation de la corruption. L'Espagne dans la construction du libéralisme politique (1840-1868)" in Olivier DARD et al. (coords.): *Scandales et corruption à l'époque contemporaine*, Paris, Armand Colin, 2014, pp. 165-180.

[11] Gemma Rubi, "The Fight against Corruption and the New Politics in Urban Spain (1890-1923)" in Jens Ivo Engels; Frédéric Monier; Cesare Mattina; Andreas Fahrmeir (eds.), *Stadt-Macht-Korruption: Praktiken, Debatten und Wahrnehmungen staädstischer Korruption im 19 un 20 Jahrhundert*, Stuttgart, Steiner Verlag, 2017, pp. 99-108.

[12] Jesús Millan "La doble cara del liberalismo en España…", op. cit.

[13] Silvia Marton, "Patronage, représentation et élections en Roumanie de 1875 à 1914", in Frédéric Monier, Olivier Dard and Jens Ivo Engels (coords.), *Patronage et corruption politiques dans l'Europe contemporaine*, Paris, Armand Colin, 2014, pp. 141-166.

[14] We have one possible example in the work of Antonio Annino, (coord.), *Historia de las elecciones en Iberoamérica, siglo XIX. De la formación del espacio político nacional,* Buenos Aires, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1995. Also paradigmatic are the works on Argentina by Alberto Lettieri and Hilda Sábato.

[15] Salvador de Madariaga, *España. Ensayo de historia contemporánea*, Madrid, Ed. Aguilar, 1931.

[16] Buffet politics is the name used by the civil governor of Lleida in his correspondence with the Ministry of Governance in preparation for the 1905 elections in the province of Lleida (Archivo Histórico Nacional, Fondos contemporáneos, 22 A-1, 1905).

[17] Jaume Vicens Vives, *Industrials i polítics del segle XIX,* Barcelona, Vicens Vives, 1980, pp. 286-290.

[18] Josep Armengol and Gemma Rubí, *Vots, electors i corrupció. Una reflexió sobre l'apatia a Catalunya (1869-1923)*, Barcelona, Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 2012.

[19] Gabriele Ranzato, *La aventura de una ciudad industrial. Sabadell entre el antiguo régimen y la modernidad*, Barcelona, Ed. Península, 1986. Also by the same author, "El caciquisme a Catalunya: una hipòtesi interpretativa" a *Debats,* no. 19, 1987, pp. 17-20.

[20] Borja de Riquer, "Burgesos, polítics i cacics a la Catalunya de la Restauració" in *L'Avenç,* no. 85, 1985. Manuel Tuñon de Lara, *Estudios sobre el siglo XIX español,* Madrid, Siglo XXI, 1972.

[21] Albert Balcells, Joan B. Culla, Conxita Mir, *Les eleccions generals a Catalunya de 1901 a 1923*, Barcelona, Fundació Jaume Bofill, 1982. The most complete study on political and electoral life during the Restoration in Catalonia is the one by Josep Armengol and Gemma Rubí, *Vots, electors i corrupció. Una reflexió sobre l'apatia a Catalunya (1869-1923)*, op. cit. In addition to this general work, also worth citing are monographic studies broken down by districts and collective publications: Conxita Mir, *Caciquisme polític i lluita electoral, Lleida 1890-1936*, Barcelona, Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 1985; Joaquim Molins, *Elecciones y partidos en la provincia de Tarragona, 1890-1936*, Tarragona, Publicacions de la Diputació de Tarragona, 1985. Àngels Gustems, *Les eleccions provincials a Girona, 1901-1923*, Unpublished Bachelor's degree thesis, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, 1983; Conxita Mir (coord.*), Actituds socials i control polític a la Catalunya de la Restauració, (1875-1923)*, Lleida, Estudi General de Lleida/Ed. Virgili i Pagès, 1989. We could also highlight monographs on different cities which either directly or tangentially attempt to analyse caciquism: Cèlia Cañellas and Rosa Toran, "La representación pòlítica de Barcelona bajo el signo caciquil" in *Historia social,* no. 11, 1991, pp. 97-122; Manuel Marin, "El cacique protector" in *Historia Social*, no. 36, 1/2000, pp. 21-34; Antonio F. Canales, *Passatgers de la mateixa barca. La dreta de Vilanova i la Geltrú, 1903-1979,* Lleida, Ajuntament de l'Alguaire, 1993; Maria Jesús Muiños, *Ideologia i societat durant la Restauració: la precària configuració d'un ventall polític a Tarragona (1890-1914)*, doctoral thesis, Universitat de Barcelona, 1991, and *Les actituds de l'elit civil tarragonina durant la Restauració (1890-1914). Cohesió interna, dependència externa,* Tarragona, Arola Editors, 2003; Xavier Tornafoch, *Catalanisme, carlisme i republicanisme a Vic (1899-1909): modernització política i lluites socials,* Barcelona, Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 2002, and *Del caciquisme a la democràcia. Política i eleccions a Vic (1900-1931),* Vic, Eumo Editorial, 2006; Joan Garriga, *Granollers, caciquisme i fractura democràtica (1848-1939)*, Barcelona, Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 2003; Joaquim Capdevila, *Tàrrega (1898-1923): Societat, política i imaginari***,** Barcelona, Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 2008; Josep Noguera, *Industrialització i caciquisme al Berguedà 1868-1907*, Unpublished doctoral thesis, Universitat de Barcelona 2013; Jordi Soldevila, *Aigua, burgesia i catalanisme. Mollerussa, la construcció d'una ciutat (1874-1936),* Lleida, Edicions de la Universitat de Lleida, 2015; Josep Sancho, *El marcel·linisme a les terres de l'Ebre (1914-1939),* Benicarló, Onada Edicions, 2016 .

[22] Gemma Rubi: "Modernizando desde abajo. La reconversión del caciquismo y la política de masas en las ciudades catalanas (1901-1923)", *Cuadernos de Historia Contemporánea,* vol. 33, 2011, pp. 187-202; and "Caciquisme et changement politique dans les villes catalanes: le cas de Manresa sous la Restauration (1875-1923)" in *Bulletin d'Histoire Contemporaine de l'Espagne*, no. 45, 2011, pp. 43-66.

[23] Manuel Marin, *Clientelisme et domination politique en Espagne: Catalogne, fin du XIXe siècle*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2006. A review of the book in Gemma Rubi, "¿Existían caciques y cacicatos en Cataluña a finales del siglo XIX? Unas reflexiones a propósito del libro de Manuel Marin*, Clientélisme et domination politique en Espagne. Catalogne à la fin du XIXème siècle,* Paris, L'Harmattan, 2006", *Cahiers de civilisation espagnole contemporaine,* 3, autumn, 2008.

[24] Pere Font, "Bustillo, monàrquics i industrials: entorn de la crisi dels partits dinàstics, 1893-1903" in *Arrahona,* 3, III period, autumn 1988, pp. 61-74; and "Correspondència referida a Sabadell a l'arxiu Maura, 1903-1918" in *Arrahona*, 6, 1990, pp. 99-107.

[25] The civil governor of Lleida at that time was Luciano Clemente Guerra. Correspondence between the governor and the Minister of Governance to prepare the ballot manipulation of the 1905 general elections, Archivo Histórico Nacional, Fondos contemporáneos, 22 A-1, Telegram dated 17 August 1905. The controversy between Agelet and Riu in *La Veu de la Muntanya de Tremp* (1904-1905). I would like to thank Josep Armengol for contributing this information.

[26] Joaquim Capdevila, *Tàrrega (1898-1923): "Societat, política i imaginari …",* op. cit.

[27] Xavier Marcet, "El salisme. Moviment polític i bloc de poder", *Terme. Revista d'història,* no. 5, 1990, pp. 15-34.

[28] The original in Catalan says: "En Sala deia: Que votin tots els morts queal poble hi tinc. / Si trobeu cap paralític / També el feu anà avotar / Isisol ell no pot valdre's / Jaamb la neu rodolarà". Josep Puy, *Sàtires, cuplets i acudits en temps d'eleccions. Política i caciquisme a Terrassa (1917-1923),* Terrassa, Fundació Torre del Palau, 2010.

[29] Jordi Pons; M. Àngels Adroer, "Salt i el marquès de Camps: un cas de caciquisme" in *Revista de Girona*, no. 129, 1988, pp. 82 – 87.

[30] Pol Dalmau, *Press, Politics and National Identities in Catalonia. The Transformation of 'La Vanguardia', 1881-1931*. Brighton, Sussex Academic Press / Cañada Blanch Centre at the London School of Economics, 2017.

[31] Jordi Planas and Francesc Valls, *Cacics i rabassaires. Dinàmica associativa i conflictivitat social. Els Hostalets de Pierola (1890-1939),* Vic, Eumo Editorial, 2011.

[32] Josep Sancho, *El marcel·linisme …*, op. cit. Gemma Rubí, *Entre el vot i la recomanació. Partits, mobilització electoral i canvi polític a Manresa, 1899-1923*, Manresa, Angle Editorial, 1995.

[33] Josep Noguera, *Industrialització i caciquisme al Berguedà, 1868-1907*, Unpublished doctoral thesis (Universitat de Barcelona, December 2013).

[34] After the 1907 Election Law, the Supreme Court was the body charged with hearing the lawsuits stemming from electoral crimes. Francisco Aguado, *Jurisprudencia electoral del Tribunal Supremo, 1910-1916*, Bilbao, Zubiri and Zarza Hermanos Impresores, 1920. Only one of the 70 protests filed with the Supreme Court in the province of Barcelona was accepted.

[35] Jaume Muñoz "Vicis de mal treure. La corrupció electoral a la província de Barcelona durant els últims compassos de la Restauració". Paper presented at the "Primer Congrés d'Història de la corrupció política a L'espanya contemporània" held in Barcelona from 14 to 17 December 2017.

[36] Letter from Manuel Planas i Casals to Antonio Maura dated 5 May 1903 (Archivo Fundación Antonio Maura, Bundle 85).

[37] Ibid.

[38] This aspect has been examined in "Une révolution par le bas? La dénonciation par les nationalistes conservateurs catalans des pratiques de corruption dans l'Espagne de la Restauration (1893-1916)" in Cesare Mattina, Frédéric Monier, Olivier Dard and Jens Ivo Engels (dirs.), *Dénoncer la corruption: Chevaliers blancs, pamphlétaires et promoteurs de la transparence à l'époque contemporaine*, Paris, Demopolis, 2018, pp. 301-321.

[39] Gemma Rubí, "El turno en entredicho: las elecciones de Solidaridad Catalana" in Fernando Martinez (ed.), *El Republicanismo de ayer y hoy : culturas políticas y retos de futuro*, Madrid, Biblioteca Nueva, 2012, pp. 117-136.

[40] In the 1914 general elections, the government aspired to insert a ministerial candidate if it reached an agreement with the Lliga Regionalista.

[41] For a record of the revolt, see Gerard Girbau, *La revolta dels burots (1917). Episodi singular de la història d'Artés,* Artés, Ajuntament d'Artés/Centre d'Estudis del Bages, 2006. More recently, Adrià Cases, *Dos de Janer de 1917: la revolta dels burots d'Artés,* Artés, Ajuntament d'Artés/ Centre d'Estudis del Bages, 2017.

[42] A good book which analyses this conflict: Pere Bosch, *La guerra de l'arròs. Conflictivitat agrària i lluita política al Baix Empordà (1899-1909).* Lleida, Edicions de la Universitat de Lleida, 2013.

[43] In a letter sent to Antonio Maura, president of the government, Robert Robert claims that "*la lucha que he sostenido con Solidaridad es de las que forman época, habiéndose acumulado allí todas las fuerzas solidarias de la provincia para hundirme y destruir el último y más firme baluarte de las fuerzas monárquicas de la provincia de Gerona y aún de toda Cataluña, quedando en mis manos el último girón de su bandera*" (the struggle I have had with Solidaritat is the kind that marks an era, as all the united forces of the province had coalesced there to ruin me and destroy the last and most steadfast bulwark of the monarchic forces in the province of Girona and even all of Catalonia, and what is left in my hands is the last shred of their flag) (Archivo Fundación Antonio Maura). Letter dated 27 April 1907, cited by Pere Bosch, *La guerra de l'arròs…*, op. cit., p. 174.

[44] Josep Armengol and Gemma Rubí, *Vots, electors i corrupció. Una reflexió sobre l'apatia a Catalunya (1869-1923)*, op. cit.

[45] Francesc Espinet and Gemma Rubí (eds.), *Solidaritat Catalana i Espanya,* Barcelona, Ed. Base, 2008.

[46] Santi Izquierdo and Gemma Rubí (dirs.), *Els orígens del republicanisme nacionalista. El Centre Nacionalista Republicà a Catalunya (1906-1909),* Barcelona, Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009.

[47] Gemma Rubí, *Coaliciones de turno…*, op. cit.

[48] In his doctoral thesis, Joan Palomas states that between 1876 and 1886, 21% of the representatives of Catalonia in the Congress of Deputies and 24% in the Senate were carpetbaggers. The district with the most carpetbaggers was Lleida, with 53% of its MPs, and the district with the fewest was Barcelona, with just 6% (*El rerefons econòmic de l'activitat dels parlamentaris catalans, 1876-1886*), Unpublished doctoral thesis (UAB, May 2002), pp. 389 and forward.

[49] "Nombramientos y suspensiones de los Ayuntamientos (1915-1923) en Ministerio de Trabajo, Comercio e Industria", *Anuario estadístico de España, 1924-1925,* Madrid, Establecimiento Tipográfico "Sucesores de Rivadeneyra", 1926, pp. 304-307. In Spain as a whole, 7,092 city councillors, 513 mayors and 400 town halls were suspended.

Biographical note

Gemma Rubí is a tenured professor of Contemporary History with advanced research credentials from AQU at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and academic coordinator of research group 2017 SGR-818 "Política, institucions i corrupció a l'època contemporània" (PICEC). She has initiated studies in Spain on the history of corruption during the contemporary era in conjunction with colleagues from France, Germany, Holland and Romania as part of the GDRI/CNRS-824 network "Politique & Corruption. Histoire et sociologie comparées à l'époque contemporaine" coordinated by professor Frédéric Monier.