

## Catalan-ness(es) in the Catalan Countries

**Mariona Lladonosa Latorre\***

Universitat de Lleida

**Original source:**

***Mirmanda*, 8: 10-23 (2013)**

(<http://raco.cat/index.php/Mirmanda/index>)

Translated from Catalan by Mary Black

### Abstract

*This is an overview of the discourses, practices, changes and continuities in the ideas of Catalan-ness in the Catalan Countries from the 1960s until today after the turn of the century. The 1960s played a crucial role in the construction of new identity discourses influenced the sociopolitical situation in the Catalan Countries at the same time that the national identity markers have undergone transformations. Both of these can be examined under a joint perspective.*

**Key words:** 1960s, globalisation, identity, Catalan-ness, Catalan Countries

### 1. Introduction

National identity in the Catalan Countries can be described from multiple frontiers of thought, first because from the 1960s until today the play between the imagined community and the real community has never ceased to spark political and social conflicts all throughout the land, and secondly because, as Joan Fuster said, what we call the identity in this particular area has been and continues to be a “question of names”. We are starting with the assumption that writing about Catalan-ness in the Catalan Countries implies an initial, specific ideological position, because if we understand ‘the Catalan Countries’ to be a general coronym – the name of a country – and frame of reference, ‘Catalan’ is the corresponding adjective that defines a person who lives there, and ‘Catalan-ness’ is thus the noun version of this adjective. If we refer to the Catalan-language *Diccionari de l’Institut d’Estudis Catalans* (DIEC), ‘Catalan-ness’ (*catalanitat*) is described as the quality or fact of being Catalan. And one of the most important political conflicts in the 20th and 21st centuries in Spain lies particularly in this subtle transformation from adjective to noun.

The conception of the modern Catalan Countries as we understand them today, and their associated Catalan-ness, is unquestionably based on Joan Fuster’s contribution in the 1960s. It is true that he did not invent it himself, and in fact Fuster somehow was just harking back to a pan-Catalanist

\* Contact address: Mariona Lladonosa. Office 3.09, [Departament de Geografia i Sociologia](#), Universitat de Lleida. Avinguda Estudi General, 4. 25001 Lleida, EU. E-mail: [mlladonosa@geosoc.udl.cat](mailto:mlladonosa@geosoc.udl.cat).

movement whose first expressions were during the Second Republic but was interrupted by the Spanish Civil War. In the 1930s, the pan-Catalanist push was divided into three strands, namely territoriality, language and shared history, all under the values of civic, voluntary nationalism but with a clear ethno-symbolic value. In the 1960s, the ideological construction of the Catalan Countries and the defining markers of their identity were revisited bearing these three strands in mind, with language at the fore as a mechanism of social cohesion. Unlike in the 1930s, in the 1960s the Catalan Countries were projected through a symbolic use of the term, which because it was imagined and diffused in a context of transition, strove to generate a “reality” upon which to support a new political project for the future. The hopes deposited in the transition and the end of the Franco regime were greater than the reality, and the fact is that the recovery of democracy and the process of institutional transformation allowed for the recognition of self-governance via the autonomous communities, yet at the same time it clearly generated a constitutional framework aimed at neutralising any joint political project in the Catalan Countries and thereby national secession.

The ideological construction of the Catalan Countries has never again had a discursive presence or political centrality such as it had in the period from 1962 to 1977. However, it is a crucial factor in understanding the recent evolution in Catalan-ness and anti-Catalanism at the same time. The national identity in the Catalan Countries has taken on various guises which are strictly associated with the political conflict with the Spanish state and the shaping of national subordination. In other words, there is a symbolic and material dependence when our community is envisioned. Spain’s national identity features have been constructed as a space of power, control and domination over different political stories, hence the conflict between identities viewed as national or regional. Calling oneself Spanish, Valencian or Catalan is not just using an innocent adjective to describe where one lives; it is also a specific story of one’s social life and therefore reflects specific power dynamics. Generating regional identities of subordination or national identities of power is a way of creating dependence and hierarchy; it is a form of domination, and it occurs based on the affective appropriation of certain symbols by individuals and groups. For this reason, the symbols that shape identities are a battlefield for the hegemonisation of stories of power. Thus, speaking about Catalan-ness in the Catalan Countries is one way of understanding national identity: within specific coordinates, and within a story that has been at odds with the story of the state from the 1960s until today, the specific period we are examining.

## **2. The 1960s as the point of departure: The times they are a-changin’<sup>1</sup>**

Contextually, the 1960s were years of major changes around the world and the dawn of the age of the global world. Earlier, in the 1950s, the development of the European economy was exceptionally fast-paced, and this extended into the next decade. This economic growth was linked to a rise in consumption and to the new social models of the consumer society and mass culture, which also had effects in Catalonia in the 1960s. On the other hand, these changes primarily affected the younger generation, who felt themselves to be the interpreters of

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<sup>1</sup> Dylan, Bob, “The Times They Are A-Changin’”, *The Times They Are A-Changin’*, Columbia Studios, 1964.

the processes of moral change and a shift in values. The effects of these changes were projected in music bands, the media, fashion and innovations, which were their direct expressions. They were years of social and political unrest when, for example, the universities played a prominent role as a venue for gatherings of groups of young people who were experiencing a progression in social changes and collective consciousness. As wellbeing was rising in Western societies and political parties were becoming more pragmatic and less ideological, a new culture emerged made of revisions of values and codes and a progressive, radical ideology that penetrated youths in the capitalist world.

Even though Spain was mired in a social and economic post-war period in the 1950s, the 1960s were years of supposed openness aimed at generating growth, tourism and new industry. The context of the 1960s should be understood as the emergence of a new mass and consumer society which influenced the changes in the country and its discourses and cultural products. Even though those years were also equally characterised by the Franco regime's censorship, repression and indiscriminate actions against Catalan culture, the social reality was transforming the post-war climate. Socially and culturally, it was being replaced by an appeal to social issues, the influence of sociology and the economy in analyses of the reality, and openness to Marxist thinking, with an important influence from Europe. The 1960s was a decade of ferment and of cultural and political expansion. On the one hand, the Catalan culture adopted the characteristics of high culture and became intellectualised, while also generating the first signs of mass culture. On the other hand, the direct influences from European and North American culture could also clearly be seen, as well as the fact that behind the changes underway was the individual and collective motivation to push for cultural and political freedom. All around the Catalan Countries, this change was experienced through numerous efforts by cultural groups, historians and the Catalan literati, as well as through the effort to reconstruct the educational system, revive the publishing system, spur a new civic society and restore Catalan national history from a new scholarly and historiographic perspective. The mobilisation against the dictatorship became common in working-class, intellectual and university milieus around the country, and it made even further headway in the 1970s. All of this made it possible for Catalonia's own cultural activity to gradually be revived, and a new representation and codification of identity emerged with the cultural recovery and impact of these new times.

### **3. Valencia: Catalan-ness and decolonisation**

Speaking about identity in the region of Valencia means speaking about the Fuster effect. Until Fuster, political Valencianism had exclusively been framed in terms of a regionalist project, and the construction of the Valencian identity had been framed as a regional identity within Spain. Regional Valencianism was broadly accepted in society, and it had lived through the Franco regime as an identity that was protected and folklorised by the regime and the local right wing. Renowned historians like Ferran Archilés and Pau Viciano had studied Valencianism and the region's projection through its basic symbolism since 1878. The Falles, the Romanesque landscape, the mediaeval past, the manufactured goods and local crafts and the expressions of popular culture like the *sainet* (one-act farces), coupled with a prolific output of novels, music and

painting from the early 20th century, were all part of the repertoire of the regionalist representation of Valencianism.

However, in the 1960s there was a major ideological shift in the construction of this identity. Fuster and his circle supported a model of political Catalanism, a new Valencian nationalism concentrated in the role of language and a gradual identity-based ethnoculturalisation independent of Spain. Fuster's concise expression "*dir-nos valencians és la nostra manera de dir-nos catalans*" (calling ourselves Valencians is our way of calling ourselves Catalans) is well known, and his assertions in the 1960s and in the transition advocated a new identity opposed to the old regional identity in a bid to supposedly and consciously break with the regionalist projection of Valencian identity. Fuster believed that it was essential to disseminate a new national framework of modernisation in a context of change in the social structure, demographics, urbanisation and industrialisation processes that would break with Spain's agrarian model, which was associated with the representation of an archaic traditionalism that had to be combatted through a political framework associated with anti-Francoism and Catalan nationalism as the alternative. The left wing and anti-Francoist sectors largely accepted Fuster's concepts and linguistic claims, so the 1960s and 1970s were the years of the greatest degree of centrality of the Catalan Countries and shared identity of its regions. Despite this, although it is true that in cultural terms there was a process of accepting this notion of the Catalan Countries, in the sphere of the symbolic and political project it did not find hegemonic support in the subsequent political discourses. Contemporary political Valencianism was widely studied by Alfons Cucó, a key figure in Valencianism during the democratic transition who was influenced by Fuster's nationalism – just like the entire generation of thinkers at that juncture, but it represents the tradition of a non-alternative autonomist nationalism.

On the other hand, the Valencian right wing quickly associated the left's discourse with Catalanism and swiftly appropriated Valencianism for itself as a form of Spanish-ness, such that there has been a systematic reproduction of a discursive contrast between Catalanism and anti-Valencianism. The famous expression "*No mos fareu catalans*" (you will not make us Catalans) is a good framing of this supposed conflict. It should be noted that furthermore, the elites in the region of Valencia have historically and ideologically been projected as sympathetic with Spanishism, projecting popular and regional social practices in Valencianism. Blaverism is the outcome of this relationship, a specific contribution of Spanishism and the extreme right in the region of Valencia that has been extensively studied by Vicent Flor. The conflict of the symbolism representing this identity has been known as the "*batalla de València*", a politicisation of the use of the flag, language and name País Valencià, which ended up as the Comunitat Valenciana. The autonomous regions provided coverage to the parallel construction of a regional and Spanish identity. However, one sidenote is needed: after the Franco regime there were two discredited ideas-positions: the right and Spanish nationalism. To what extent does Catalan anti-nationalism allow the idea of Spain to be revived and legitimise an evolution towards rightist positions? Blaverism later reinvented the identity features of Valencianism, namely language and territory, with the purpose of atomising the most important elements of Valencia's own identity. The re-presentation and re-signification of these two elements by Spanishism

was accomplished via two strategies. The first is the linguistic atomisation of Catalan, that is, the manifest intention not to call the language in the different regions ‘Catalan’ – such as “Lapao” in the western part of Catalonia, the Iberian-rooted Valencian and Mallorcan and its hyper-dialectalisation – via the glorification of bilingualism, a strategy pursued all over the Catalan Countries based on a process of language shift and minoritisation as a popular or private language, which has had uneven effects in the different regions. The second is territorial fragmentation and provincialisation, in recent decades with the argument of modernisation based on ecological and regional exploitation, large-scale infrastructures and architectural flourishes linked to a neoliberal model of development which is known in both the region of Valencia and on the Balearic Islands.

In the region of Valencia, Catalan-ness has taken root in the collective imagination as an identity primarily linked to the left and to cultural and political Catalanism. Despite the fact that Valencian nationalism is not clearly represented in the current political system, the framework of representation of Catalan-ness today is associated with an identity of resistance. In the 1990s, a Fusterian revision was carried out by numerous sectors as a third way, as embodied in the ideas of Joan Francesc Mira, who sought a reconceptualisation of or reconciliation with the symbolic legacy of early 20th century political Valencianism as identity elements that explain Valencianism beyond regionalisation, enabling the project of a Valencian political nation to be revived in the more “realistic” social imaginary within the current political context, which is less “utopian” than the configuration of the Catalan Countries. This is a Valencianism under construction, as some have called it, which, just like the pan-Catalanist option bequeathed by Fuster, sketches the two current overarching identity stories of Catalanism in the region of Valencia. In any event, with a greater or lesser reach, these two stories have played a key role in imagining the identity of Valencia. In order to understand the new dimensionalities in this issue today, we suggest a reading of the “País Valencià, segle xxi. Reflexions i experiències de la generació que ve” collection published as part of the Valencianist guidebooks put out by the Universitat de València.

#### **4. The Balearic Islands: Ethno-landscape re-appropriation**

There are two factors to bear in mind in relation to the transformation of the identity on the Balearic Islands since the 1960s. The first is the already extensively analysed influence of the tourism boom and cultural and political contact with Europe, the outcome of the regime’s openness in its constant bid for economic survival. The impact of tourism generated a long-term transformation of the economy, social structure and frameworks of identity representation which has lasted until today. Likewise, even though the islands underwent an accelerated process of tertiarisation which changed the agrarian model – with its cacique-based tradition – this transformation fostered the arrival of a heavy contingent of immigrants from mainland Spain to work in a heavily provincialized and somewhat abandoned geographic space within the Spanish state. Just like Spanish immigration to Catalonia and French immigration to Northern Catalonia, Spanish immigration and tourism to the Balearic Islands prompted a major transformation in the patterns of diglossia in Catalan societies and therefore in the use of the language and the shaping of the

collective linguistic imagination. However, it is true that the arrival of tourism and immigrants from northern Europe had a heavy influence on shaping a collective imagination to represent of the islands, not only in linguistic terms but also in the projection of the region as a traditional, rural Mediterranean landscape which reshaped the stories of identity self-representation through the confluence of two dynamics.

The first dynamic was the relationship between these new self-representations and Catalanism through generations of young university students who travelled to Barcelona to study, where they were exposed to the nationalist anti-Franco movement and influenced by Fuster's work *Nosaltres els valencians*. One of them was Josep Melià, who in 1967 published *Els mallorquins*, a work regarded as a parallel to Fuster's but from the vantage point of Mallorca whose goal was to revisit and reinterpret the history of Mallorca and the Balearic Islands.<sup>2</sup>

The second dynamic entailed a reassessment of natural locales which, as Antoni Vives explains, was done by re-visioning the ethno-symbolic legacy and appropriating it through associationism, scouting, educational renovation movements in schools and the oral transmission of the legacy in the town parishes. According to Vives, contact with a new context of representation on the islands under the influence of European alternative tourism reinforced – and empowered – a romantic identity which forged ties with the ecologist movement and the nationalist movements aimed at linguistic and cultural revival.

This identification remains valid today, when the claims on behalf of the territory and heritage are framed as a story that contrasts with imposed Spanish-ness and speculative and consumer-based territorial exploitation. These processes of primarily cultural identity have clearly been transferred to the realm of politics as a project of the unique political nation of Mallorcan-ness, Menorcan-ness, Ibizan-ness and Formenteran-ness in the hegemonic sphere. What has emerged is a clear refusal to construct a denatured Balearic identity without roots in the practices and representation of the reality on the islands. Just as with the territorial atomisation in the region of Valencia, the establishment of Balearic-ness has been regarded by the local nationalists as another formula of political dissolution of the territorial unity with the Catalan Countries.

## 5. Northern Catalonia: Subjugated Catalan-ness

The Catalan-ness of Northern Catalonia has features that distinguish it from those in the other regions of the Catalan Countries because it is part of a different sociopolitical context, namely the state of France since the 1659 Treaty of the Pyrenees. The counties of Northern Catalonia have unevenly retained markers of Catalan-ness in the cultural identity of their inhabitants, depending on the phenomena of urbanisation and demographic transformation they have

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<sup>2</sup> Similar historical revisionist approaches were carried out later by figures like Josep Maria Massot i Muntaner and Gregori Mir i Mayol, and from the standpoint of cultural and political activism by authors like Josep Maria Llompart and Damià Pons, just to mention the most renowned.

experienced. Of course, the same holds true in the region of Valencia, on the Balearic Islands and in the Principality. Within 21st-century France, Catalan-ness as its own identity does not exist either legally or officially. On the other hand, the relationship between Northern Catalonia and Paris has been questioned by the domination to which the latter has subjected the former. A region with a heavy influx of French immigrants, as well as a popular retirement area, over the last decade of the 20th century it received 75,000 new inhabitants from the rest of France, who were joined more recently by even larger numbers of immigrant workers from abroad. The demographic predictions say that two-thirds of the population of Northern Catalonia may be born outside the region by 2015, a phenomenon which has led to talk about a “demographic transfusion” (Baylac-Ferrer, 2009:20). In a more painstaking, specific study on the transformations in Northern Catalonia, it might be interesting to observe – just as has been done in the Balearic Islands, as discussed above – to what extent the construction of Northern Catalonia as a peripheral space in France has affected the frameworks of identity meaning.

For centuries, the transmission of Catalan identity took place orally, especially through language and the transmission of popular culture and oral micro-toponymy. Linguistically, in the 1950s first the early bourgeoisie and later the working classes stopped transmitting the language, with the exception of the Gypsies, who kept it as their language of socialisation. The influence of the French national identity and the unfolding of France’s Jacobin state profoundly affected the mental structures of identity, just as republican values and national secularisation changed the rites and traditional phenomenology, and this can be seen in the new Catalan identity in the north. Throughout the 20th century and even today, however, Catalan-ness has historically been a subjugated identity associated with ruralism, the frontier of modernity. This is true to such an extent that what are inaccurately named ‘regional languages’ have suffered from linguistic subjugation and recession even in the private spheres of everyday life, symbolically represented by the concept of patois as an expression of illiteracy and uncouthness. This is a model of diglossia manifestly proposed by the French state through the public education system – which brings to mind the famous pictures of schools with the slogan “*parlez français, soyez propres*” (speak French, be clean) – and a centralised administrative and territorial organisation which showed no signs of greater flexibility in recognising identities labelled as regional until the second half of the 20th century.

In order to grasp the identity transformations in Northern Catalonia, we should bear in mind that after 1945 the defence of any nationalistic stance felt reminiscent of Pétain’s reactionary discourse and Nazi collaboration. It was not until the 1960s that groups of young Catalanophiles, under the clear influence of the new cultural and political trends, began to organise into groups supporting linguistic rights after a first – almost anecdotal – formula to study the “local languages and dialects” in schools was made possible by the Deixonne Law (1951). The influence of May ’68 heavily swayed the leftist parties and French communists towards recognition of Northern Catalonia. This is captured by Pere Verdaguer when he interviewed Miquel Mayol, a member of the cultural group of Catalan youth after May ’68: “*ara la cultura és política i la política cultural*” (now culture is politics and politics is culture). Guy Héraud’s ideas on the Europe of ethnicities and Robert Lafont in his *Révolution régionaliste* (1967) gained a prominent place in discussions on the modernisation of the

state and what came to be known as the decolonisation of the provinces. This was also expressed in *Le Nouvel Observateur* in April 1968: “*l’esquerra s’adona amb una certa estupefacció que l’exigència d’una revolució regionalista és potser la condició prèvia de la democràcia i del socialisme*” (Verdaguer, 1974:236). Mitterrand himself had pledged greater linguistic recognition, although it never actually materialised. The French left’s sensitivity to the issue of other identities was almost like a mirage in the formulation of a gradual regionalisation of the state.

However, we should note that cultural organisations in Northern Catalonia have never ceased to exist since the 1960s, and contacts with Southern Catalonia, the Principality proper, have been constant over time. The *Universitat Catalana d’Estiu* (uce) was founded in 1969 with the goal of sociocultural confluence among the Catalan Countries, and it has been held nonstop in Prada since then, even though it has never managed to lay deep roots in the sociocultural dynamics of the region. Political organisations have followed this same pattern, although the representation and political repercussions of the Catalanist parties have only been symbolic. One of the unique features of Northern Catalonia compared to the other political realities in the Catalan Countries is that organisations have framed themselves as groups defending Catalanist interests, alternating nationalist, autonomist and regionalist discourses indistinctly without any identification with class or with the left-right divide. Political Catalanism throughout the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s continued to be framed as the defence of the Catalan identity within France with the goal of capturing and reassessing a neglected specificity. Identity expressions are therefore focused on the linguistic and cultural issue, and projects aimed at transmitting them are the most common. The organisation of the first Catalan-language schools in 1976, the *La Bressola* and *Arrels* schools, are still the prime driving forces spreading the language and reviving Catalan-ness. Associations of parents and teachers in support of education in Catalan have sprung up around these projects. However, schools are not the only spaces of academic dissemination; so are the Department of Catalan at the University of Perpignan, the *Òmnium Catalunya Nord*, *Arrels* radio and the *Casal Jaume I*, among others, from the standpoint of cultural and popular dissemination.

We would like to mention two more dynamics worth bearing in mind, which appear yet again. First, the defence of the environment has also come to the fore as a factor of cohesion and identification of Catalanism in Northern Catalonia, and good examples of this are the rejection of a project like the very high tension (VHT) lines and the campaigns rejecting tourism development in the region. The second is the persistent desire for territorial fragmentation by the French state, echoing that of Spain. In the case of Northern Catalonia, the administrative division of France is the first political frontier of Catalan-ness, with the depersonalisation triggered by the French transposition of place and topographic names and personal names into French, and it has experienced attempts to even further regionalise it with failed formulas such as the change of the department’s name from “*Languedoc-Roussillon*” to “*Septimanie*” in 2005.

When we explain the Catalan-ness of Northern Catalonia from the south, we tend to notice a folklorised interpretation of the repertoire of elements making up the identity. Even though it is true that the more strictly folkloric elements and expressions, or those from popular culture – *gegants* (giants), *castellers* (human pyramids), *diables* (devils), festivals and celebrations like the



Flame of El Canigó, the Correllengua and Saint John's Eve celebrations – or sports elements such as the USAP, are the ones which are more widely accepted as elements of identification with Catalan-ness, this same dynamic cannot be found as clearly in the expressions that are more profusely integrated into the new mass identities of the rising pro-independence movement in the Principality. Since the beginning of the 21st century, there has been a rising presence of the Catalan language in Northern Catalonia, although it is still comparatively meagre. The role of the media has not been symptomatic, but the reception of the media from the south has shared realities, albeit not necessarily with a good capacity or desire to capture the reality of the lands outside the Principality, and especially the Internet has facilitated a transfer between North and South that has changed the frameworks of identity representation. The subjugated Catalan-ness in Northern Catalonia has prompted greater awareness of Catalan-ness as a device of power in southern Catalonia. This is a slow but constant process of southward projection as a framework of modernity, freedom and normality which, within globalisation and the porousness of frontiers after the project of European construction, brings positive affirmation and appreciation of Catalan identity just as the myth of the French Republic is being seriously questioned based on the exclusionary management of the Jacobin model in the French state.

## **6. Catalonia: From cultural to political Catalan-ness**

In the Principality, Catalan-ness as a recognised identity has historically been crucially important to the shaping of the nation. More recently, a manifestly cultural and progressively political national identity in Catalonia is gaining the greatest number of adherents through the political bid for sovereignty. Of course, the Catalan-ness that today is beginning to be hegemonically recognised as an identity project aimed at a rupture with the Spanish state did not construct a social story of its specificity in these terms until the first decade of the 21st century. Catalanism prior to the Civil War sought autonomy as a means of achieving a new political framework of modernisation and greater influence in the Spanish political system. With the recovery of democracy, Catalanism once again sought to restore its cultural and political position – within the new system of the autonomous regions – in Spain through the strategic course of pactism. This political project has clearly failed for a variety of reasons: the inability to change the Charter of Self-Government to fit the text approved by the Catalan Parliament in 2006; a constant centralisation policy by the Spanish state – aggravated by the ideological oversimplification in a national vein by both the left and the right in recent years; deep-seated political and societal frustration with the supposedly perfect transition in the 1970s; and of course the 2008 economic crisis, which is still in effect today, placing arguments about the fiscal deficit at the core of the grievances with Spain. The fact that the economic issue has become of the utmost importance in the pro-sovereignty discourse has explanatory factors in the symbolic transformations which the identity has experienced, changes that are clearly linked to late modernity which we shall examine at the end of this article.

However, in the 1960s the elements shaping identity were related to the transformations mentioned above and linked to the new mass culture, such as the Nova Cançó and the spread of “música lleugera” in Catalan, which was

crucially importance in all the Catalan Countries; anti-Francoism, from neighbourhood, student, union and political movements, and democracy; along with claims for freedom, justice, territoriality and language. Some experiences framed the transformations in the identity discourse to make it an identity of resistance. Francoism as a story of anti-Catalan repression is one of them, but so is the immigration of Spaniards to Catalonia in the 1960s and 1970s, which brought about a true socio-demographic transformation. Anna Cabré uses the term “*sistema català de reproducció*” (Catalan system of reproduction) to refer to the demographic model of growth in Catalonia during this period. The influence of immigration clearly played a core role in shaping the identity story, and one example of this is the idea widely found in the social discourse that “*és català qui viu i treballa a Catalunya*” (whoever lives and works in Catalonia is Catalan), which has remained alive in the collective social imagination with the arrival of international immigrants at the turn of the century, despite the new challenges this entails. Linked to these phenomena, the school as an integrative factor and the aforementioned associationism and political movements as places of Catalanisation are two crucially important contexts of socialisation in the models of representation and places of memory in the social and national model of Catalonia during the transition and democratic recovery. The Catalan language took on a prominent role as a cultural identity marker, so language was the most important identity factor shared hegemonically in the Catalan collective imagination.

With the recovery of democracy, the political and institutional debates began to transform the consensus from the transition into a more left-right conflict, yet one that was strikingly obsessed with cultural factors and the national debate, which ended up displacing the political facet. Replacing the class conflict with the culture conflict in the 1980s and 1990s was a projection of the gradual ideological liberalisation of welfare societies in the late 20th century.<sup>3</sup> Political and economic liberalism would displace the debates of the 1960s to the field of welfare and wealth, conditioned by the end of the large social meta-stories and the rise of individualism and the personalisation of identity. The economic argument in the current sovereignty debate is fully imbued with this new story. Parallel to this process, one of the transformations in the elements of national identity which we can spotlight is the revision of ethnocultural factors – aesthetic, historical, landscape and folkloric – which in the Principality seem to have been superseded by the new practical adhesions – democratic, welfare, wealth, freedom and justice measures – of the new mass pro-sovereignty Catalanism. One last note with regard to the new identities linked to Catalan-ness: As Joaquim Capdevila observed after the 1960s and repeated cultural influences, as well as the influences from the global transformations, Catalan-ness will undergo an evolution from its strictly patriotic identities towards complex national identities in which gender, class, environment and other identities converge, from which a hyper-identification with the land and local environments will be projected. This is what Capdevila believes is a new stage in Catalanism which he calls post-nationalist, which will harbour new expressions of leftist pro-independence after the 1960s and glocalist support of independence after the 1990s, as well as the aforementioned

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<sup>3</sup> A thorough examination of this issue can be found in Lladonosa (2013).

mass support for independence, and it will mark the starting point of a process of transformation from cultural convictions to political arguments.

### **7. *Jo et done el meu present, transforma'l en futur*<sup>4</sup>**

Catalan-ness in the Catalan Countries has taken different forms of protagonism according to the sociopolitical context of each specific region and the deliberate disruption by the Spanish and French states. The symbolic stories and material projection of this Catalan-ness entails understanding the complex system into which it is inserted, without forgetting that the social structures are conditioned by the actions of the states and the aforementioned factors. Today, we have two more challenges that will shape us as a people. The incorporation of international immigration and the economic crisis and chronic unemployment open up questions regarding the structure of our society and social ascent within it. The issue of class conflict should probably once again be situated at the core of the political discourses for national construction. What is more, it should be noted that there is a series of elements that have similarly been reproduced around the Catalan Countries and can explain the transformations of Catalan-ness and its current forms of representation.

The ideological transformation we have experienced since the 1960s have had a vast effect on the face of these identities, first, because of the end of the meta-stories and the loss of the centrality of the grand leftist ideologies, and secondly because of the effects of neoliberalism and the crisis in social democracy. The emerging identities mentioned above are models that replace the traditional identities, and they provide us with a new value system characterised by greater cultural and relational informality, yet at the same time by new projective aims in more specific identities and in specifically more local claims, if you will. This dynamic has arisen all around the Catalan Countries in the guise of new protests which are a local response to state and global pressures. Even though they have not been clearly translated institutionally, they have indeed been politically through the organisation of social, associative, cultural and even festive networks with a clearly protesting purpose which are manifestly projective. Following are two examples which can be found in different sites within the Catalan speaking lands.

The first is the new forms of resistance and projection of the popular language and culture through a revision and updating of the traditional identity markers, namely the modern cultural and musical festive expressions for language. They include Correllengües (celebrations in favour of the Catalan language) around the land, Tirant de Rock campaigns, competitions like Sona 9, festivals like the Feslloch in Benlloch, Identi'Cat in Bao, the FestTour travelling festival in Catalonia, the countless local festivals such as the DesFOLCa't in Calaf and the Santa Maria festivities in Formentera, along with the profusion of new bands and the normalisation of the use of the language in all genres. Another example is the revival of popular culture to recover and update it: singers and practitioners of *glosa* (a traditional musical rhyming activity), *gegants* (giants), *castellers* (human pyramids), *bastoners* (practitioners of a tradition weapon dance), *diables* (devils), etc. Yet another example is the local

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<sup>4</sup> Ventura, Feliu, "Present", *Música i lletra*. Propaganda pel fet!, 2011. Translated as "I give you my present; transform it into the future".

recovery of the anthropological heritage; one example from the Ponent region is the Vinyes Trobades project promoted by Slow Food Terres de Lleida to safeguard the old vineyards, local grape varieties and wine-making culture.

The second is the transformation from the romantic image of the land and the landscape to ecologism, coupled with the new environmental and regional claims which can also be found all over the Catalan Countries. They are closely associated with the symbolism of the Catalan identity, an alternative to the processes of deindustrialisation, the devaluation of agriculture, the neoliberalisation of the economic system and the destruction of the land. Examples of this include the famous “*No al transvasament*” campaign promoted by the Plataforma en Defensa de l’Ebre, “*No a la MAT*” promoted by the platform by the same name, and the countless “Save the...” campaigns, on behalf of Cabanyal, El Roser, L’Empordà, Mallorca, Ses Fontanelles and many other sites aimed at saving the land and the heritage. Finally, we should mention a dynamic that is not waning, namely schools and associationism as the structures for sociocultural action and reassessment. They include everything from the educational renovation movements in La Bressola to the groups of the Escola Valenciana and the Escolles Mallorquines movement in the sphere of education, and all kinds of local cultural groups within associationism, as mentioned above. Each of these expressions is a device of power which strengthens the dimensionality of identity resistance in a projective stage en route to a transformation that is as yet unfinished.

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