Reconstructing Landscape to Reconstruct Regionalism?
L'Horta, la Ciutat de les Ciències, and the Ideological Politics of Valencian Modernity

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Abstract

In this paper I explore the ways economic and political "reterritorialization" – such as regionalist politics in Spain – may be negotiated through cultural discourses and landscapes. Few regions exemplify the contradictions of regional politics better than the Comunitat Valenciana, whose capital Valencia has been transformed by the Generalitat Valenciana's simultaneous pursuit of economic development and political autonomy over two decades and three political administrations. Some of these changes imply the displacement of L'Horta de Valencia, long a regional symbol, by new monumental spaces like the Ciutat de les Arts i de les Ciències. I examine this precipitous substitution of landscapes, in regional space and iconography, to analyze how the Generalitat's reconstruction of the Valencian landscape may serve to reconstruct Valencian regionalism. In this essay, based on a broader qualitative research project, I suggest that a new regionalist discourse has emerged premised on global competitiveness and obsessed with modernity. Like the Museu de les Ciències itself, however, this new Valencian regionalism may be built for global tourism yet lacking substantial content.

Keywords: Regionalism, cultural landscape, modernity, València

Introduction

For those interested in economic globalization and European regionalization, an important question remains: How are such processes of "reterritorialization" negotiated politically, particularly in the culturally charged realm of regional politics? From this point of view, few places are as intriguing as Spain's autonomous regions. And though the "historic nationalities" in Catalunya, Euskadi, and Galicia exemplify the enduring power of the region, the Catalan-speaking region of Comunitat Valenciana demonstrates perhaps even more clearly the contested and constructed nature of regional politics. Because Valencian regional politics is complicated by debates about the region's proper identity and relationship and the rest of Spain, however, it has not received the scholarly attention it deserves. But Valencian regional politics merits attention specifically *because* of its visible fractures, which reveal the complex and contested social production of regional territory and identity.

The Comunitat Valenciana remains a region under construction. Nothing demonstrates this more clearly than the landscape itself. At Valencia Capital's eastern edge construction continues on the massive Ciutat de les Arts i de les Ciències, planned and promoted and paid for by regional government the Generalitat Valenciana. Rising from former croplands and industrial sites along the former riverbed of the River Turia, this new complex has recently become central to the region's economic and territorial development and central referent in regionalist political discourses. In a few decades València has been transformed from a provincial city marked by agrarian cultural traditions into a regional capital driven by tourism and international trade. The abrupt contrast between these two Valèncias can be seen in the way la Ciutat de les Arts i de les Ciències towers over adjacent croplands of L'Horta d'en Corts, a last vestige of L'Horta within city limits.

What may this dramatic juxtaposition of landscapes, each symbolizing different visions of Valencian culture, tell us about the reconstruction of regional space and identities? What does it reveal of the importance of regional landscape in the remaking of regionalist discourse, and the role of regional governments in this process? To answer these questions, I offer a brief theoretical framework for interpreting globalization, regionalization, and the complex role of regionalist discourse and landscape. I argue we must better understand how cultural landscapes function in regional politics, how their planned manipulation can transform regional spaces *and* identities.

I explore these ideas through the case of the Valencian landscape amidst transformation. A brief history below explores the changing yet enduring importance of L'Horta to Valencain regional culture, as both Valencian way-of-life and signifying system, following the definition of culture offered by Williams (1982), which can be seen in emblematic literature, political rheto-

ric, history, and social science research. But new landscapes like the Ciutat de les Arts i de les Ciències are emerging from the city skyline and the rhetoric of regional politics, the brief history of which I also trace. I analyze how regional government represents this transformation *vis à vis* the broader questions of Valencia region and regionalism. This article draws from broader qualitative analysis of archived newspapers and government document and in-depth/semi-structured interviews with political and civic leaders, through which I seek to interpret the physical processes of planning and urbanization in light of accompanying regionalist discourses.

This paper faces a significant terminological problem however: How to employ a vocabulary that respects the ideological complexity of regional politics without becoming ensnared in it? For if regionalism in the English merely describes those politics focused at the sub-nation-state scale, this definition neglects the complex spectrum of regional politics in Spain. At one end of the spectrum is *cultural regionalism* asserting regional cultural difference but not self-determination, such as the conservative politics of *Valencianisme*. At the other end is outright *regional nationalism* advocating maximum autonomy or national sovereignty, like the left-leaning, pan-Catalan politics of *nacionalisme valencià*. While I respect those terminological differences, perhaps we should approach regional politics the way Anderson (1983) approaches nationalism: Instead of looking for "true" nationalisms (or distinguishing between regionalism and nationalism) we ought to recognize regionalism wherever regional political communities are being "imagined." More specifically, regionalism is many culturally-charged ways regions are imagined to be *cohesive* and *autonomous*. Like nationalism, regionalism involves the "invention" of new traditions to symbolize social cohesion, establish or legitimize institutions of authority, and inculcate value systems and conventions of behavior (Hobsbawm, 1983). Regionalism can thus be found in the "culture wars" (Mitchell 2000) through which different parties struggle to define (or re-define) the region in particular ways, whether the cultural nationalism of the *Bloc Nacionalista Valencià,* the regionalist-inflected socialism of the *Partit Socialista Paìs Valencià*, or the Spanish nationalism of the *Partido Popular.* Though these ideologies are certainly not equally regionalist *per se*, to the degree each engages specifically regional questions (and the region as framework for debate) is the degree their politics becomes regionalist. Valencian regionalism is thus, in essence, the various, imaginative, regionalist tales (akin to Juaristi, 1997) that Valencians tell about their culture, territory, and landscape.

The remaking of the Valencian regionalist landscape has been a key used by successive regional governments to remake Valencian culture itself. This planned transformation has been propelled and structured primarily by an ambiguous yet potent idea of *modernity*. Modernity is the ideology at the center of new "ideological landscapes" (Olwig 1984, 2002) like the Ciutat de les Arts i de les Ciències, through which Generalitat Valenciana under vari-

ous administrations has helped construct new regionalist ways-of-life and signifying systems, imagine new communities and invent new traditions, and displace L'Horta as the iconic Valencian landscape. In the landscape thus may be the key to the understanding the ongoing, contested reconstruction of Europe and the Catalan-speaking territories in space, place, *and* regional culture.

Globalization, regionalism, and cultural landscape

Regionalism in Spain, whether cultural regionalist or nationalist, exemplifies why integrating conceptual vocabularies is necessary to comprehend territorial restructuring as it unfolds in local landscapes. Analyzing regionalism requires a conceptual framework that takes seriously the structural determinism of globalization, the autonomous role of the state, *and* the mediating role of culture.

First and most broadly, the regionalization of Europe may be interpreted as a matter of geographical scale and reterritorialization. Many critical human geographers now study the social production of geographical scales like state territories (Brenner, 1999a,1997b; Delaney and Leitner, 1997; Leitner et al., 2002; Mains, 2002; MacLeod and Goodwin, 1999b; Marston, 2004a, 2004b; Smith, 2004; and Swyngedouw, 1997, 2002). Although many understand political change in terms of globalization's dynamic structural exigencies, they emphasize the role of states in mediating globalization and their own transformation. Globalization is not "deterritorialization" but the "reterritorialization" of state power at different scales (Brenner, 1997b). Economic globalization and political regionalization are thus linked in Europe. Although many regionalist and regional nationalist movements may be based upon historically durable territorial structures (such as the pattern of medieval kingdoms that underlies today's Spanish "State of the Autonomies") regionalization also conforms to the spatiality of a global capitalism, which challenges the nation-state as natural territory for economic regulation and political expression and promotes cities and regions as a more agile scale for economic competitiveness (Brenner, 1999). European integration and the principle of subsidiarity only enhance this trend. European reterritorialization is thus a product of the simultaneous rescaling of economic and governing structures, mediated by state power.

If these theories offer a compelling framework for interpreting dynamism of state territoriality, however, they may be critiqued for being abstract, structurally deterministic, and insensitive to the question of culture. As a result many scholars are beginning to study how scales are mutually constituted by forces both 'local' and 'global' (Swyngedouw, 2002; Marston, 2000; Gibson-Graham, 2002), defined more by spatial networks than territorial boundaries (Leitner *et al.,* 2002; Latham, 2002), and are discursively and ide-

ologically laden (Swyngedouw, 2000, 2004; Mains, 2002; Marston, 2004b; Smith, 2004).

To find a more empirically grounded and politically attuned approach to geographical scale we might turn to research under the banner of 'New Regionalism,' which emphasizes the particular significance of regions in a global age. New Regionalism has emerged as both a regionalist policy discourse (promoting autonomy and competitiveness amidst globalization and state deregulation) and the critical analysis of emerging regional institutions and territories (Keating, 1998, 2000, 2001; Le Galès and Lequesne, 1998; Amin, 1999; Lovering, 1999, Deas and Ward, 2000, and MacLeod, 2001). The region reveals much about the globalization-regionalization dialectic and how political, economic, and cultural processes intersect to enable new territories to "coalesce" (MacLeod, 2001; MacLeod and Jones, 2001).

New Regionalism offers much greater attention to the specificity of the region and regional political institutions, especially as these latter seek regional advantage in a globally competitive economy (Storper, 1997; Cooke and Morgan, 1998; Perkmann, 2002; Perkmann and Sum, 2002). Though much of this work remains basically structuralist and limited to the materiality of formal state institutions, some have reminded us that regional competitiveness strategies is never simply technical but is about "...power and 'culture' in the broadest sense..." (Lovering, 1999, p. 389). In regionalization the region and place become fused in contested "institutional practices, discourse, and memory" (Paasi, 2002, p. 808). Indeed, culture is the medium that helps regional inhabitants interpret the changing spatiality and subjectivity of European life and their region's place in it (Paasi, 2003, 2004). Regional states thus have a vested interest in and the power over the rhetorical narration of new identities that legitimize regional institutions and promote new territorial structure and ways of life (Häkli, 1998).

Because New Regionalist institutions and identity discourses often emerge from complex historical and cultural contexts, however, an important conceptual problem emerges. How exactly are 'New' Regionalisms grafted onto or substituted for 'old' forms of regional politics? Perhaps the answer lies in the *cultural landscape*. The restructuring of regional institutions and identities implies the remaking of regional space *and* culture, and no geographical concept incorporates the material and ideal so elegantly as landscape. As one of geography's oldest and most varied concepts, landscape can have a number of meanings: as lived-in material culture (Sauer 1925), text (Duncan, 1990; Duncan and Ley, 1993), or some combination of material reality and representation (Mitchell, 1996). More specifically, cultural landscapes are the materialization of discourses, particularly political discourses (Schein, 1997). Landscapes are both a central material component in political discourse both representing its "intent and ideology" and serving as a "constitutive part of its ongoing development and reinforcement" (*ibid.,* p. 663).

If we understand the landscape to be both material reflection of cultural discourses and key symbolic referent within them, we see its importance to regionalist politics, which explicitly emphasizes the links between culture and landscape and territory (for the example of Catalan nationalism see Nogué and Vicente, 2004). Cultural landscapes are not merely reflection of existing cultural ways-of-life and signifying systems, but are "ideological landscapes" (Olwig, 1984). They are instrumental in the construction and maintenance of new cultural identities, whose transformation becomes a kind of "mindscaping" (Olwig, 2002, p. XXXI) which asks political subjects to envision their physical landscape and polity in new ways.

In sum, contemporary theory suggests reterritorialization and regionalization are premised upon the active participation of New Regionalist states, which fuse globally-oriented entrepreneurialism and the politics of regional autonomy in political institutions as well as regional space. But such transformations must often be mediated through cultural discourses about the nature of regional identity, in which the landscape is often central. Reterritorialization and New Regionalism, therefore, must often confront the cultural landscape, which can often be an arena of resistance to globalization and New Regionalism. The ideological landscape, however, can also be a primary tool used by states to reconstruct regional spaces *and* culture. This hypothesis is perhaps best explored through the case study of two cultural landscapes juxtaposed in regional history and space, and efforts of a regional government to narrate that transition in the discourses of a new, modern regionalism.

L'Horta: The original landscape of Valencia regionalism

The meaning of València's landscape transformations must be understood in light of L'Horta's historical importance to Valencian regional politics in its many ideological guises. This long history cannot be told in a few pages. Clearly the imprint of L'Horta can be seen everywhere in Valencia's regional capital: the croplands surrounding the city, the bounty of the Mercat Central, the façades of Twentieth Century landmarks like the Estació de Nord and the Mercat Colón, the famed procedures of the Tribunal de les Aïgues, and the folkloric traditions of *Les Falles*. Even if the most casual tourist will have seen postcards of a barraca, the most emblematic structure of L'Horta de València. These examples attest to L'Horta's importance as cultural icon, but only imply its relevance to Valencian politics.

So below I offer an impossibly brief survey of L'Horta in Valencian regionalist discourses *via* some of its key texts, from the Valencianism or cultural regionalism of the literary *renaixença* to the Republicanism of Vicente Blasco Ibáñez to the nuanced pan-Catalan regional nationalism of Joan Fuster to the anti-globalization localism of the various *els Salvem* move-

ments. There is no room here to trace the complex history of Valencian regional ideology (for this see Cucó, 1999, Guia, 1988) so I merely highlight some emblematic moments in the history of Valencian regional politics and L'Horta's important place in it.

Modern Valencian regionalism can be first dated to the mid-19th century calls by the romantic movement to recuperate autocthonous regional customs. This cultural rebirth or *renaixença* provided the foundation later expressions of *valencianisme polític* (Cucó, 1999). The Valencian renaixença looked fondly back to the region's medieval history as the autonomous and Valenciano-speaking *Regne de València* within the Crown of Aragón, extolling the distinctive virtues of Valencian culture and language and calling for their recuperation. Poet Teodor Llorente was characteristic of this movement when he emphasized L'Horta as the emblematic landscape of Valencian cultural difference in a much cited passage from 1887.

The Horta of Valencia is an immense countryside, perfectly leveled, meticulously distributed, in which there is not one inch of land lost nor idle, in whose expansiveness are disseminated its dwellings and a population essentially agricultural, in which it was born and which it identifies itself...

(quoted in Costa, 1994, p. 18).

L'Horta provided a central point of reference in the promotion Valencian cultural difference and calls to recover the autonomy lost with the *furs* in 1707, even if the *renaixença* failed to become a regionalist movement *per se* in the full political sense (Sanchis Guarner, 1999, Cucó, 1999).

Late 19th and early 20th century Republicanism offered a far more critical response to the economic, political, and cultural realities (and injustices) of life in Spain. The work of novelist and politician Vicente Blasco Ibáñez offers the most important window on Valencian Republicanism, and no Valencian politician has ever offered such rich representations of L'Horta in print. The novel *La Barraca* and its portrait of L'Horta capture some of the enduring tensions within Valencian life and politics: between the city and its rural surroundings, between the urban bourgeoisie and rural laborers, between the speaking of *Castellano* and *Valenciano*. For Blasco Ibáñez (2000), L'Horta may have been a space "soaked in light…the great squares of vegetables like enormous green handkerchiefs, and the red earth so carefully tended (p. 62) but this is a landscape constructed by the labor of Valencians (in this passage a farmer named Barret)

All the blood of his grandfathers was there. Five or six generations of Barrets had passed their lives working the same land, turning the land, medicating its inner being with strong manure, watching that its vital

juices would not wane, caressing and brushing with hoe and ploughshare
those clumps of earth, each of which had been irrigated with the sweat
and blood of the family (p. 76).

Handed down from father to son, this landscape is Valencian *patrimoni* in the clearest sense of the word. Going beyond Llorente cultural regionalism, Blasco Ibáñez represents L'Horta for explicitly political purposes, emphasizing this landscape as undisputed point of reference for Valencian culture at once proud and flawed.

After the Civil War the politics of Valencian difference took explicitly nationalist form in the 1960s writings of Joan Fuster, who blended philology with historical inquiry to situate Valencia's identity equally in its Catalan-speaking heritage and the essential unity and distinctiveness of Valencian people. In *Nosaltres, Els Valencians* or *We, the Valencians* he claimed bluntly "In the País Valencià the countryside is everything…ours is an economy fundamentally agrarian, this determines in good measure the character and the generic comportment of Valencian society" (Fuster, 1998, p. 281). Though he critiqued the provincialism of the renaixença, Fuster nonetheless located the essential "unity" of the Valencian people in certain cultural traditions, which in turn were largely rooted in L'Horta. Valencian nationalism, like the city and region, were defined by the cultural landscape of L'Horta (Fuster, 1962).

After the death of Franco and the transition to regional autonomy in 1982, Socialist administrations in municipal and regional government focused on the very regionalist objectives of institutionalizing autonomous governance and consolidating Valencian territory. During the period the question of L'Horta continued to be central to regional identity and cultural discourses, to which some key works of social science testify (with eloquence perhaps more numerical than literary). For example, Mira's (1981) survey of language use strongly connected the use Valenciano, a critical referent for Valencian regionalism, with rural areas and L'Horta. Across the region 93% of farmers spoke Valenciano, compared to 65% of professional workers (p. 120). Not only was L'Horta an emblem of regional difference but it was also a landscape for reproducing that difference. Andrés Piqueras Infante (1996), inspired by Fuster and guided by Mira, surveyed Valencians in the early 1990s about their regional identity by way of questions about "most representative" places and customs. 77% of respondents cited *paella*, 51% cited the language of Valenciano, and 50.6% cited the Horta itself as the premier symbols of Valencian difference. In the capital city and its surroundings, fully 60% cited the Horta as an emblematic feature that defined the region (*ibid.* p. 139). Beyond the speaking of Valenciano, what defined Valencia for Valencians was the landscape.

The hard struggle with the land, the affinity for water, the great care and the eagerness deposited in the Horta and in other kinds of family enterprises, have given rise to a certain ideas about friendship, work, and personal effort, but also a manner of relating among individuals…These are shared values, representations, and ways of doing things that, in the end, are what constitutes "culture"

(Piqueras, 1996 p. 243).

As the Generalitat repositioned the Comunitat Valenciana within the new Spanish "State of the Autonomies," L'Horta remained central to regional identity.

To extend this history of Valencian regional politics and L'Horta to the present, it is perhaps important to mention the flourishing of various protest movements across the region's capital, which are often broadly grouped under the moniker *els Salvem*. Emerging since the early years of democracy and autonomy, a variety of civic groups resisted major urban development projects with an ideology characterized by equally strong doses of environmentalism, neighborhood activism, left-leaning critique of capitalist urbanization and globalization, and Valencian nationalism (all protest is launched in Valenciano). Perhaps the most significant expression of this new regionalist politics has been various protests against the destruction of L'Horta, which originated in 1980s battles against roadway construction, reached fever pitch in 1999 with the opposition to a proposed port expansion, and culminated in citizen's initiative *Per L'Horta*. Instigated by municipal expropriation of farmlands for a logistical activity zone, and situated in a context of general preoccupation for L'Horta's precipitous disappearance, the citizen's initiative *Llei Reguladora del Procés d'Ordenació i Protecció de L'Horta de València com a Espai Natural Protegit* (Law Regulating the Planning and Protection of the Horta de València as a Protected Natural Space) proposed a temporary moratorium on urban expansion and preservation of L'Horta's farmlands. It preamble declared

L'Horta de València is historical, cultural, natural, and agricultural patrimony of all Valencians…an irreplaceable landscape with strong character all its own…a landscape that is the physical expression of the creations, knowledge, and practices of a traditional agrarian culture.

This citizen's initiative was unprecedented in the region. Organizers gathered nearly 120,000 signatures, more than double required by law, and presented the initiative to regional parliament or *les Corts Valencianes*. Though the Corts declined to debate the measure, it exemplifies L'Horta's continued relevance to regional politics.

L'Horta has served as both a changing material basis for Valencian life and a set of symbols at the center of Valencian regionalist/nationalist discourse. The symbolic imprint of this iconographic landscape will long endure in Valencia, but what if L'Horta does not? After decades of encroachment by urbanization very little of L'Horta de València remains, and even that is under assault by furiously speculative construction, some of this promoted by regional government itself. This raises a tricky question I address in following pages: What would Valencian regionalism be without L'Horta? Can such a regional icon be replaced?

New regionalist landscapes rise from the old

If L'Horta has defined life for many Valencians, marking the edge of the regional capital and the nature of regional life, this is less and less the case. The city's eastern façade, for example, is now marked more by the towing Ciutat de les Arts i de les Ciències than the croplands of L'Horta de la Punta. The impossible juxtaposition of these two landscapes casts in start relief the rapid transformation of Valencian life and regionalism, as well as tensions inherent to regionalist politics in a global age. More than a juxtaposition this is an encroaching displacement of landscapes. Indeed, Calatrava's buildings physically displaced portions of L'Horta and irrigation canals like *la séquia na Rovella,* which intimately connected the city and its farmlands. In this juxtaposition and displacement of landscapes, each said to be symbolic of the region, we may learn something about the dynamism of regionalist politics. More specifically, we may learn how the Generalitat Valenciana navigates the cultural tensions of globalization in and through the landscape itself. How can the Generalitat Valenciana, officially the political manifestation of regional autonomy and cultural distinctiveness, lead in the displacement of a traditional regionalist landscape like L'Horta? Perhaps it is through the discourses that materialize landscape and the ideological rhetoric that lends cultural significance to new regionalist landscapes.

Below a very brief history of the Ciutat de les Arts i de les Ciències, which traces regionalist discourse during the key moments in the project's political history: its planning, near cancellation, and inauguration. From each I have selected just a few quotes to highlight the ways regional politicians and others have discussed its cultural significance as specifically *Valencian*: symbolic of new forms of regional self-identification, autonomous self-governance, and cultural difference. These politics may not be Valencianista or nacionalista in any strict sense, but their discourses regionalist in the broadest sense: they seek to construct a new Valencian community via a new Valencian landscape. But of what kind?

The Project's Origins under the Socialist Administration of the 1980s

The early years of regional autonomy under the administration of Socialist Joan Lerma are critical for understanding the material and symbolic origins of la *Ciutat de les Ciències*. After the contentious negotiation of València's Statute of Autonomy, torn by controversies over the region's official language and symbols, the nascent Generalitat Valenciana sought to institutionalize its authority and forge a more cohesive and autonomous Comunitat Valenciana, an effort in which the regional capital figured prominently. The agenda took shape in the technical language of spatial planning, but overlaying these territorial goals was the broader desire to modernize regional culture.

Lerma suggested in late 1989 that València construct a "city of science and technology" to promote scientific research and learning by the general populace, boosting Valencian culture projecting it beyond regional boundaries. He suggested it could convert València into a European capital of science and innovation offering

> *...the possibility, above all for our children, of having access to a technical and scientific education that today they don't have or have with great difficulty...To me it seems (the project) is fundamental for the future of this region. Could we get along without it? Certainly, just like we can do without so many other things. But each time we renounce something like this we renounce a little bit of the future*
>
> (*Levante-El Mercantil Valenciano,* January 8, 1989).

Universitat de València professor José María López Piñero was charged with developing a more detailed vision for the project. Echoing Lerma he suggested

> *(I)n our city it is necessary and possible...to create a city of the sciences, which could be a showcase of scientific activities and would aid in teaching and the diffusion of knowledge. It would be a way of 'taking the pulse' of the Valencian identity itself in this regard*
>
> (*Levante-EMV,* January 28, 1989).

As the planning took shape in a proposal for a "Tower of Communications," science museum, and planetarium project director Antonio Ten in 1992 claimed

> *The City of Science is born as a potent cultural and educational instrument, oriented toward the diffusion of scientific and technological knowledge to all strata of society. It is also born with the vocation of showcase*

of the reality of a living and innovative city and region, decidedly launched in the direction of the future"

(*Levante-EMV*, February 2, 1992).

For Ten the project would be a "true *point of encounter* with an approaching future."

Nearly Canceled by the PP, Valencians Defend the Ciutat de les Ciències

If the origin of new landscape is critical for understanding its social construction, perhaps even more revealing are key moments when political discourse is most contested. Thus something particularly important may be learned from popular Eduardo Zaplana's ascent to regional power in 1995 and his controversial efforts to cancel (or at least modify) the Ciutat de les Ciències, which demonstrates the powerful and powerfully contested role of landscape in regional politics.

In the elections of May 28, 1995 the Socialists lost their majority in the Valencian Corts to the Partido Popular. Within days Zaplana announced a neoliberal agenda that included sweeping privatization and reviewing the viability of the Ciutat de les Ciències. On August 23, the Generalitat announced that it would "completely re-orient" the project and seek private capital investment from entertainment companies like Disney or Universal Studios. By late October of that year, however, Zaplana's administration announced the complete cancellation of the Tower of Communications and the science museum, citing (presciently) the elevated construction costs. Only the planetarium L'Hemisfèric remained untouched, since construction contracts had already been let out.

Zaplana's attack on the project provoked sharp reactions as an array of forces defended not only the buildings but also the incipient modernity they had already come to symbolize. The recently ousted Socialists were first to protest. Lerma argued

Anyone with a vision of the future who is trying to put the city on the road to modernization knows that the tower is a critical project...Any city that aspires to find itself among the great European cities needs something of this style...

(*Levante-EMV,* September 23, 1995).

Lerma accused the PP of conceiving such projects only "as if they were a business," doing a "disservice to the future of the city of València" (*ibid.*). Joan Romero, at that time vice-secretary of the regional Socialists, called for

a "common front" among all important Valencian institutions, public and private. Aurelio Marínez, socialist leader in València's city council called for this common front to "stand up against a decision that puts the modern future of the capital in serious danger" (*ibid.*)

From across the city came pronouncements in near universal support of the project and in protest of Zaplana's decision. The editors of *Levante – EMV* expressed their fear the cancellation would leave the "unmistakable landscape of a city of ruins and not of sciences" (*Levante-EMV,* September 24, 1995). Benjamin Muñoz, director of the *Associación de Promotores y Constructores de Valencia* argued

> *…(T)he complex of the Ciutat de les Ciències opens doors to the information super-highway, the Internet, and many more things…these landmarks are referents for the future and will be, without a doubt, for València what the Eiffel tower is for Paris (ibid.)*

These sentiments echoed throughout the wide spectrum of Valencian regional politics.

The Corts Valencianes responded by calling on the Generalitat to complete the project as proposed, a measure that received the support not only of the Socialists and the leftist Esquerra Unida, but also the right-wing nationalists of the Unió Valenciana and Zaplana's own compatriots in the PP. Zapalana's administration offered to redesign the park, but the modest substitute only provoked more opposition. Socialist Romero accused Zaplana of substituting the initial designs with a "theme park," a move that would "destroy an important cultural and educational initiative…" (*Levante-EMV*, November 25, 1995). The city's most prominent architects also objected. Alejandro Escribiano, primary author of the city's municipal plan revisions of 1988, lamented the impending loss of an important "symbol for the city" (*Levante-EMV,* December 9, 1995). On December 20, 1995, *Levante – EMV* published the results of a poll asking the city's residents "Do you believe València must have an emblematic project for the twenty-first century like the Ciutat de les Ciències?". A resounding 84% of respondents said yes. More, they preferred Calatrava's tower to the newly modified designs nearly two to one.

By trying to cancel the project, the new regional administration merely helped crystallize Calatrava's designs as *the* symbol for the city and Comunitat Valenciana, consolidating a discourse in which the complex represented regional modernity itself. In early 1996, Romero suggested that by canceling the project Zaplana "would go down in history as the person who tried to destroy the future" (*Levante-EMV,* January 4, 1996). The mere proposal of the Ciutat de les Ciències had in a few years become a protagonist in the rapid evolution of regionalist discourse in Valencia towards an obsession with modernity, and the project's cancellation an affront to it.

The Inauguration of a New Landscape

A decade after Lerma's proposed the project and five years after Zaplana tried to cancel it, major portions of the newly renamed Ciutat de les Arts i de les Ciències neared completion. Zaplana's administration ultimately built Calatrava's planetarium/IMAX theater and science museum, exchanged the tower with an equally (it not more) expensive and ambitious *Palau de les Arts* (concert hall), and added the costly aquarium *L'Oceanographic* to the complex. The soaring political rhetoric and discourses accompanying each consecutive inauguration – particularly of L'Hemisfèric and el Museu de les Ciències — exemplify how the Generalitat invested this emerging landscape with its own set of regionalist meanings, which were in some ways distinct from those of the Socialists, but in others remarkably consistent.

At the inauguration of L'Hemisferic in 1998, an extravaganza of lasers and fireworks and the premiere of Valencia's own IMAX movie "*El Gust per la Vida*," Zaplana argued the project "combines the defense of what is our own, of our singularity and our projection toward the Universe beyond" (*Levante-EMV* , April 17, 1998). Media advertisements taken out by the Generalitat in local newspapers claimed "It's for you, it's for the world" and brochures touted the complex as "a symbol of the Comunitat Valenciana for the twenty-first century" (Ciudad de las Artes y las Ciencias S.A., 1998). In a concurrent public relations campaign "Comunitat Valenciana: Anem a Més" (or "Comunitat Valenciana: We're going on to more") to promote regional government's achievements after three years of the Zaplana mandate promoted the "the results of a great project." Zaplana spoke of situating the Comunitat Valenciana "in the group that is going to lead the regions of Europe." This new referent for Valencia culture and a European center of learning, the materials bragged, had "the cultural eyes of the world …looking to València" (Generalitat Valenciana, 1998).

The core of the complex, however, was always the science museum, so its inauguration in November 2000 prompted the most regionalist rhetoric. Zaplana called the moment "transcendental" and the region a "symbol of modernity and progress." Valencians "believe in themselves, are open to the world, and have a tremendous cultural wealth," he said, represented by the museum (*Diario de Valencia,* November 14, 2000). In November 14, 2000 issue of *Las Provincias* Zaplana called it

> *one of the landmarks, one of the architectural and cultural referents, which will shape the València of the future. It is one more of the emblematic projects promoted by Valencian government that will situate our Comunitat in the vanguard of European regions.*

For Zapalana a visit a museum was an "opportunity to advance to the future" (*ibid.*).

The official guide to the museum reflects this same rhetorical joining of regional pride and European modernity. Beyond a tourist attraction Zaplana (echoing Lerma) called the project "a great wager on the future" that would convert "our Comunitat in a global reference point…of science, entertainment, and technology" (ibid.). Scientific innovation and regional competition provided an overarching "common project" and vehicle for the cohesion of the Comunitat Valencia.

The symbolic association of the project with regionalism and modernity extended beyond such formal political rhetoric. Just one indication of this can be found in coverage by the major Valencian daily newspapers of the science museum's inauguration, in which the Generalitat's rhetoric resonated in a wider, cohesive discourse. The special supplement to center-left *Levante-EMV* carried the headline "Destination Future." An editorial in the conservative *Diario de Valencia* suggested the image of the museum is "the image of the future." The center-right *Las Provincias* published a November 14, 2000 editorial suggesting

> *València, and by extension the Comunitat Valenciana, has lived through a long autumn and a raw wintertime. But it has woken up. It has cost twenty years of democracy that have served to awaken the institutions of self-governance…València can be proud of what is has done. València, from this day forward, is a city that can look as an equal to others like Bilbao, Barcelona, Madrid, and others of European-wide reputation*

For these editors the city and region had ascended to the status of pioneer, innovator, and leader. The paper carried the headline "The Future is Already Here in València."

From these few key historical moments we can see how regional government reconstructed its capital city to promote Valencian self-identification and pride, affirm the legitimacy of autonomous government, and cultivate new notions of Valencian cultural and tradition. In the process they articulated a vision of Valencian regional culture defined more by the future than the past, and by outward-looking competitiveness more than inward-looking historical reflection. Though Zaplana and the P.P. can in no regard be considered nationalist, nor regionalist in any sense other than the opportunistic use of regional pride and competitiveness for rhetorical purposes, this brief history demonstrates the centrality of regional questions to Valencian political discourse. The question of Valencia's distinctiveness and place in the world is both the framework and medium through which political decisions are made and represented. If Lerma and Zaplana are not regionalists or nationalists by the strict definition of those terms employed in València, it remains apparent that the definitions of the region and regional identity may vary, but their meaning remains a central feature of ongoing debate.

Analysis: Reconstructing landscape to remake regionalism

The dramatic juxtaposition of L'Horta and la Ciutat de les Arts i de les Ciències in the Valencian landscape and imaginary returns us to some key questions. Most generally, how is the restructuring of political and economic territory (reterritorialization or regionalization) negotiated culturally? More specifically, what is the role of cultural landscape in the planned reconstruction of regional identity? These questions are of broad theoretical importance, but they have particular resonance in Catalan-speaking regions like the Comunitat Valenciana transformed in recent decades by the rapid (and simultaneous) processes of economic globalization, political regionalization, and modernization. Beyond the abstract consideration of reterritorialization and culture, however, the rapid disappearance of L'Horta from both the material landscape and the regionalist imaginary prompts more specific and troubling questions. What happens to regional culture when the landscape in which it was cultivated disappears? Even more dramatically, how can a regional government like the Generalitat Valenciana participate in the planned urbanization of a symbolic regionalist landscape like L'Horta without imperiling its own legitimacy?

I suggest that answer to all of the above questions, rooted both in geographical theory and the Valencian experience, can be found in two words: culture and landscape. For regional governments navigating the complex cross-currents of economic globalization and cultural regionalism, culture and landscape are both problem and answer. Below I elaborate on this very broad observation by drawing four more specific conclusions, which both arise from the Valencian case and help explain it and may serve as useful conceptual reminders for the study of regionalism.

In a regionalist context, all economic and political transformations must be narrated culturally. The pursuit of global competitiveness or territorial restructuring, especially when promoted by regional governments, must often be framed within a regionalist discourse. New Regionalism often must be reconciled with the culture complexities of 'old' regionalisms. Social and spatial transformations are judged continually against the overarching regionalist project, whether defined in terms of regional pride and self-identification, territorial cohesion and autonomy, or the cultivation of regionally distinct ways-of-life or symbolic practices (among others). In such an environment, some kind of regionalist rhetoric becomes compulsory for regional political leaders, even when their ideological orientation may not be very regionalist at all (Zaplana, who is neither a Valencianista nor nacionalista but a conservative *popular*, is a prime example). In such regionalist rhetoric certain keywords and landmarks become important points of reference, and political events and projects will inevitably be judged against them. Regionalism reminds us that culture mediates globalization and the state mediates both.

Historical forms of regionalist life and politics can be durable factors in (and even obstacles to) the pursuit of 'new' regionalist agendas. This, of course, has been a primary way that regionalist movements are perceived in a global world: as the historically-based resistance to the forces of economic or cultural globalization. But there is something about L'Horta de València that makes this point with exceptional clarity, since this form of material culture literally and figuratively stands in the way of new development. L'Horta is both a way-of-life and a set of symbols, indeed a scale of Valencian life, which must be confronted whenever any new infrastructure of regional modernity is contemplated. Culture is always politically complex terrain for regional governments to navigate, but this is especially true when regionalist landscapes must be sacrificed for the infrastructure of regional ambition.

When old regional landscapes and discourses cannot be adapted to new regionalist agendas, they are moved aside for alternative regionalist ways-of-life and signifying systems. Many regional traditions and landscapes do not stand in the way of globalization or regional development. Some landscapes (like old city centers) can be preserved for their charm and antiquity and converted into motors for tourism. Other regional traditions, like the affinity for trade and entrepreneurship attributed to Catalans, can provide a convenient referent linking the past to the present and future. As a cultural landscape L'Horta is doubly problematic, however, since it both materially stands in the way of growth and symbolically represents agrarian social relations with little relevance to a globally-oriented, entrepreneurial regionalism. In such a case, perhaps the only way for regional government to ideologically confront the challenge of L'Horta is to ignore it, passively allowing it to disappear, while actively fostering *other* regionalist landscapes.

This is where the construction of the Ciutat de les Arts i de les Ciencies directly upon the croplands of L'Horta is so symbolically important, for it encapsulates both the Generalitat Valenciana's disinterest in preserving L'Horta with its desire to erect a new regionalist landscape in its place. At the same time as the science museum *literally* overshadows the croplands of L'Horta, the new kind of regional culture that museum is said to represent *symbolically* overshadows the historical traditions connecting Valencia to its agrarian past. Whether the politicians and planners of the Generalitat intended to or not, they in effect erected a new cultural landscape symbolic of new cultural traditions directly upon the remnants of the old.

We can debate the content and significance of this displacement. We can argue that L'Horta is irreplaceable and its loss signifies the end of Valencian regional culture. This is a view among many in València. Certainly such landscape and customs honed over many centuries cannot be easily replaced. But if we approach culture as dynamic and socially constructed we must admit the possibility of new regionalist cultures. València exemplifies how debatable regionalism can be. If we allow for the political manipulation and reorientation of regionalism discourse and

landscapes, this raises another question. What exactly is L'Horta being diplaced for?

The regionalist ideology of modernity offers a potent substitution for historical regionalism and another model of regional life more adapted to globalization. The answer to any government seeking to navigate between old and new regionalisms, between the politics of locality and the pursuit of global competitiveness, may be found in reorienting regionalism around the vague yet powerful notion of modernity. The rhetoric of regional modernity offers a vision that looks outwards and forward, embraces interconnectedness and the future, and defines culture by its place in a wider, extra-territorial sphere of relationships and a historical dynamism. Yet it does so while promoting regional cohesion and autonomy. In substituting the discourses and landscapes of regionalist modernity, regional governments can stay regionalist without the binding constraints of regional history and geography. This is, I think, the substitution promoted by the Generalitat Valenciana through the planning, construction, and promotion of the Ciutat de les Arts i de les Ciències.

If landscape is so central to defining regionalism, then perhaps it is not surprising that redefining regional culture is most readily accomplished by reconstructing regional landscapes, luring the regionalist gaze of Valencians away from L'Horta and the past toward Calatrava's gleaming new buildings and the modernity are said to represent. By displacing L'Horta with the Ciutat de les Arts i de les Ciències, tradition with modernity, the Generalitat takes a firm hand in symbolically reconstructing Valencian culture as way-of-life and signifying system. Intimate connections between Valencians and the land (e.g. communal systems of irrigation and market exchange) are replaced by inter-connectedness at a different scale, represented by international flows of tourists and cultural expression. The careful cultivation of regional traditions, rooted in millennia of social practices, is abandoned for global interconnectedness, innovation, culture, and fashion. By this argument regionalism must neither be confronted nor abandoned, but merely re-oriented and reconstructed in ways more convenient to regional competitiveness in a global age. With its longstanding bonds to the land broken, Valencian regionalism is made more pliable and adaptable to changing historical circumstances. Innovation and change are proposed as the new Valencian regional traditions, celebrated as the new Valencian way-of-life: modernity.

Conclusion

Few places exemplify the complex relationship between economic, political, and cultural transformation better than Spain's autonomous regions. Concurrent processes of economic globalization and political regionalization have reterritorialized Spain into a state of entrepreneurial and culturally

charged autonomies. In the Catalan-speaking regions, as elsewhere in Europe, the intersection of economic integration and regionalist politics presents regional governments with political challenges as well as opportunities. These challenges and opportunities are perhaps most evident in the cultural landscape itself and the ways that regionalization takes shape in regionalist discourse and the places that materialize it. In the displacement of the Valencian Horta by the Ciutat de les Arts i de les Ciències we see most clearly the central role of landscape as both referent for regional culture and instrument in regional politics. If culture remains a key challenge for globalization-as-reterritorialization and New Regionalism, in theory and practice, cultural landscape can be a key answer, overlooked in theory but not in practice.

For regions like the Comunitat Valenciana the landscape has been a central referent defining the scale and structure of regional life and culture. For centuries the emblematic landscape of Valencian regional difference was L'Horta (recall the survey of Piqueras Infante, 1996). Today the landscape of the Ciutat de les Arts i de les Ciències has become the preeminent symbol of the city, diplacing others like L'Horta in regional space and imaginary. In a recent survey residents of the capital were asked to name five places in the city that spontaneously came to mind. The most common response was the Ciutat de les Arts i de les Ciències (Boira 2005). Such a profound transformation offers four basic insights to anyone interested in reterritorialization and regionalization in general or the Catalan-speaking regions specifically, which perhaps bear repeating. First, in regionalist politics all regional transformations must be narrated culturally. Second, historical regionalisms can be durable factors in or obstacles to 'new' regionalist agendas. Third, when old regional landscapes and discourses cannot be adapted to new regionalist agendas, they are moved aside. And fourth, the regionalist ideology of modernity offers a substitution for the more troublesome politics of history and locality, adapted to the fluid and competitive realities of globalization.

But what exactly does this mean for regionalism? What kind of regional modernity is this that the Comunitat Valenciana has embarked upon? And what *really* has L'Horta been substituted with? This is a normative discussion beyond the scope of this paper and best left to Valencians. But perhaps insight on the nature of new regionalist politics and cultures might be found in the landscapes constructed in their name. The Generalitat's science museum may serve as a point of reference here, since that's what it was explicitly designed to be: the utmost symbol of Valencian modernity. What kind of building is it? As anyone who has visited it will know, Calatrava's façade is monumental and visually stunning on the outside. But the museum lacks significant content on the inside. Drawn towards this gleaming white vision of Mediterranean modernity, we find the banal contents of a mediocre science center. And though the project was initially defined by its contents, the building today advertises modernity without articulating what that really means.

Or perhaps this is the wrong interpretation. Maybe the science museum has indeed defined modernity, modernity as the experience of having our vision drawn away from the past and the land toward the future and the sky, an experience in which (to quote Marshall Berman, who paraphrased Marx) "All that is solid melts into air" (Berman, 1988). Dazzled by the mirage of modernity we might even forget that another more substantial regional vision once existed, even though its soils are buried right under our feet.

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