Why do Catalans want independence?

Explaining the increase in support for independence in the period 2010-2017.

by

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AUTHORS DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this submission is entirely my own work, in my own words, and that all sources used in researching it are fully acknowledged and all quotations properly identified. It has not been submitted, in whole or in part, by me or another person, for the purpose of obtaining any other credit / grade. I understand the ethical implications of my research, and this work meets the requirements of the School of Public Policy.

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ABSTRACT

Catalonia is one of the historic nations within Spain, and during the period 2010-2017 experienced a large increase in support for independence. To explain this phenomenon, a historical review is used to contextualize and Andre Lecours' variables are used to analyze it. It is concluded that self-determination, unresolved constitutional problems, public policies and nationalist narratives have been variables that have influenced this process.

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INTRODUCTION

Catalonia is a historical nation within Spain, which has had its own institutions of self-government for centuries. Moreover, Catalan nationalism, born in the 19th century as a political movement, has always defended and claimed for a greater self-government within Spain. The historical dynamics have also meant that Catalan nationalism has been configured as a civic nationalism because of this very claim for defence of self-government. Defending Catalonia has not been presented as a claim of a specific ethnic group, but as a result of a common institutional past.

However, historical dynamics are not enough to explain why in the period 2010-2017 support for independence increased so much. To understand how independence went from being a marginal movement to a movement that was able to win elections, it is necessary to use the variables proposed by Lecours.

These variables try to explain why sub-state nationalism is so attractive at a time when in Western democracies nationalism is often associated with xenophobia, racism and extreme right-wing extremism.

This research aims to update the variables of (Lecours, 2011) to explain the increase in support for independence between 2010-2017. However, these variables have been adapted chronologically to the facts, and some of them have also been eliminated because they do not respond to the Catalan reality.

First, we will address self-determination, a variable that seduces citizens because it is based on the liberal idea that people have the ability to choose their own destinies and reinforces the feeling of belonging. This variable will analyse the impact of the ruling against the "Statute of Autonomy" on the self-determination debate.

Secondly, the variable to be addressed consists in how the unresolved constitutional problems are used by nationalists, as a political attraction. In the case of Spain the 15M movement, which was a social protest in response to the economic crisis, questioned the consensus of the Spanish constitutional pact. In the same context, the Catalan nationalist movement also took the opportunity to question another unresolved constitutional issue: the non-recognition of Catalonia as a nation in the Spanish constitution.

According to Lecours, public policies serve as a tool to distinguish nationalist actors, and in the cases of secession, to make visible all that could be done with an independent state. This was done by the Catalan government during the 2015 legislature.

Finally, narratives are another important tool to give legitimacy to the political movement, as they are usually a resource that appeals to the emotions of the people. In the Catalan case, it was recalled how the unfair past and the humiliations that Catalonia had suffered served as a force for a better future.

The research concludes by exposing the limitations of these variables in the current political context (2017-2022) and whether the frustration of citizens with the unfulfilled demands of politicians have had any impact on the independence movement.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Nationalism is something that has been part of the history of Europe since the 19th century with the formation of the Modern States, many communities declared themselves distinct by exalting their language, their history or their common identity. Nationalism has historically had the capacity to adapt to the historical context, examples are the nationalisms of the European colonies that used it to liberate their country but also the reactionary movements that use nationalism to be hostile against minorities.

One of the leading theorists on nationalism (Gellner, 2015) defines nationalism as:

Nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent. Nationalist sentiment is the feeling of anger aroused by the violation of the principle, or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfilment, A nationalist movement is one actuated by a sentiment of this kind.

For Gellner there is a violation of the nationalist principle which is very sensitive, if the nation is governed from outside the nation, in other words if the rulers of the political unit belong to a different nation than the majority of the governed. Historically, most nations of the world do not live in political units that are nationally homogeneous, but there are very complex patterns and the satisfaction of one nation often leads to the frustration of another.

Nationalism can combine well with authoritarianism and populism (Bieber, 2018), but it can also act independently. Nowadays, the media power is talking about nationalism as a synonym for protectionism, xenophobia, and anti-establishment discourse, in the style of Le Pen or Trump. Although there is no global trend towards an increase in nationalism, the resonance of nationalism in Europe is part of a crisis of liberal democracies. However,

this is not the only nationalism that exists; beyond banal nationalism, there is a nationalism that has a revolutionary aspect based on the capacity of individuals to unite with the nation.

Nationalism for Bieber is:

Nationalism is best understood as a malleable and narrow ideology, which values membership in a nation greater than other groups (i.e. based on gender, parties, or socio-economic group), seeks distinction from other nations, and strives to preserve the nation and give preference to political representation by the nation for the nation.

The author admits the limitations of measuring nationalism because being nationalist is mostly bad and there is not a global trend in all countries, but it is adapted to each context. Thus he offers three variables: attitudes, the rise of nationalist parties, nationalist policies, and nationalist violence. However in the nationalist literature there are many authors that do distinct between civic nationalism based on liberal principles versus a cultural nationalism which is illiberal and authoritarian Brown (1999).

Although analytically a distinction is made between these two forms of nationalism, in many nation-states they are intertwined, and it is not so easy to draw the line between civic and cultural/ethnic nationalism.

So civic nationalism is based on this idea of loyalty to a territory and its institutions, and from this loyalty an ethical principle is derived. The community formation of civic nationalism is always a construction and can sometimes be a bit of a vague idea. In terms of national community building, cultural nationalism states that citizens living in a particular territory have common ancestry and a shared destiny situated in the future, civic nationalism on the other hand uses this vision of a shared future in an institutional sense. Thus, civic nationalism will seek to promote a common destiny through a common

institutional past. Other factors can be influential on the civic nationalism and secessionist movement like the socioeconomic conditions but also the objectives. In the secessionist movement the leaders need to claim a cultural distinction to make a strong case for secession, but secessionist movements seeking greater autonomy base their discourse on territorial rather than ethnic terms.

Banal nationalism (Billing, 1995) is also a type of nationalism that comes from nation-states as a way of shaping national identity through practices, ideological beliefs and routines that reproduce the world of the nation-state. There are numerous expressions of banal nationalism, one of them being the playing of the national anthem before sporting competitions or national teams. Outside the sporting sphere, there are also examples of banal nationalism, such as the national flag in public space. The central idea of banal nationalism is the unofficial use of national symbols in a subtle way that is so internalised by citizens that it goes unnoticed.

In many liberal states in Europe there is a sub-state nationalism of nations that are part of large states, such as Scotland in the UK, Flanders in Belgium or Catalonia in Spain. In these nations, nationalism presents specific claims for democratic change (Lecours, 2012). The narrative of sub-state nations is often that as a group they have suffered or are suffering some kind of injustice because of the state, either for historical reasons or because of specific state policies. In this sense, given that it is difficult to draw a clear line between ethnic nationalism and civic nationalism, in sub-state nations this distinction has its own dynamics. Because the historical narrative used is based on the injustices and oppressions received throughout history, in many occasions the exaltation of nationalism is based on the principles of civic nationalism. In this type of nations, reference is also made to the violation of Gellner's nationalist principle, which is based on the fact that the nation must be governed from within the nation, not from the state to which it belongs in

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this case. In sub-state nations it can also be observed how malleable and narrow (Bieber, 2018) is the use of nationalism, since large nation states can give it a use that consists in perpetuating their political power, and in sub-state nations it can be used as a democratic potential.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The configuration of nationalism in Spain during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries took a different course from that of the rest of Western Europe. In 1898, with the loss of the last Spanish colonies and the emergence of nationalist movements in the Basque Country and Catalonia, the Spanish state was at a crucial political moment to include the historical nations in the design of the state. In these two nations, claims ceased to be merely cultural and began to be organised into political parties.

 This rise of peripheral nationalism can be explained by three factors (Muro & Quiroga, 2005) the fraudulent political system in which the two major parties corruptly took turns in power with the approval of the monarchy. The rapid industrialisation of these two territories gave rise to a different social structure: while Spain was dominated by peasants and large landowners, in the Basque Country and Catalonia a small industrial bourgeoisie had emerged and organised itself politically. The third factor was the lack of incorporation of Basque and Catalan nationalism into the political system, in which these territories had scant self-government.

The Second Spanish Republic (1931-1936) was an unprecedented moment in Spanish history in which tensions with peripheral nationalisms were resolved, along with other structural changes. For the first time, the Basque Country and Catalonia were granted statutes of autonomy recognising their own government and parliament and exercising

certain powers. This process was interrupted by the Civil War and later by Franco's dictatorship, which lasted until 1975 (Muro &Quiroga, 2005).

Subsequently, during the Franco regime, the dictatorship was associated with authoritarian and centralist nationalism, while the nationalism of the peripheral nations (Galicia, the Basque Country and Catalonia) was linked to the democratic opposition. The effects of this have led to a negative conception of nationalism because it is associated with an authoritarian period in Spanish history. Simultaneously, the Spanish state never recognises itself as nationalist, and points to peripheral nations as the only nationalists (Geniola, 2018).

In this sense, Franco's nationalism had a lot of banal nationalism because it presented itself as anti-nationalist but concerned with saving the nation from the communist threat. The propaganda of the regime used nationalism to protect Spain from the "anti-Spanish" which included liberals, republicans, leftists and obviously the Catalans and Basques.

The notion of Spanish nationalism as universalist and non-nationalist is something that has existed in many Western nation-states: "A nation that aspires to international hegemony must deny being nationalist. It must claim to speak for universality, while preserving its own particular interests" (Michael Billings, 2021).

Franco's project was also assimilationist, in other words, it tried to eliminate the national identities of the peripheral nations by imposing Spanish as the only language of the state and by persecuting any symbol that wasn't Spanish. Examples of this policy are the prohibition of anthems, flags or folkloric traditions of these territories.

The opposition to the dictatorship in Catalonia was based on a revival of Catalan culture, especially literature, art and music. Catalan nationalism was seen as a political struggle against the dictatorship, and was made up of socialists, liberals and communists.

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The end of Franco's dictatorship ushered in the Spanish transition, a period in which Spain had to build itself as a country, and see how it fitted into the European integration that was gradually taking place. The transition (1975-1978) took place in a context of great social tension due to the activity of terrorist gangs, but also because of the fear of another military coup that could halt the democratic process. The official account of the transition is that it was an exemplary process where the transition from an authoritarian regime to a democratic regime of law to law, with a pact between the democratic opposition and the Francoist elites. There are also authors (Ysàs, 2010) who argue that despite the fact that the histography praises the transition, it is necessary to pay attention to certain moments of this process and review them.

The political violence exercised by various social actors determined the course of the transition, and the process of creating a democratic state. The official version ignores the deaths that occurred during the transition as the story of that period as something peaceful and exemplary helps to obviate the fact that some reforms were carried out under the pressure of a violent outbreak (Baby, 2015).

Despite all the historical context, the 1978 constitution solved the historical problem through a decentralised model and the recognition of the historical nations in the constitution.

Once the constitution was approved, the statutes of autonomy of Catalonia and the Basque Country were drawn up, with the intention of producing a legal framework for the self-government of these territories. Both statutes recognised competences in language, culture, media, education, labour, health, public order and justice (Ysàs, 1994). Catalonia was granted a different system of financing than the Basque Country, since while the Basques had autonomy in terms of taxation, the Catalans did not.

Thus, from this look at the major events of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it can be concluded that Catalan nationalism has historically been a response to Catalonia's need for self-government as a nation, but also a way of demanding democratic changes within the State. During the 19th century as a response to the fraudulent two-party system endorsed by the monarchy, during the Second Republic to reinforce democratic transformation with a historic reform of the State, and during the dictatorship as democratic resistance to Franco's regime. The fact that Catalan nationalism has had this historical dynamic of democratic transformation and response to state power has turned it into a civic nationalism.

It is relevant to understand how the distinction between ethnic and civic nationalism operates in sub-state nations, specifically in Catalonia. It allows to observe how nationalism can be adapted and how malleable are the narratives that are constructed around the idea as a reason. Moreover, the historical context of the national configuration of Spain as a plurinational state shows how sub-state nationalisms have been presented as democratic alternatives throughout history. But the historical dynamics and the configuration of nationalism are not enough to explain how Catalan independence went from being a residual movement to a mass movement. It is clear that the political and social actors managed to make the idea of Catalan independence attractive to many Catalans, and Andre Lecours' variables will be used to explain this phenomenon.

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LECOURS VARIABLES

The first variable is self-determination, which is the basis for the legitimacy of nationalist movements. The idea that nations are the owners of their future is part of the basis of enlightenment, and is closely linked to liberal freedom.

The idea of self-determination gained strength after the First World War when many European borders changed completely. Also later in the processes of decolonization after World War II in many former European colonies began to speak of the right to self-determination. The United Nations itself recognizes the right of self-determination of peoples as a fundamental human right.

According to Lecours, claiming the right to self-determination reinforces the collective identity and also, it is politically more seductive to belong to a nation than to a region. The response of the State is usually the use of the principle of territorial integrity, which is also supported by international law.

The second variable has to do with the construction of decentralized agreements. For the author, autonomous political structures have the capacity to institutionalize national identity and nationalist politics. Institutions have the capacity to reproduce identity and perpetuate its national character.

The third variable is based on the idea that multinational and multiethnic societies tend to have histories propitious to the construction of narratives with oppressors and humiliations that tend to become powerful engines of nationalist mobilization. Nationalist mobilization based on narratives about a group's history and the injustices suffered in its history has much to do with emotions. The use of symbols, myths or images to rally support for a specific claim often explains a group's relationship with the state.

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The fourth variable addresses how major constitutional issues that often remain unresolved or have been addressed in an unstable manner remain on the political agenda in the long run, or that promises to resolve them are often insufficient,because constitutional reforms are very difficult political moves to make. This leads nationalist movements to appeal to the deep roots of the state as something that is unreformable. Therefore, sub-state nationalist movements often appeal to the political architecture of the state and this reinforces the distinction of one group from the rest.

Nationalist movements are involved in some public policy debates that make citizens feel closer than state constitutional discussions. For Lecours, public policy has the capacity to create a distinctive identity in much the same way that culture does.

Nationalist leaders can use public policy as something that is embedded in the nation's value system, culture and priorities. Education or health care can be a manifestation of how a political community is articulated. In decentralized states public policies, the tension between the central state and the sub-state nation over competencies can become a source of nationalist mobilization. Nationalist leaders argue that greater autonomy for the nation or secession of the territory is the only alternative to preserve the welfare of the citizens of a community.

This is part of a mobilization process because it appeals directly to concrete social problems, but also to identity, since the public policies are embedded in collective values distinctive of that nation.

The last variable is the processes of continental integration that help nationalist movements to defend increased autonomy, and sometimes, as in the case of Catalonia, to defend independence.

In this sense, multilevel government processes such as the European Union can delegitimize sub-state nationalisms as states suggest that nationalism goes against the logic of European integration. In response to this position, the sub-state nations respond with a discourse that states lose power in integration processes, while regions and stateless nations can assume more protagonism. Despite the apparent optimism that the Europe of the regions may have projected for sub-state nationalisms, they have recently been disappointed with the integration of their nations into the European project. The lack of recognition of the agency of these nations in the European constitution, and the absence of authority of the committee of regions made it difficult for these nations to participate directly in the EU.

In fact, this variable is not applicable to this object of study because the multilevel structure of the European Union did not involve any political opportunity structure. The EU variable did not make independence a more attractive as a political movement. Although the Catalan independence movement is Europeanist, the Spanish state has always threatened to do everything possible to make Catalonia a non-member state in case of secession (Troitiño et all, 2021)

Lecours' views take a holistic perspective that analyzes nationalism as a political process that includes mainly three elements, identity, group interests and mobilization. Not only does Lecours maintains a holistic perspective, but his variables have a lot of explanatory potential to explain the increase of the independence movement between 2010 and 2017. However, for methodological reasons, I will only consider four variables, which will follow a chronological order according to the political events.

The variable of self-determination is significant because it explains the turning point in Catalan nationalism. This variable is important in this research because it was the first step for the independence movement to stop being marginal.

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The variable that has to do with constitutional reforms is also of special relevance in this case because many of the political actors supporting independence refer to the impossibility of reforming the constitution. This variable explores how the 1978 constituent process left many issues unresolved. This had feedback effects at the Spanish and Catalan levels.

Another element that generated frustration in Catalan nationalism and triggered support for independence was the Lecours variable dealing with the issue of public policies. Not only because public policies act as a tool of distinction but also because the pro-independence parties started a strategy to promote the idea that public policies could not be fully developed with membership of the Spanish state.

Finally, narratives were an important part of the growth of support for independence. The main narrative offered by independence leaders relied on historical accounts as a legitimizing basis.

CATALAN POLITCAL SYSTEM

The main Catalan governing body is called "Generalitat" is a historical institution from the XIV century which has been abolished twice during its history. In 1716 by King Philip V after the War of Succession and during the Franco dictatorship where the Generalitat operated from exile.

The death of Franco meant the process of transition to democracy and therefore the restoration of historical institutions. Such was the importance of the restoration of the Generalitat that the political parties that ran in the first elections and included the reestablishment of the Generalitat had an overwhelming success .This is so because for the Catalan population not only the return of basic freedoms was important, but also the return of the historical institutions that gave Catalonia its own identity.

Thus, in 1980 the first legislature began after 40 years of dictatorship, with a statute of autonomy that gave the Catalan government a certain political autonomy and its own institutions.

Table 1. Chronology of Catalan presidents.

1980-2003	2003- 2006	2006-2010	2010-2016	2016-2017
Jordi Pujol (CIU)	Pasqual Maragall (PSC)	José Montilla (PSC)	Artur Mas (CIU)	Carles Puigdemont (Juntspelsi)

Source: Own elaboration.

After the restoration of the Generalitat, the Catalan political system was characterized by the government of Convergencia i Unió (CIU), a Catalan nationalist center-right party, which was in the Catalan executive power from 1980 to 2003 (Giodarno et all, 2002).

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Historically CIU has been a moderate nationalist party, during the governments of Jordi Pujol the maximum political aspiration they defended was the increase and protection of Catalan self-government (Barrio, 2014).

CIU as a political party has also been a protagonist of the great events of Spanish democracy. It participated in the drafting of the 1978 Constitution and despite being a non-state party, it participated in the founding of the Spanish democratic system, because in the drafting of the Constitution it was decided that there had to be the presence of the peripheral nations. For this reason, it always had a commitment with the State as a whole, which guaranteed the governability of Spain by giving support to the different governments in exchange for more competences for Catalonia (Aguilera, 2001).

In 2003 the Catalan political system changed course and after 20 years of CIU hegemony, Catalonia began to have a left-wing government. The government formed in 2003 was formed by a coalition of three political parties: the Partit del Socialistes de Catalunya (PSC), Esquerra Republicana (ERC) and Iniciativa Verds (ICV).

Catalonia is the Socialist Party (PSC) which is the Catalan arm of the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE). The PSC is a union of left-wing political parties that survived the civil war (1936-1939) and later the dictatorship (Davis, 2004). During the 23 years of CIU government they were the opposition party, which also had a large territorial implementation in the municipalities.

Traditionally there has always been a tension between the guidelines of the state party and its defense of Catalanism, that is why it is not included in the axis of Catalanism, although it does have Catalanist postulates.

Another party that formed part of the coalition of the 2003-2006 legislature was Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC) which was founded during the second republic,

illegalized during the dictatorship and reestablished during the transition to democracy. Since the 1990s ERC has defended a pro-independence solution for Catalonia, and rejected the reform of the statute because it considered it insufficient for Catalan self-government. Their refusal to accept the reform of the Statute of Autonomy put an end to the coalition government and gave way to a PSC government on its own.

Another relevant party in Catalonia that despite never having governed is the Partido Popular (PP). The PP was created by the Francoist elites in the transition to democracy and represents the most conservative and Spanish nationalist wing of the Catalan political map. It was the one that presented the appeal of unconstitutionality of the reform of the Statute and the one that has always had the most critical discourse against Catalan nationalism.

The new government began with a new leader, who would replace Pascual Maragall, a historical figure of Catalan socialism. Hence, the new legislature would begin with Jose Montilla at the helm of PSC, with the willingness to deal with the disagreements of his government partners. The second coalition government had to deal with internal discrepancies but also with a financial crisis that would explode within the legislature. The government passed with the uncertainty of whether the statute of autonomy would be declared unconstitutional, which ended up happening at the end of the legislature in 2010.

From 2010 onwards, Catalan nationalism transformed from a movement demanding more autonomy to a political movement demanding the right to self-determination, and even secession. The political and social actors used four of Lecours' variables to make Catalan nationalism attractive to citizens.

The electoral behavior in Catalonia has always been based on the national and ideological question (Barrio & Rodriguez, 2018). Catalan political parties have been characterized by being right-wing or left-wing and by defending a greater or lesser decentralization of the State.

Figure 1. Political parties based on ideology and nationalism (2010)

Catalan Nationalism

Left Wing | ERC | CIU | Right Wing

PSC | PP

Spanish Nationalism

Source: Own elaboration.

SELF DETERMINATION

In Catalonia the demands for independence have historically been marginal, Catalan nationalism has always had as a struggle the increase of self-government, the protection of the Catalan language and culture. This took a historical change of course with the ruling of the constitutional court in 2010 where it annulled some articles of the Catalan statute of autonomy. (Lecours et all, 2020).

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As already mentioned at the beginning of the 20th century, after several decades of democracy, several social and political actors began to become aware that a reform of Catalan self-government was necessary. To articulate this reform it was proposed to modernize the statute of autonomy that had been approved at the time of the transition to democracy. The statute had been approved in 1979 and it was considered that it no longer responded to the demands of the Catalans for self-government (Cuadras-Morato, 2016).

In 2006 the government of the Socialist Party in Spain and the left-wing coalition in Catalonia generated favorable conditions to carry out this reform. Some members of the Spanish Socialist Party did not feel comfortable with some articles such as the recognition of Catalonia as a nation. But despite this and many negotiations, the Statute was approved through a referendum with the support of 74% of the voters.

The approval of the reform of the Statute of Autonomy provoked much anger among the most conservative and nationalist sectors of the Spanish State. The Popular Party has historically been the greatest representative of the idea of the Spanish nation as a territory that under no circumstances can be dissolved, and which could be classified as the defenders of ethnic or cultural nationalism. The PP represents Spanish nationalism in which there is only one nation. Their commitment to the constitutional order of 1978 led them to oppose the reform of the Statute and to present an appeal of unconstitutionality before the constitutional court (Lecours & Dupré, 2020).

The possible modification of the Catalan Statute by the Constitutional Court caused a lot of frustration in Catalonia, some political and social actors began to argue that a ruling against the Statute could mean the end of Catalonia within the Spain of autonomies (Guibernau, 2013).

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The sentence of the Constitutional Court arrived on July 10, 2010 and annulled and reinterpreted a great part of the legal text. The issues that the court considered unconstitutional were: the limitation of the involvement of the Spanish government. It also considered that Catalonia could be considered as a nation but only in the sociological sense without having any legal value. Another controversial aspect was the annulment of the mechanism that would have given Catalonia greater fiscal autonomy (Guibernau, 2013).

For Gellner the state of anger arouses the violation of the nationalist principle which consists in the fact that the leaders of the political unit belong to a nation different from the majority of the governed (Gellner, 1988). Although Gellner refers to a type of ethnic nationalism, and this is not the case of Catalonia, it is possible to establish a parallelism because in Catalonia there was this feeling of lack of sovereignty. This inability to be able to govern Catalonia from Catalonia and the frustration of the lack of negotiation of the Spanish State is what gave a change of course to Catalan nationalism.

It is especially relevant to see how the failure of the reform of the statute of autonomy transformed the Catalan party system as shown by the electoral programs of the 2010 elections. Those elections took place a few months after that controversial sentence of the constitutional court and in the middle of the economic crisis.

Table 2. Political parties position on the Statute sentence in 2010 election.

	Ideology	Nationalism	Position in the 2010 elections
Partit Popular (PP)	Right Wing	Spanish	Overcoming the barriers of nationalism".
Partit Socialista de Catalunya (PSC)	Left Wing	Spanish	Federal Spain Deploy the entire statute in spite of the ruling
Convergencia i Unió (CIU)	Right Wing	Catalan	Catalonia is a nation with the right to self-determination
Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC)	Left Wing	Catalan	Catalonia is a nation with the right to self-determination

Source: Based on the electoral manifestos

In the first place the PP was the one that had the most intransigent position with respect to the demands of Catalan nationalism. They were the political party that presented the appeal of unconstitutionality before the supreme court. Therefore, it was evident that their political proposal would be contrary to the defense of the statute and greater self-government.

As can be seen in the table in the first pages of their electoral program they already point out that it is necessary to "overcome the barriers of nationalism". In addition all their discourse in the national sphere consisted in defending the idea that Catalan nationalists distract the population with absurd problems: We Catalans are suffering the governments

of the wrong priorities". "We cannot continue with governments that are more dedicated to separate Catalonia from the rest of Spain than to create a competitive economy that ends the current exorbitant unemployment rates" . "Opportunities are slipping away while the current government is wasting time looking for enemies and opening unnecessary debates".

On the other hand, the PSC, which despite being part of a state party had always defended Catalan nationalism in these elections, had a different position than the rest of the Catalan nationalist parties. This is due to the fact that the ruling against the reform of the statute of autonomy and the management of the economic crisis took their toll on the PSC. Despite this, in their electoral program they defended another reform of the Statute, extending autonomy and recognizing Catalonia as a nation. They also proposed a federal model for Catalonia, betting on a reform of the Spanish State, but did not defend the right to self-determination.

CIU broke with its historical dynamic of defending Catalan nationalism within the frameworks of the state by asking for more autonomy. In the 2010 elections the new leader Artur Mas left behind the legacy of Jordi Pujol and started a new cycle for center-right Catalan nationalism. After the Statute sentence they started to talk about self-determination and even put on the table that Catalonia needed a new framework of relationship with the State. Thus ended the model of Catalonia-Spain relations that they had defended for 23 years with the government of Jordi Pujol. This was stated in their electoral program:

The constitutional pact established in the framework of the transition has reached its limit, especially after the interpretation of the Constitutional Court's ruling on the 2006 Statute, approved in a referendum by the citizens of Catalonia. If they do not want to accept the result with resignation, it is necessary to change the policy followed until now. Catalonia's

self-government is due to the democratic and inalienable right of every nation to decide its future. Only through the exercise of the right to decide can Catalonia guarantee to be a cohesive nation; with economic and social progress, and recognized.

Finally, ERC represented the most critical part of the Spanish government, as they were the only party in the political landscape that defended independence - and therefore recognized the right to self-determination.

Self-determination came into the Catalan debate as a result of the Estatut ruling, which provoked a transformation in Catalan nationalism. Some parties began to consider self-determination in their electoral programs, and this gave them good electoral results. In the 2010 elections, the parties that defended self-determination accumulated the majority of the votes. So in terms of Lecours it can be affirmed that self-determination made Catalan nationalism a more attractive political project.

Table 3. Political parties results and position on self-determination in 2010 election.

Political Party	%	Position on self-determination
Convergencia i Unió	38.43%	In favor
PSC	18.38%	Not mention
PP	12.37%	Against
ICV	7%	In favor
ERC	7%	In favor
Solidaritat Catalana	3.29%	In favor
Ciutadans	3.38%	Against

Source: Ramos, 2011

The election results show that the parties that included self-determination in their programs accumulated 55% of the votes. However, these elections took place in the midst of a context of economic crisis, and this caused the parties that had been part of the previous coalition government to worsen their results (PSC, ERC and ICV).

While the electoral behavior of these elections includes more elements than the national axis, it is relevant to note that in the party system, opening the debate on self-determination was a first shift towards support for independence.

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

In this context, the Lecours variable is applied to the major constitutional issues that tend to remain unresolved and perpetuate themselves on the political agenda.The author explains that the fact that sub-state nationalism appeals to constitutional problems makes them attractive because constitutions are not easy to reform, so these problems remain on the political agenda for decades. And on the other hand, the solution to these constitutional problems does not usually make some of the nationalist actors happy.

To understand how this variable operates in the Catalan context, it is necessary to address how the Spanish constitution was adopted, which followed a peculiar path within the European context.

In 1977, the primary constituent elections were held, within which a number of the historical parties that had defended the interests of the historical nations throughout the Second Republic were legalised, as was the Communist Party. The legalization of these political actors did not please at all the members of Franco's bunker, nor some members of the opposition, as they believed that these measures were insufficient. However,

between tensions, street violence and long negotiations, in 1978 the Spanish constitution was signed through a transition "from law to law", without completely breaking the regime and only creating agreements with totally different political actors.

Despite the establishment of parliamentary democracy and the recognition of basic freedoms, some constitutional issues remain unresolved: the crimes of the dictatorship are not judged, the flag is not changed and the monarchy returns without any referendum to consult the citizens (Murillo, 2015).

At the level of territorial model it establishes that the historical nations have the right to self-government but it does not recognize which are the historical nations implicitly. As established in article 2 of the Spanish Constitution:

The Constitution is based on the indissoluble unity of the Spanish Nation, the common and indivisible homeland of all Spaniards, and recognizes and guarantees the right to autonomy of the nationalities and regions of which it is composed and the solidarity among them all.

The 2008 crisis reopened the debates that the constitution was unable to address both at the Catalan level and in the rest of Spain.

Along with major unresolved constitutional problems, there has also been a crisis of legitimacy of the Spanish political system. As a consequence of the crisis and the cases of partisan corruption, an important lack of control and an increase in fraud and corruption was created. As a consequence, a feeling of apathy and discredit towards institutional politics spread (Hernández & Kriesi, 2016).

This crisis of political legitimacy materialized in the 15 May movement (15M) which tried to channel the unease of the management of the economic crisis by the major Spanish political parties. The 15M did not start from a very solid organizational structure but from different nodes with different political motivations and spread throughout the Spanish territory.

The 15M movement inaugurated a cycle of protests that questioned the political consensus of 1978. The narrative was changed and the transition to democracy began to be seen as an operation designed by the Francoist elites to perpetuate their power in a democratic context (Romero, 2015).

In the context of the 15M protests and also of the discontent of the peripheral nationalisms, it becomes visible how the Lecours variable is applied to the constitutional reform. The transition to democracy left a political culture where consensus was the most important thing (in order not to repeat scenarios such as the civil war). It was that same consensus that was used to demolish the welfare state, with the justification that the economic crisis needed urgent measures. The 15M put conflict and rupture on the table to confront the idealization of consensus and open debates that had been closed for decades (Murillo, 2015).

This political mobilization took a different form in territories such as the Basque Country or Catalonia. In the Catalan case, the legislature that began in 2010 led by CIU was one of the first to apply austerity measures, especially in health, education and social protection.

Meanwhile, the same year (2011) of the beginning of the 15M in the Spanish government begins a legislature of the PP of conservative character and not very favorable to the demands of the Catalan nationalists (Qvortrup, 2021). The government of Artur Mas

pointed out that the economic recovery would require a greater fiscal autonomy, so that the Catalan institutions would have the capacity to recapture all their taxes in Catalonia.

On the other hand, the Madrid government's response was a total rejection of the change in the tax system, which led to a radicalisation of the Catalan right. This refusal by Rajoy's government (PP) together with the social framework of political discontent led the Catalan government to call elections with the promise of a referendum on self-determination (Marti, 2013).

The refusal of the Rajoy government to grant more self-government, or in this case more fiscal autonomy to Catalonia is at the root of the unresolved constitutional problems. One of the articles of the Statute of Autonomy that was suspended by the Constitutional Court provided for Catalonia to have a fiscal pact to be able to manage its own taxes. The statute was declared unconstitutional precisely because the Spanish constitution at the time recognized Catalan self-government in an ambiguous way, which has generated this instability with the competences. This radicalized the Catalan center-right and led them to defend the right to self-determination in the institutions. Also the civil society started to mobilize in the streets, all this in a climate of dissatisfaction with democracy.

In 2012, the same year as the negotiations between the Catalan and Spanish governments, a large protest took place in Barcelona during Catalonia's national day, the first time a pro-independence protest had a large turnout. This protest was led by civil society organisations (Vilaregut, 2018).

Two months after this massive demonstration, the Catalan Parliament called elections in a context of austerity measures, political disaffection and growing support for Catalan independence (Rico & Liñeira, 2014). Once again, CIU won the elections without an absolute majority and with a historically high voter participation. However, this time with

a commitment to hold a referendum on independence within its legislature, and with support for Catalonia's secession from the Spanish state.

Graph 1. Relationship Catalonia-Spain

Relationship Catalonia-Spain (2006-2017)
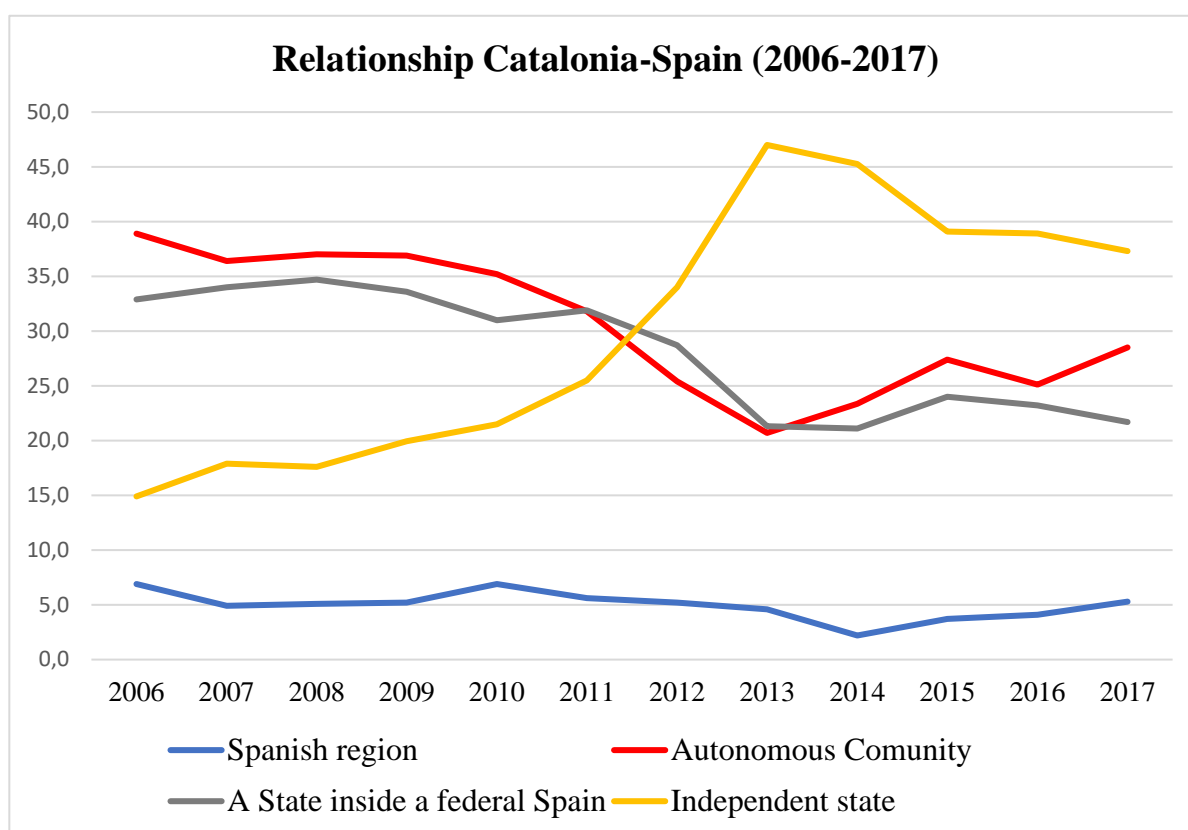
Source: Center for the Study of Opinion of the Generalitat de Catalunya (CEO)

The data corroborate that in the period between the economic crisis (2008) and the failure of the negotiations for the fiscal pact (2013) there were two effects on Catalan society. The first has to do with the decline of the federal option, which began to fall in 2010, coinciding with the ruling on the Statute, and reached an all-time low in 2013. This lack of support for the option of Catalonia as a federal state is probably due to the Spanish government's refusal to grant more self-government to Catalonia, either through a reform of the statute of autonomy or a change in the tax system.

In terms of Lecours, it could be argued that the existence of unresolved constitutional issues, and the way they were addressed, which consisted of the frustration of the reform of the Statute and the refusal to grant greater fiscal autonomy, diminished support for a federal project. In contrast, support for independence grew exponentially from 2006 to 2013, the period in which it grew the most was during the economic recession and the crisis of political legitimacy mentioned above.

Graph 2. Satisfaction with the functioning of our democracy (2006-2017).
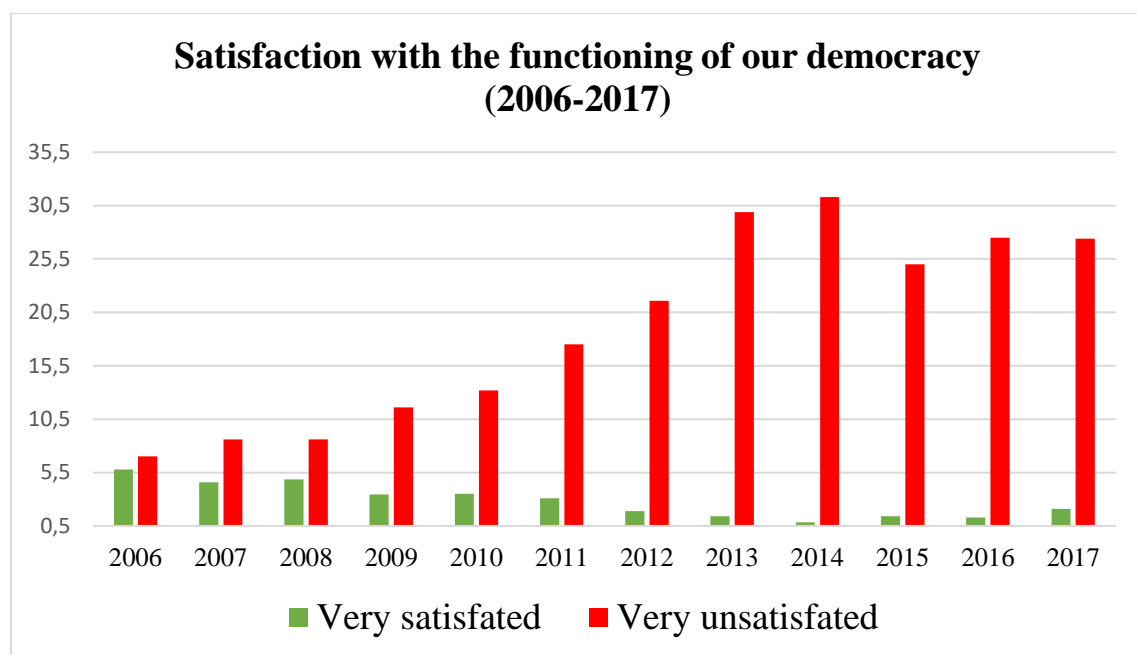
Source: Center for the Study of Opinion of the Generalitat de Catalunya (CEO)

Parallel to the increase in support for independence, there was a growing dissatisfaction with the functioning of democracy. From 2008 onwards, this dissatisfaction began to grow and reached its historical maximum in 2014, coinciding with the historical

maximum of support for secession. At the same time, the number of individuals who are very satisfied with the functioning of democracy also decreases.

In 2014, when dissatisfaction with democracy and support for independence was at an all time peak, the Catalan parliament made a "declaration of sovereignty and the right to decide of Catalonia" as a measure prior to the holding of a referendum. The Constitutional Court annulled this declaration on the grounds that only the Spanish people as a whole enjoy sovereignty (Serrano, 2015) as a result of a constitution that does not openly recognise Catalonia as a nation. The Catalan government decided to hold a referendum despite the Court's ruling, to which the Spanish government only authorised it if it was a "non-binding consultation" without "legal effects". Thus, the referendum was held as a "participatory process" and was organised unofficially. The consequences of this non-binding consultation were the calling of elections with the intention of turning them into a plebiscite on independence, with the "yes" parties and the "no" parties.

The 2015 elections marked a shift in political discourse in Catalonia from a political tradition of bilateral negotiations with the state to reach agreements within the state to a unilateral exercise of self-determination (Serrano, 2015). This occurred in a context of social unrest in which the articulation of the concept of the 'right to decide' proved attractive to a population that had accumulated large doses of political disaffection and with a state that was unwilling to negotiate. Moreover, the pro-independence discourses were not based on ethnocultural issues but emphasised independence as an improvement of the welfare state; the question of welfare in the Catalan political debate was closely linked to the unfair fiscal treatment by the state (Serrano, 2013).

The party system was also totally transformed by the advent of demands for self-determination and the failures to negotiate more self-government for Catalonia. From moderate nationalism, it shifted to unilateral independence. Catalan nationalism was

transformed and polarised. This meant the radicalisation of the Catalan right, with its consequent dissolution and the formation of a large coalition with Esquerra Republicana (ERC), members of civil society and the recently dissolved CIU. Most of the space that belonged to Catalan nationalism in those elections became part of the coalition "Junts pel si" (together for yes). There was also the incorporation of a new party called the Candidacy for Popular Unity (CUP) born as a response to the crisis management by the traditional parties. On the Spanish right, the Popular Party lost a lot of influence and its political space was replaced by Ciudadanos (Citizens), an openly nationalist Catalan political party.

The whole political debate was polarised (Lopez, A, 2015) as the pro-independence sector presented the elections as a plebiscite. The entire electoral campaign was based on the benefits and drawbacks of the possible independence of Catalonia, in addition to political parties, business associations, intellectuals, members of the Catholic Church and even European political leaders also participated in the debate.

Figure 2. Political parties based on ideology and nationalism (2015)

Source: Own elaboration.

In short, the government of Artur Mas was responsible for the austerity policies in Catalonia, and to try to solve the lack of public budget he asked for more fiscal autonomy to the central government. The response of the State government was totally negative since the cabinet at that time was led by the Popular Party.

The constitutional issues that were left open at the time of the transition opened a door of opportunity for Catalan nationalism to become more attractive. The fact that Catalonia is not explicitly recognized means that self-government is not shielded, and the central government can deliberately deny these demands.

In addition to the unresolved constitutional issues, Catalan citizens saw the pro-independence option as an alternative.

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This alternative was presented as an attractive option in the face of a country that had made a transition to democracy without many issues to resolve, and an economic crisis that had degraded satisfaction with democracy.

PUBLIC POLICY

According to Lecours, another major attraction of sub-state nationalism is the way in which nationalist movements engage in public policy debate. This means that nationalist discourses revolve around hot topics.

In this way public policy can be a tool of identity distinction, as it can be seen as a symbol of the values, interests and culture of a political community.

The 2015 elections were the first elections in which the political framework was polarised between supporters of independence and supporters of belonging to Spain. The pro-independence parties in their electoral programmes put a lot of emphasis on independence as a way to improve Catalonia's public policies.

In the electoral programme of Junts pel Si, they build their discourse on four axes: a prosperous society, an equitable society, a society of solidarity, a democratic society and a free country.

Table 4. Description of the public policies in the electoral program of Junts pel si in the 2015 elections.

	''Prosperous society''	Equitable society	Caring society	Democratic society	A free nation
Definition	"Only a prosperous society is capable of providing a decent standard of living for all its citizens, including those who, because of age or health, are unable to earn an income for themselves. on their own.	The Catalonia we want is a society in which the gap between those who have the most and those who have the least is as small as it is in countries where it is smaller, and in which the initial social situation is not an impediment to economic progress and social advancement.	The Catalan State will have to face the very difficult problem of financing the pension system, which will be severe in fifteen years' time. The current policy of the Spanish State, which consists of denying the problem while draining reserves designed to face that future, is leading to a financial, human and political crisis.	We aspire to much more than continuing to be a formal democracy and, therefore, it will be necessary to establish provisions, such as those that characterise mature and advanced democratic systems, to encourage and increase participation and the capacity for collective decision-making on the most important issues in the public sphere and in the sphere of the common good.	There is no people that can be denied the exercise of its right to self-determination and independence from those State structures with which, for a certain period of time, more or less long, it has been linked when the majority will of its society so desires, in a free, peaceful, democratic and unequivocal manner, democratic and unequivocal

Public Policies mentioned	Education, health care, fight against poverty, housing rights, environmental protection, pensions, support for small and large companies.	Tax reform, minimum wage increase, anti-unemployment measures	Reducing public debt through a productive economy, natural environment, corruption prevention measures,	Free media, civil servants are obliged to know Catalan, the education system uses Catalan as a vehicular language, promotion of gender policies, protection of minorities, etc.	Recognition of Catalonia as a nation and the right to self-determination

Source: Junts Pel si, 2015.

Junts pel Si was the winner of the elections and represented two very different traditions of Catalan nationalism: that of the right, which was used to making pacts with Spain, and that of the left, which was used to belonging to a residual pro-independence movement.

Despite the discrepancies between these two sectors, they articulated their campaign on the basis of the social problems of a society that was still experiencing the consequences of the economic crisis and political disaffection. They established that the independent Catalonia that was to be built was totally linked to public policies that connected with the daily problems of the citizens. They also set out their own definitions of what they consider to be a prosperous, equitable, supportive, democratic society and connect it to Catalonia's national aspirations. As they define it in their political programme:

We cannot work for a prosperous, equitable, supportive and democratic society if, first, we cannot exercise, as a country, the freedom of full sovereignty. Which is, no more and no less, what is at stake now.

That same legislature that began in 2015 had as its main objective to build "state structures", that is, to build the basic infrastructures for the future Catalan state. In this way, the Catalan government started to develop public policies that were outside its competences as an autonomous community.

Table 5. Laws with an appeal of unconstitutionality or declared unconstitutional.

Law	Purpose of the Law	Resource
Decree on business hours (2014)	Prohibition to open stores on holidays and during Christmas vacations.	Competence of the central government.
Decree on bank taxes (2015)	Tax on bank deposits	Too similar to state tax.
Energy poverty decree (2016)	To supply electricity and gas to low-income families.	Competence of the State.
Law on the creation of taxes on nuclear energy production (2017)	Tax on producers of radiotoxic substances	Competence of the State.
Law on foreign action and relations with the European Union (2016)	Promotion of Catalan diplomacy and bilateral relations with the European Union.	Competence of the State.
Effective law on equality between men and women (2016)	Gender equality.	Annulment of some articles by the Constitutional Court for being competence of the State.
Law against the denonaments	Mediation between landlords and tenants, debt cancellation, social renting, cession of empty apartments to public administrations.	Declaration of some articles as unconstitutional.

Catalan law against climate change (2019)	Emission reduction, energy transition, banning fracking.	Competence of the state.

Source: Based on press articles.

The Constitutional Court has marked Catalan politics since the approval of the Statute of Autonomy in 2006. Since then, more than 40 laws have been either suspended as a precautionary measure or completely annulled, the majority of the appeals filed by the Popular Party.

In 2015, when pro-independence demands were gaining strength in the political landscape, the appeals or court rulings of the Constitutional Court were used as a means of mobilising pro-independence movements.

Many of the laws annulled or intervened by the Constitutional Court are part of the current political agenda. Issues related to the protection of local trade, to social protection, to climate issues and also to the creation of international relations by the Catalan government.

According to Lecours (2014) social policy in industrialised states has generated many discussions on the political agenda. Nationalist movements enter into these discussions to use social policy as an identity distinction. In the Catalan case, social policies were used to show that the Spanish government was not as committed to the welfare of the Catalans as the Catalan government. And for that reason the only alternative for good social policies is independence.

Some speeches of pro-independence leaders already pointed in this direction:

The conservative majority in the Congress, a minority in Catalonia, blocks the social compromises approved by the Parliament.

Marta Rovira (Secretary General of the Republican Left (ERC).

NARRATIVES AND INSTITUTIONS

One of the elements that become relevant to make nationalist movements attractive are narratives and institutional empowerment. In terms of narratives, these often use symbols, myths and images of the past for nationalist mobilization (Lecours, 2011). The exaltation of these narratives is usually done from the emotions, or of the Spanish State as an enemy. In the Catalan case, the historical narrative around the Spanish State has always revolved around the lack of democracy. This narrative has existed since the birth of Catalan nationalism in the 19th century and especially during Franco's dictatorship when nationalism was the democratic opposition.

The use of narratives requires the articulation of a collective identity, so that individuals feel included. As mentioned above, there were a series of events that changed the course of Catalan nationalism. The ruling against the statute of autonomy, the refusal of the Spanish state to give greater fiscal autonomy and the political disaffection after the crisis not only had an effect on the discourse of self-determination, public policies and fiscal reform but were an activator of a collective identity.

The national construction of the Catalans has been based on being open and inclusive, Catalan nationalist leaders do not make use of ethnic discourses. It is also relevant to mention that as Catalonia is part of Spain, national identification is always on the political

agenda in terms of to what extent one is Spanish and to what extent one is Catalan. The boundaries of one national identity with another are not clear, and in many occasions they coexist together (Karlsson, 2019).

The historical narrative is an important resource for nationalisms, it emphasizes that the political cause for which one is fighting has a historical meaning and at the same time a collective destiny. The antiquity which is appealed to in the Catalan case refers to the political institutions and the language.

"One must be familiar with our history in order to remember the profound depth of the Catalan people's democratic convictions. During times when people seem to undermine, deny or even deny our past as a country, it is more important than ever to commemorate what we have been and to remember the heroic defense of Barcelona and all of Catalonia three centuries ago" (Artur Mas 2015a).

In this sense this quote pronounced by President Artur Mas (CIU) in 2015 refers to this idea of the Catalan nation as a historical political agent, where he affirms what the Catalan nation has been and must be again. That serves as a very important legitimizing framework, and affirms this idea that the institutional destiny of Catalonia cannot develop within the framework of the decentralized Spain of the autonomous communities.

"In the first part of the 20th century we fought hard to defend the Second Republic, which had restored our autonomy after more than 200 years, and the use of our language. Sadly the Republic was defeated by the forces of General Franco during the Spanish Civil War, and a dark period of Catalan history began again." (Puigdemont 2016a).

In the same line of the historical narrative the element "dark period" is a resource to refer to those times when the Catalan people were oppressed. It also establishes a dichotomy

in that the state regime was authoritarian while the Catalan people represented democratic values. This connects with Lecours' variable in which he explains how narratives of oppression and humiliation are powerful tools for nationalist mobilization.
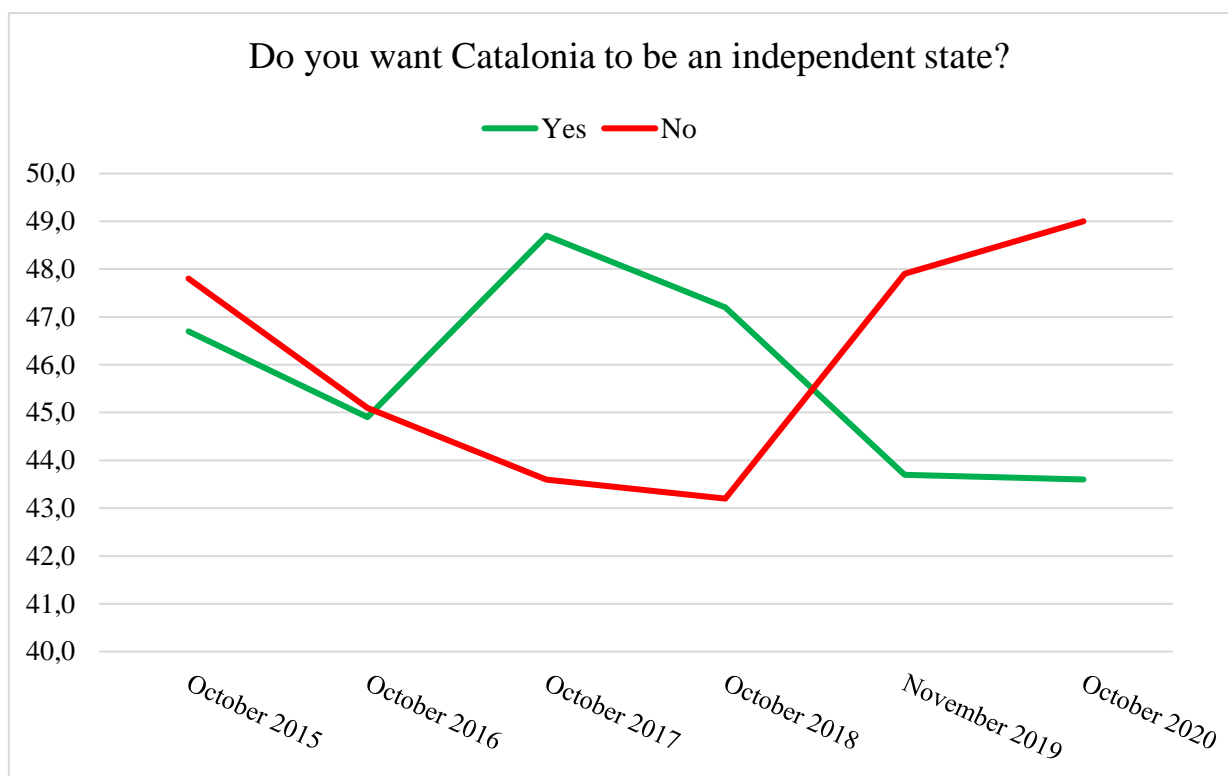
ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

The proposed variables are adjusted to the events that took place between 2010 and 2017, but the Catalan political landscape has changed a lot in the last ten years. Thus the model proposed in this research and the variables used may be adapted in a different way to the period 2017-2022, in this section I will address the limitations and alternative explanations for the current context.

Self-determination as an element that makes sub-state nationalisms more attractive became the most legitimizing element of Catalan independence as of 2017. The political coalition of "Junts pel Si" when it came to power promised to reach independence in a period of eighteen months. In this way the president of Catalonia approved the call for a referendum of self-determination, in defiance of the Spanish justice system

In the months leading up to the referendum, the Spanish state adopted a repressive strategy to stop the vote, such as arresting members of the government for their alleged involvement in the organization of the referendum (Balcells et all, 2021). The referendum was held on October 1, 2017 with police violence against nonviolent protesters (Human Rights Watch, 2017).

Graph 3. Support for independence (2015-2020).

Do you want Catalonia to be an independent state?

━━ Yes   ━━ No

	October 2015	October 2016	October 2017	October 2018	November 2019	October 2020
Yes	46.7	44.9	48.7	47.2	43.7	43.6
No	47.8	45.0	43.6	43.2	47.9	49.0

Source: Center for the Study of Opinion of the Generalitat de Catalunya (CEO)

Thus not only did self-determination give legitimacy to support for independence, but it would also be relevant to explore repression as a variable. As Table X shows, the organization of the referendum had an effect on support for Catalan independence, with an increase in the "yes" vote but also a decrease in the "no" vote. However, despite the variations, support for independence has always been very even, with neither supporters nor opponents of secession ever reaching a figure above 60%.

The repression by the Spanish State not only consisted in repressing the referendum of self-determination with police violence, but also in applying the controversial article 155 of the constitution. With the application of this article the central government was granted the ability to dissolve the parliament of Catalonia to stop an autonomous community that

is acting illegally. Thus in other sub-state nations such as Scotland or Quebec, the state's response may be to increase decentralization so that secession is seen as a less attractive political option (Lecours, 2018).

Another event that has had an effect on the independence movement is the 2019 supreme court ruling. Nine political and social leaders who had led the organization of the referendum were sentenced to prison terms ranging from 9 to 13 years. The rest of the political leaders who were in the government organizing the referendum left Catalonia to go to Brussels, in order to give visibility to the conflict from outside Catalonia.

CONCLUSIONS

Catalan nationalism has always had civic roots, in the past it has responded with democratic proposals to the deficiencies of the Spanish state. Throughout history it has always been characterized by demanding greater self-government within the Spanish state. During the 18th century with the fraudulent democratic system and during the dictatorship with the abolition of all Catalan institutions.

History helps to understand the characteristics of this type of sub-state nationalism, but to understand the turnaround in 2010 it is necessary to apply four of Lecours' variables.

In 2010 the constitutional court declared many of the articles of the statute of autonomy as unconstitutional, which generated a political frustration that led to a change of discourse in the political parties. Self-determination began to be part of the public debate, and even the Catalan nationalist center-right included it in their electoral program.

The results of these elections showed that a large part of the Catalan population agreed with a referendum on self-determination. The same Catalan population showed this frustration towards the Spanish state in the surveys, where the solutions that went through a pact with the state diminished, such as a federal state.

In the same political context, in 2011 the 15M movement exploded which opened the debate on how the constituent process was built in the transition to democracy, the economic crisis, the austerity measures, and the dismantling of the welfare state reopened the debate on how the transition to democracy was only a pact between the fascist elites to share power. The impact of this movement in Catalonia was translated in social but also national terms. The narrative that began to be created was that the problem went

beyond the ruling on the statute of autonomy, since the fact that Catalonia is not implicitly recognized in the constitution made the problem prolong itself over time.

The impact of 15M in Catalonia completely transformed the party system, the Catalan nationalist center right had left aside the moderation and became a pro-independence force. In the 2015 elections an electoral program is presented where, apart from making visible the limits of the Spanish constitution for Catalonia, a strategy based on public policies is also used.

The legislature begins with the idea of creating state structures to begin the process to independence, and begins to develop public policies focused on social and economic rights. This was a very attractive political dynamic because it reinforced the idea that within Spain not only Catalonia would not be recognized as a nation due to the shortcomings of the constitution, but also that it would not be possible to develop good public policies for a citizenship that had suffered an economic crisis.

Thus the variables having to do with self-determination, constitutional problems and public policies were the trigger for the rise to independence along with a narrative based on all that the Catalan people had suffered throughout history.

For future research it will be necessary to see if these variables can be applied to the current political moment (2017-2022) because on the one hand the political actors have to deal with state repression, and on the other hand the citizenship has to deal with the frustration generated by the unfulfilled promises during the 2015 legislature. The state structures did not serve for any secession and the self-determination referendum did not lead to any effective declaration of independence. It will be interesting to see how these issues affect Lecours' variables.

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