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## Accounting for nationalist violence in affluent countries

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**Year:** 2010  
**Type:** Thesis (doctoral)  
**University:** Instituto Juan March de Estudios e Investigaciones, Centro de Estudios Avanzados en Ciencias Sociales, Instituto Universitario Europeo, 2009.  
**City:** Madrid  
**Number of pages:** x, 354 p.  
**Abstract:** El objetivo de esta tesis es analizar las causas del surgimiento de violencia nacionalista en Europa occidental en la segunda mitad del siglo XX. A pesar de que surgieron numerosos grupos terroristas de ideología nacionalista, tan sólo unos pocos fueron capaces de construir organizaciones lo suficientemente robustas como para desafiar a sus respectivos estados de manera creíble. Para explicar esta variación, el clásico argumento de la existencia de territorios "agraviados" con respecto al poder central ha de ser complementado con un argumento basado en el uso de la violencia con fines de "movilización". Así, el éxito de los grupos terroristas no depende sólo de los agravios que su población de referencia tenga, sino también de su capacidad para movilizar, a través de la violencia, a nuevos grupos de apoyo que alimenten su pervivencia. En el centro de este argumento yace la relación entre las élites políticas en el centro del estado, y las élites locales en la región disputada por los nacionalistas. Si los partidos dominantes en el centro también lo son en la región conflictiva, entonces tendrán incentivos electorales para evitar la radicalización de los nacionalistas a través de concesiones "anticipatorias". Por el contrario, si las élites regionales no dependen de partidos estatales, es posible que utilicen la "amenaza nacionalista" para mejorar su posición con respecto al centro, pero a costa de radicalizar a los nacionalistas y de reforzar su apuesta por métodos violentos. Esta hipótesis es contrastada en dos pasos. En primer lugar, la tesis analiza estadísticamente 30 regiones de Europa Occidental y comprueba que la hipótesis principal del trabajo funciona bien cuando se compara con otras hipótesis. En segundo lugar, seis casos de violencia nacionalista son analizados en profundidad — País Vasco, Cataluña, Gales, Irlanda del Norte, Córcega y Cerdeña. El estudio pormenorizado de estos casos refuerza la verosimilitud del argumento principal de la tesis: la violencia nacionalista depende tanto del potencial de movilización de los radicales como de la incapacidad de los partidos estatales para anticipar su consolidación.

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**Instituto Juan March de Estudios e Investigaciones**

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**LUIS DE LA CALLE ROBLES**

**ACCOUNTING FOR NATIONALIST VIOLENCE IN  
AFFLUENT COUNTRIES**

MADRID  
2010

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**Centro de Estudios Avanzados en Ciencias Sociales**

Esta obra se presentó como tesis doctoral en el Departamento de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales del Instituto Universitario Europeo el 3 de diciembre de 2009. El Tribunal estuvo compuesto por los profesores doctores D. Donatella Della Porta, D. Juan Díez Medrano, D. Stathis Kalyvas y D. Michael Keating.

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## ABSTRACT

*This thesis seeks to explain the determinants of resilient nationalist violence in Western Europe since World War II. Despite being one of the most affluent regions in the world, several episodes of nationalist violence arose from the late 1960s all over the continent. Faced with very strong states, these armed movements resorted to terrorist techniques of warfare to mobilize supporters and extract concessions from the government. However, some of the nationalist armed organizations succeeded in building support and becoming resilient whereas many others failed and disappeared very quickly. In order to explain this variation, I contend that classical “grievances” arguments must be complemented with “mobilization” accounts of nationalist violence. Thus, the success of a terrorist nationalist organization in surviving does not only depend on the sources of grievance it can trigger in its fight against the state, but also on its capacity to create a large constituency of support that guarantees the steady flow of recruits, funds and legitimacy. In addition to grievances and “mobilizational” incentives, this thesis also looks at the specific link between the political elites at the centre of the state and those holding offices at the regional level. If the dominant state-wide political forces also command the largest plurality of votes at the regional level, then state actors will have strong incentives to deal quickly with any nationalist challenge from the region under dispute. Regional politicians whose electoral fortunes depend on state-wide parties prefer reacting with some level of concessions if they expect the increase of nationalist mobilization in the absence of a positive state reaction. On the other hand, if regional politicians have autonomous sources of power –i.e., they do not run on state-wide party lists- state political actors will have more trouble in dealing with nationalist*

*violence, since they must rely on the regional actors to assess the real demand for concessions. Whenever regional politicians are averse to change -because they anticipate that potential concessions will be paid by them-, they will advise state makers to repress nationalists. And if armed nationalists have potential to build their own constituency, state repression will contribute to that end. This combination of institutional “unresponsiveness” and “mobilizational” incentives can account for the existence of resilient armed nationalist organizations in Western Europe. I test this argument in two steps. First, I analyze a dataset with 30 observations of nationalist-prone European regions. The aim is to check whether the main argument fares empirically well in comparison to more standard explanations of nationalist violence. Second, I run three paired-wise comparisons to track in-depth the process of consolidation of nationalist violence. I compare the Basque Country, Corsica and Northern Ireland with Catalonia, Sardinia and Wales –respectively. The main argument of the thesis works reasonably well to account for the observed variation, and it has also some implications for the potential emergence of armed nationalist movements in developing countries.*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*After having spent ten years in writing this dissertation, it would be impossible to exhaustively list all those who in some way or another helped make it possible. Therefore, I would like to single out four mentors and four institutions. Pedro Iriso and the University of Salamanca gave me the possibility of starting an academic career. Pacho Sánchez-Cuenca fed my interest in the field of political violence, and encouraged me to be a member of that extraordinary community of researchers and friends which is the Juan March Institute. Stathis Kalyvas put me in touch with the latest studies on violence during my stays at Yale, and his advice at the different stages of my research was priceless. Last but not least, Michael Keating at the EUI wisely helped me get through the “practicalities” of bringing the dissertation to an end.*

*Friends and family made my life easier during all these years. I hope that the 2002 Juan March class (Alex, Álvaro, Carmen, Laia and Lluís) and Sergi, Ilias, Xavi and Elliot at Florence will forget the many debts I have incurred with them. My family – my parents, siblings, nieces and nephews- has been able to endure my long absences as stoically as my brief stays. Finally, there is a person whose invaluable support I’ve been extremely lucky to count on since the start of this project: Maider, eskerrik asko denagatik.*

## **CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. The puzzle**

Spain experienced two periods of democracy during the 20<sup>th</sup> century: the short experience of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic (1931-1936) and the current constitutional monarchy established with the 1978 Constitution. Sub-state nationalist unrest has been prolific in democratic Spain, and played a relevant role in the end of the Republican period. Nevertheless, the strength of the nationalist movements within Spain seems to have changed over time. Catalan nationalism took the lead during the Republican years and was, with its claims for devolution, the architect of the decentralized 1931 Constitution. But, quite remarkably, four decades later it was Basque nationalists that made up the staunchest regional minority in their call for decentralization during the recent transition to democracy. Whereas Basque nationalists attracted around one third of the vote in the Basque Country on the eve of the Spanish Civil War, this figure rose to 60 percent in the aftermath of the dictatorship.

What happened between 1936 and 1978 that so markedly contributed to the rise of Basque ethnic consciousness in these years? The canonical argument is that Basques, already overtly nationalist during the civil war, reacted against the intolerable level of indiscriminate repression the dictatorship imposed on them (Lorenzo 1995). Thus, the spread of nationalist violence in the Basque Country would have followed a classical “grievances” argument, based on the structural incapacity of the dictatorship to



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address nationalist complaints. Hence, nationalist consciousness preceded the emergence of ETA violence against the state. However, this account cannot explain why Catalan nationalists did not trigger violence against the state, given the fact that they had already mobilized their whole support constituency during the Republic and that the level of post-war repression had been at least similar in this region than in the Basque Country. If both regions experienced similar levels of state repression, why is that nationalist violence only broke out in the Basque Country?

Certainly, explanations based on “grievances” hold genuine weight. It seems that the dictatorship reacted more blindly in the Basque Country against the initial episodes of armed contestation of the regime than in Catalonia. Besides, Catalan politicians holding offices within the institutions of the dictatorship took advantage of their larger influence on the decision-making centres to temper the anti-nationalist nature of the regime. All this is true. However, I also contend that the triggering of violence pursued “mobilizational” purposes. Leaving aside these nuances about the differential reaction of the state to radical nationalists in the two regions, only a “mobilization” explanation can account for the increasing presence of violence in the Basque Country during the ‘70s, articulated around a new nationalist group. As I will show in Chapter 4, violence did not follow nationalist awareness, but the other way around: violence was used by radical nationalists to raise consciousness and set up a new more belligerent constituency in support of secession.

If we want to explain the comparison between Catalonia and the Basque Country, classical “grievances” arguments must be complemented with “mobilization” accounts of nationalist violence. I argue in this dissertation that this combination of institutional “unresponsiveness” and “mobilizational” incentives can account for the existence of resilient armed nationalist organizations in Western Europe. Together with the two sketched regions, there are other useful comparisons to be made. To name but a few, South Tyrol experienced a peak of terrorism during the late ‘50s and ‘60s, while violence did not emerge in the Italian

French-speaking region of Aosta; Corsica and Sardinia shared similar processes of nationalist mobilization during the '70s, but violence only touched Corsica in any constant way; finally, the resilient armed challenge in Northern Ireland should also be noted, compared to the absence of any major violence in Scotland or Wales.

My research question deals with this kind of puzzle. To put it simply, what I analyze here is why some nationalist movements foster resilient violence to achieve their political goals while others do not. This dissertation thus lies at the intersection between the study of nationalism and the study of political violence. Unfortunately, these two subfields have until now followed divergent empirical and theoretical paths. When the focus has been put on political violence, scholars have dealt with nationalism as if it were a very straightforward exogenous variable, avoiding discussing the internal dynamics of the nationalist movement. On the other hand, researchers on nationalism have usually considered violence as the natural consequence of certain types of nationalism, concealing the effect of state responsiveness on the nationalist propensity to trigger violence. Very few works have analysed the relationship between violence and nationalist mobilization, however.

Research on political violence has located its theoretical underpinnings either in the underlying rationale for predicting rational violent behaviour<sup>1</sup> or in the best preconditions for expecting violence in some places rather than in others.<sup>2</sup> However, the failure to capture the internal dynamics predating conflicts and the tendency to overlook endogenous trends in identity formation alike have jeopardized and called into question the results of this literature: on the one hand, very complex models are accompanied by poor empirical tests which depend upon heavy culturalist

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<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, Fearon (1995), Fearon and Laitin (1996), Lake (2002), McCormick (2003) and Slantchev (2003).

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, Beissinger (2002), Fearon and Laitin (2003), Gurr (1993) and Petersen (2001).

assumptions about the behaviour of ethnic groups; on the other, robust empirical results are accompanied by weak (at best) theoretical models which suffer from acute problems of endogeneity, casting doubt on their general validity.

Meanwhile, the study of nationalism has been one of the most prolific research enterprises within the social sciences. Several scholars have traced the roots and types of nationalism;<sup>3</sup> its emergence as either an endogenous by-product of other macro-processes<sup>4</sup> or as an exogenous outcome of state policies;<sup>5</sup> the ecological conditions and individual motivations underpinning it;<sup>6</sup> the determinants of nationalist electoral support;<sup>7</sup> and the spread of violence associated with nationalist conflicts.<sup>8</sup> However, not much effort has been made to construct a concrete research program to explain the emergence of violence (Fearon & Laitin 2000). Consequently, not only has violence been treated as a natural consequence of some types of nationalism – a spurious effect of looking only at empirical cases where violence did actually emerge (Fearon and Laitin 1996) – but it has also been interpreted as the only option available for ideologically-ridden nationalist challengers.

To bridge this gap, several researchers have tried to analyze the links between violence and ethnic mobilization. Thus, instead of univocally considering this link as a dependent variable,

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<sup>3</sup> Among many others, Breuilly (1993), Connor (1994), Greenfeld (1992), Hobsbawm (1990), Keating (1996) and Smith (1986).

<sup>4</sup> Anderson (1983), Deutsch (1953), Gellner (1983), Gourevitch (1979) and Hroch (1985).

<sup>5</sup> Gellner (1983), Hobsbawm (1990), Posen (1993) and Weber (1975).

<sup>6</sup> Barth (1969), Diani and Melucci (1983), Hechter (1973; 2000), Laitin (1998), Olzak (1992) and Sahlins (1988).

<sup>7</sup> See Fearon and Van Houten (2002), Levi and Hechter (1985), Sorens (2005) and Van Houten (2001).

<sup>8</sup> See Brubaker and Laitin (1998) for a general overview. Snyder (2000) connects nationalist violence to the existence of authoritarian elites unable to lead the transition towards democracy.

researchers have just begun to show the interconnections between the spark of violence and the building-up of new endogenously-created ethnic constituencies.<sup>9</sup> Although this enterprise has still not yielded any systematic findings, I build on it to explain why nationalist violence occurs only in some regions, despite the fact that nationalism is a world-wide and far-reaching phenomenon.

Regarding the selection of cases, I analyze nationalist movements<sup>10</sup> within Western Europe.<sup>11</sup> There are several reasons for doing so. Firstly, Western European countries have strongly consolidated territorial structures (leaving the German Democratic Republic aside, Ireland – the last independent state to emerge –

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<sup>9</sup> See, among others, Bueno de Mesquita and Dickson (2007), Cederman (2004), Hechter (2000), Kalyvas (1999; 2006) and Laitin (1995).

<sup>10</sup> By nationalism I purport to internal challenges against internationally-recognised states. Those challengers aim to achieve a more beneficial allocation of resources between the state and the uprising regions with secession as their ultimate goal. Within this category, I also include nationalist parties that fall short of calling openly for a new state. The argument is as follows: new nationalist parties will rarely appear before the state as “pure” separatists, since they have incentives to *fake* first their goals by trying to appear as simple regionalists making just territorial claims. At the end, we would not know if we are confronting a separatist movement or a regionalist one. Taken for given, state officers will not want to break up their country in absence of challenges. On the contrary, I do not include pure “regionalist” movements. See Meadwell (1991) for an excellent analysis of the differences between regionalist and nationalist parties.

<sup>11</sup> I include regions from the following Western European countries: Spain, France, Great Britain, Germany, France, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium and the Scandinavian countries. As an exception, I also include Canada in the set of countries. I do so because Quebec underwent very similar dynamics to the ones that we observe in European countries with nationalist conflicts -there was nationalist electoral mobilization during the ‘60s with minor episodes of violence. In practical terms, the inclusion of Quebec allows me to increase variation in the dependent variable without breaking the coherence of the set of cases.

came into being in 1921), democratic institutions<sup>12</sup> and widely agreed systems of internal economic redistribution. As a consequence, they are abnormal candidates for undergoing internal strife, since the actual probability of breaking up a country with per capita income in the top quartile of the distribution (above 4,000 dollars in 1990) is almost negligible (Przeworski *et al.* 2000). Thus, the existence of resilient political violence in affluent countries should come as more of a surprise.

Second, and as a corollary of the first point, we know that guerrillas cannot survive in countries with strong infrastructures and territorial control capacities. Therefore, the type of violence that emerged in Europe after the 1960s took the form of “terrorism,” that is, attacks attempting to force the state to make concessions by increasing its costs of resistance rather than trying to liberate territory to build an alternative type of political regime (Sánchez-Cuenca and De la Calle 2009). The fact that we do not observe variation in the techniques of violence that nationalists set off to achieve their political goals gives additional coherence to the research.

Third, and more prosaically, Western countries have many good sources of information. Firstly, their strong bureaucracies keep records of almost everything, from rates of unemployment to electoral results. These numbers are extremely necessary in order to test “structural-conditions” hypotheses. Second, the existence of a free media allows for the tracking of the occurrence of relevant facts for the development of violence, and doing so with recourse to alternative accounts.<sup>13</sup> These reports are indispensable in dealing with the mechanisms that set off and consolidate violence. All in all, the selection of Western European regions will allow me

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<sup>12</sup> Within the set of regions that I consider for the analysis, only those lying in Spain suffered non-democratic institutions after World War II.

<sup>13</sup> This existence of good sources of research has been traditionally forgotten. As Brannan *et al.* (2000) explicitly complain, scholars in the field have tended to reject first-hand sources of information to avoid ideological “contamination” with the biased outcome of only giving voice to governmental sources.

to analyze realistically how violence spread in some very-well known cases of nationalist conflicts.

The cycle of nationalist violence in Western Europe seems close to end. After the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland in 1998, the Basque nationalist organization, ETA, remains as the last active terrorist group in the continent, but with ever diminishing resources. The decay of nationalist violence in Western Europe facilitates its analysis, but at the same time, it casts doubts about the potential emergence of new nationalist challengers in affluent countries. However, if we can say something about why people living in these rich countries bore the costs of violence against the centre, then we shall be better equipped to analyze those conflicts where classical arguments based on grievances continuously fail to account for violence.<sup>14</sup> If nationalists use violence in affluent countries to mobilize their potential constituencies in the face of uncompetitive states, why should their poorer counterparts not do the same? In the rest of this chapter, I review the literature on nationalist terrorism and outline the plan of the work.

## **1.2. Literature review: The three traditions**

Although terrorism is no newcomer to the market of political violence (Rapoport 1984), its wide diffusion has coincided with the consolidation of state machineries that are effective in avoiding alternative centres of power within their borders. The impossibility of organizing guerrilla-like insurgencies prompted challengers to use new technologies of violence, less demanding in terms of organizational costs but apparently similarly effective

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<sup>14</sup> See Hegre and Sambanis (2006) for an empirical overview of the “greed” and “grievance” debate on the emergence of civil wars.

in terms of forcing state decision-makers to take challengers' claims into account.<sup>15</sup>

Thus, the use of terrorism does not correlate with any specific ideological orientation, since over the last fifty years some very different social and political groups have made use of terrorist methods: from radical left-wingers pushing the State to accelerate the arrival of the communist revolution, to religious fanatics willing to spread the seeds of their creed around the world. And of course, nationalists too have tried to put pressure on states by committing terrorist attacks with the object of fulfilling ethno-territorial goals.

In brief, political terrorism<sup>16</sup> should be seen as a rational warfare technique<sup>17</sup> used by ideological groups committed to extracting political demands and/or promoting mass uprisings against states that are strong enough to deter other types of challenges (like civil wars or guerrillas) within their frontiers. Therefore, the irrational dimensions of terrorism must be qualified: even if harbouring some pathological characters, terrorist organizations are not mainly the business of thugs who enjoy killing people and destroying properties. Neither are they similar to the mafia.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> See Abrahms 2008, Cronin 2006, and Kydd and Walter 2006 for reviews of arguments on the effectiveness of terrorism.

<sup>16</sup> There is a very huge literature about the conceptual definition of terrorism. See Schmid (1993) for the canonical work on this and Sánchez-Cuenca and De la Calle (2009) for an updated overview.

<sup>17</sup> From Crenshaw's seminal work (1981) on, scholars using analytic tools to account for terrorism have highlighted that terrorist organizations behave strategically to achieve some political goals. See McCormick (2003) and Kydd and Walter (2006) for general overviews. On the rationality of apparently irrational terrorist behaviours as "suicide missions" see, among many others, Berman and Laitin (2004), Bloom (2005), Gambetta (2004), Jackson and Reiter (2007) and Pape (2003, 2005).

<sup>18</sup> I would like to make this point clear. A mafia gang can use this method to put pressure on the current government and extract demands. On the other hand, terrorist organizations can reproduce mafia

Why study terrorism as a topic separate from political violence? Brubaker and Laitin (1998) offer a good answer to this question:

Not only do the riots, terrorism, and state violence involve sharply opposed mechanisms and dynamics (in terms of degree and mode of organization, mode of recruitment and involvement of participants, affective tone, symbolic significance, contagiousness, degree and modality of purposeful rationality, and so on), but within each category there is also a great deal of causal heterogeneity (p.446).

Until now, research on terrorism has sought to answer three main questions. Concerning the *emergence* of terrorism, the question is why we observe terrorism in some settings but not in others. With regard to *resilience*, the important point is why some terrorist organizations last longer than others. Lastly, concerning the *end* of terrorist organizations, the most interesting question is how (and why) they disappear.<sup>19</sup> As mentioned above, I focus on

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behaviours to coercively extract rents from citizens and oversee illegal markets. However, from a theoretical viewpoint terrorist organizations pursue different goals to mafias. According to Gambetta (1996), the Sicilian mafia came into existence because of the absence of a powerful state capable to monitor contracts and bargains. Basically, they substituted it but they did not want to bring it down. On the contrary, terrorist organizations aspire to build the institutions of an alternative political regime, but not to cover its gaps (pro status-quo terrorist organizations would be the exception that proves the rule: they work as *vigilantes* for the state, and at the same time they take advantage of the insufficient presence of the state on the ground to thrive economically by monopolizing surveillance and protection).

<sup>19</sup> A fourth interesting topic is the *performance* of terrorist organizations. Are they efficient? Do they achieve some goals only with terrorist attacks? But here the field is polarised into two opposed insights: on the one hand, some scholars think terrorism does not pay at all, and some visible concessions are due to other sets of variables (Wilkinson 1974 would be the main representative); on the other hand, other researchers think that terrorist organizations are efficient as long as they can at least survive to the state efforts for destroying them (Irvin 1999 is



the first two questions, since the third has received a great deal of attention, and it has already been well addressed.<sup>20</sup> My interest focuses, then, on the *emergence* of terrorism, as some countries have been subject to terrorist attacks by nationalist groups, but not others; but also on the *resilience* of terrorist organizations, whereby some of them were able to wage a strong *war of attrition* against their states, while other organizations disappeared quickly and never overcame the first stage of symbolic attacks. These two questions are related, since the analysis of the onset of insurgent organizations always includes a measure of resilience in its definition in order to distinguish between truncated and successful onsets. I put the focus more on the existence of resilient terrorist organizations, rather than on onset alone, since the latter can be sometimes meaningless given the fact that terrorism is a low-cost technique of violence that requires a small level of organization.

Three separate theoretical traditions can be traced in relation to the field of political violence, where few efforts have been made to fill the gap between them.<sup>21</sup> The study of terrorism suffers from the same gaps. Firstly, “case studies” (also known as small-n studies) have dominated analyses of terrorism, with eternal debates on definitions and concepts, since each author wants to

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a good case in point). However, this debate, reformulated in different terms, can offer good results. See, for example, Kydd and Walter (2002), and Pape (2003).

<sup>20</sup> To accounts of decline of terrorist organizations, see Bjorgo (2009), Crenshaw (1991), Della Porta (1995), Ross and Gurr (1989) and the broad literature on IRA farewell to arms (Guelke *et al.* 2000).

<sup>21</sup> This typology fits well Brubakers and Laitin’s three methodological approaches: culturalist work, inductive work, and theory-driven work (1998). However, the match is not perfect: my first category is not exactly the same as “culturalist” work, since I also include some small-n studies there. It seems to me that some of these studies come closer to culturalist than to inductive work (where Laitin and Brubaker locate them). Moreover, as Calvert (2002) indicates, some theory-driven work takes for granted assumptions that would qualify as heavily culturalist.

match the definition of terrorism to her case. During the '70s and '80s, edited volumes about European terrorism mushroomed, with national chapters describing the emergence of terrorist practices in the centre of the Cold War board but few real insights.<sup>22</sup> Following the breakdown of the Soviet Union this kind of literature underwent a new revival, but now it explained ethnic violence as a by-product of ancient nationally-based hatreds manipulated by strategic leaders thirsty for power.<sup>23</sup>

Several arguments have been emphasised in this literature to account for nationalist violence. Zariski (1989), however, combines very well the most relevant ones: the existence of grievances and path dependency. Firstly, he emphasizes the role of competitive pressures due to migrants coming from other regions of the same state, who are positively discriminated against in terms of their economic chances vis-à-vis those of the native population. Second, he also underlines the fact that a former record of state repression and cultural discrimination against the regional group provides the best conditions for ethnic violence.<sup>24</sup> These two dimensions fit very well the “sons of the soil” hypothesis (Fearon 2004).

Unfortunately, efforts to turn each case of ethnic violence into a special case which needs differential treatment have pushed this literature to a dead-end. The fact that hypothesis-testing draws on the same cases used for hypothesis-making also hinders the chances of running alternative tests to prove the findings (King *et al.* 1994). Thus, authors in this field have preferred to place their attention on the search for policy solutions for terrorism by

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<sup>22</sup> See, for example, Alexander (1976), Freedman (1986), Kupperman and Trent (1979) and Stolz (1988).

<sup>23</sup> It is difficult to find authors standing for explicitly primordialist views (Fearon and Laitin 2000). But, anyway, some authors are comfortable in the outskirts of this position. See Kapferer (1988), Tambiah (1996), Woodward (1995).

<sup>24</sup> See Boudreau (2004) on the relevance of the past record of state repression in modelling the tools for contestation that opponents to dictatorship use.

looking at its consequences rather than its causes. Nonetheless, this part of the field has been the main source from which other scholars have collected secondary data, offering useful and valuable descriptive work and hypothesis-building.

Moving from this tradition to the next, some works using “small-n cases” have tried to rigorously apply statistical methods together with some kind of “analytical narrative” methods.<sup>25</sup> Here, some important findings about terrorism have been documented. For instance, this work has been very useful in highlighting the existence of some local-based mechanisms which promote the resilience of terrorism in some settings but not in others (Laitin 1995).<sup>26</sup> It has also emphasised that ethnic terrorism may attempt to mobilize “identity” within the in-group. According to Byman (1998), terrorism is a tool to awaken (and increase) the separatist feeling. However, in spite of some interesting research, this set of work risks weakening its position on account of the “uniqueness of the case”, trying to generalize what are usually implications only from the case(s) selected.<sup>27</sup>

The second tradition comes from rational choice scholars focusing on terrorism, who have dealt with bargaining in several forms (hijacking, hostage-taking, and kidnapping). This tradition has undergone a huge scholarly increase in the last years,<sup>28</sup> particularly since the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks against the United States. Here, very complex models usually go together with a little

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<sup>25</sup> On “small-n studies”, see Crighton and Abele (1991), Irvine (1999), Laitin (1995; 1998), Newman (1996), Petersen (2001), Ross and Gurr (1989), Roux (2005), Sánchez-Cuenca (2001; 2007), Silke (2001), Waldmann (1997) and Weinberg (1991). On “analytical narratives”, see Levi (2004).

<sup>26</sup> Since Laitin’s work deals with the comparison between the Basque Country and Catalonia, I discuss in-depth his explanation in Chapter 4.

<sup>27</sup> No less important is the problem of selection bias in the design of the sample, from which suffer several “small-n studies” -for example, Crighton and Abele (1991) and Irvine (1999).

<sup>28</sup> Seminal works are De Nardo (1987) and Lapan and Sandler (1988).

concern about testing.<sup>29</sup> Additionally, the implicit assumptions behind these models are sometimes as “culturalist” as more inductive kind of work. Thus, Calvert (2002) does a good job by showing that some theoretical models dealing with ethnic violence take as given the salience of ethnic identification for individuals. Thus, these models solve a problem, but create another.

In spite of these weaknesses, some interesting implications can be derived from the models. The basic insight is that terrorist organizations may use violence to endogenously influence the state and their potential constituencies of support. For example, McCormick and Owen (1996) and Konrad (2002) offer a good explanation of the importance of gaining credibility for a new terrorist organization which wants to become a serious bargaining partner, through escalation in killings. Overgaard (1994) instead sets out a model with asymmetric information according to which some terrorists may have private information about their strength which is not available for the government. One interesting outcome here is that terrorists with different resources can “pool” their strategies in order to confuse the government: the latter does not really know which kind of terrorists (weak or strong ones) it would be facing.

In turn, Lake (2002) defends the theoretical power of the *rationalist approach* to violence when applied to terrorism, but with a very important distinction: the capabilities and winning probabilities of the players are not exogenous to the bargaining process; on the contrary, terrorists can endogenously change their bargaining position by waging attacks. Weingast and de Figueiredo (2001) construct their theory around a similar idea. They highlight two processes whereby terrorists can take advantage when starting to kill:<sup>30</sup> (i) the *action-reaction*

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<sup>29</sup> As usual, there are exceptions which prove the rule. Kydd and Walter (2002) is a good example.

<sup>30</sup> In these examples, I assume that any regional group is made up of two subgroups: moderates (those playing the institutional game) and radicals (those taking up arms). In the Weingast-De Figueiredo's model, indiscriminate repression by the state affects moderates and radicals

mechanism (the state does not know who was guilty of the terrorist attacks and represses blindly, pushing moderates towards radicals' positions), which pursues the goal of empowering the radicals;<sup>31</sup> and (ii) killings oriented towards forcing the state to bargain.

In a similar vein, Bueno de Mesquita and Dickson (2007) develop a model where terrorists can be, under certain conditions, successful in increasing their constituency of support by forcing the state to signal the actual government's concerns about the targeted population. Finally, Kydd and Walter (2002) show that the power of the radicals (terrorists) is directly related to the power that state groups are willing to place in the hands of moderates: state actors transfer powers to moderates if the latter can credibly stop radicals' attacks. Then, terrorists withhold a veto card, since they may break down state concessions by maintaining their attacks in the face of devolution.

In sum, all these theoretical models offer counter-intuitive insights, and are useful and necessary to make inroads in the study of terrorism. However, testing should go beyond a description of the typical case which nicely fits the outcomes of the model.

A third tradition can bridge this gap between story-tellers and somewhat empty modellers. This third tradition is constituted by quantitative-oriented scholars trying to run statistical models in which outcomes are predicted by a wide set of variables. Gurr-style research<sup>32</sup> offers interesting insights and findings on the conditions for the emergence of violence.<sup>33</sup> However, insufficient

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evenly. The outcome is that moderates move their policy preferences towards radicals' positions.

<sup>31</sup> Marighella (1983) was the leading thinker concerning the potential advantages for small clandestine groups of using this mechanism against strong states.

<sup>32</sup> Ted Gurr was one of the leading practitioners of this kind of research through his own works (Gurr 1972; 1993; 2000) and the collection of the *Minorities at Risk* (MAR) dataset.

<sup>33</sup> This statistical field has done a good job by showing that several kinds of arguments about the salience of (cultural, political, economic)

theoretical thinking<sup>34</sup> together with other matters (problems of endogeneity,<sup>35</sup> lack of specific data on terrorism<sup>36</sup>) have limited the general validity of this literature. Few gains can be made if the small number of factors predicting warfare – only three, according to Gurr 2000 (repression, lack of international state engagement and the emergence of militant nationalist organizations) – is not matched by the existence of clear mechanisms producing the outcome.<sup>37</sup>

On the other hand, the use of new statistical techniques is broadening the opportunities for collecting data within small-n cases. Beissinger (2002) offers a elegant model based on three factors (structural facilitation of the emergence of nationalist movements, institutional constraints over the actors, and the influence of the *events* through endogenous processes), and he tests it by taking advantage of a whole array of techniques, where

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discrimination do not fit very well. They are not the main causes of the emergence of violence (Fearon and Laitin 2003), even though they can work as motivating forces. However, Hegre and Sambanis (2006) have reopened the debate by emphasizing the role of ethnic grievances as a main cause for civil war.

<sup>34</sup> Basically, two models have been tested recurrently: the (*cultural*) *division of labor*, which demands groups are susceptible to rebel whenever they get aware that are being exploited; and the *competition model*, which aim at conflict due to the emergence of competition just where there were prior stable group hierarchies (Olzak 1992).

<sup>35</sup> In some cases, this problem devastates the whole work. As a case in point, Brown and Boswell (1997) find out that the more separatist a movement is, the more likely it is to be violent. But, the measure of violence is taken temporally just before the measure of separatism. It is therefore very difficult to know what variable is influencing what.

<sup>36</sup> According to Silke (2001), less than 20 percent of the works on terrorism published during the second half of the 90's included some type of statistical analysis. Only less than 5 percent went beyond descriptive statistics.

<sup>37</sup> This absence of micro-mechanisms also puts caution on Fearon and Laitin's well-known paper about the factors accounting for the onset of civil war (Fearon and Laitin 2003).

the use of event-count models to explain diffusion processes along the period under study is outstanding. The good match between model and statistics is weakened by the absence of complementary micro-foundations for the findings. Unfortunately, he is not interested in terrorism, and when dealing with it, considers it only as a marginalised form of violence that is disconnected from other types of mass-based political conflicts.

Two remarks can be made to conclude this section. On the theoretical side, although there is a number of works on the existence of nationalist violence, and several hypotheses have been – for better or for worse – suggested and put to the empirical test, we still lack any systematic research on the conditions favouring its emergence and consolidation in Western Europe from a comparative perspective. On the methodological side, I should stress that good research demands not only empirical testing and a deep knowledge of the field, but also rigorous modelling and theory construction. Both approaches presuppose and require each other. Therefore, this dissertation pursues a research program based on the premises of thinking theoretically, collecting local (first-hand) data and testing rigorously. In the remainder of this introduction, I briefly describe the chapters of the dissertation.

### **1.3. Outline**

This research considers why some armed nationalist organizations are more successful in becoming credible political actors than others. As scope conditions, I am concerned with the wave of nationalist violence affecting Western Europe (plus Canada) since the late '60s. Chapter 2 presents the main argument of the dissertation. To explain nationalist violence it is not only necessary to look at the most likely structural preconditions for nationalist violence (grievances, prior autonomy/ independence of the region and the like), we shall also need to take the strategies of the players and their interactions into account. To advance my

argument, the odds of observing violence in a polity with nationalist claims will greatly rely on the strength of the state (which I will call its regional *competitiveness*), on the potential of growth of the nationalist movement (its *ethnic potential*) and, finally, on the particular relationship between local elites and their constituency (*local power*). This last element stands for one of the key features of this dissertation: Absent from more formal accounts of nationalist violence, “local political elites” stand out as key bargaining players in the contest between state representatives and regional nationalists.

Violence will only appear when the state is *uncompetitive* (unresponsive to the regional constituency contested by the nationalists) and local elites have incentives to cheat central decision-makers on the potential strength of nationalist challenges. If prospective concessions granted to nationalists could jeopardize local politicians’ power, then their change-aversion will force them to block state concessions by claiming that nationalists’ demands do not represent the view of the majority of the polity. If the state buys this argument, it will repress the first armed challenges, with the result of nurturing further nationalist violence as long as repression encourages other local constituencies to endorse the use of violence to achieve concessions.

Chapter 3 offers two empirical tests of this argument. I have built a new dataset with 30 European regions that experienced some sustained level of nationalist mobilization after World War II. The data structure is cross-sectional. The observation is the region, rather than the country, and the time-period covers the 2<sup>nd</sup>-wave of nationalism starting from the 60’s onwards. I take advantage of this dataset to check how my hypotheses fare when compared to more standard accounts of nationalist violence. I test hypotheses on: (a) preconditions for nationalist violence (derived from the literature), and (b) the interactive behaviour between the main actors (derived from the model). I run some regression and Boolean analyses of the data. State responsiveness and the potential for nationalist mobilization likewise work reasonably well in both tests. Thus, it seems that classical “grievances”



explanations of violence need to be complemented with a more dynamic account of the interaction between state decision makers, local political elites and nationalist challengers.

Nevertheless, chapter 3 only shows cross-sectional correlations. To check the dynamic nature of the argument fully, I proceed in the next chapters to run three in-depth two-region comparisons in order to investigate how these factors interact to trigger resilient violence. I have selected six regions where there was some violence: Northern Ireland, the Basque Country, Corsica, Catalonia, Wales and Sardinia (they are ranked in a decreasing order of violence). With this selection, I take some of the most representative cases of violent nationalism (Northern Ireland, the Basque Country, and Corsica), but also potential cases where there was no violence even though some preconditions were present. The goal was to maximize variation in the dependent variable by looking at cases with different levels of political violence,<sup>38</sup> but that also share some common characteristics. Rather than telling the whole story of these nationalist movements, I put the narrative focus on those crucial factors that the argument singles out as most relevant for setting off resilient violence. Therefore, the model gives coherence to the comparative chapters, since all of them are articulated around the variation on the key independent variables that, to a large extent, account for the existence of nationalist resilient violence. Thus, chapter 4 looks to the Basque Country and Catalonia. Here, unresponsiveness seems to be constant, but the potential for nationalist growth was clearly

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<sup>38</sup> My selection of cases did not exhaust the set of potential interesting comparisons. For instance, the comparison between Northern Ireland and South Tyrol would have been also a nice one. In both regions, the nationalist ethnic constituencies made up less than half of the population (remember that South Tyrol was gerrymandered within a larger Trentino region with the result of producing a majority of Italian-speaking citizens). In both regions there had been nationalist mobilization during the interwar period. However, the republican terrorist organizations killed around 2,000 people in Northern Ireland while Tyrol terrorists carried out less than 30 deadly attacks.

different. Chapter 5 deals with Corsica and Sardinia. In this comparison, similar levels of potential for nationalist growth were unpaired by a different state reaction to nationalist demands. Chapter 6 compares Northern Ireland and Wales. In this case, nationalist potential for growth and state responsiveness vary, although less than commonly thought.

Finally, chapter 7 brings together all these six cases. I look for commonalities and differences among them and investigate what factors contributed to affecting the different level of observed violence. I propose some exercises of counterfactual thinking to inquire as to how things would have changed in these regions under alternative scenarios. Although the argument in this dissertation is probabilistic, the emergence of resilient nationalist violence could have been affected by changes in variables such as state responsiveness and the potential for nationalist mobilization. After that, I delimit the scope conditions of the dissertation. In order to specify the conditions of application of its main findings, I speculate about the potential implications of the dissertation for developing countries. With anecdotal evidence from Serbia, China and India, I discuss the advantages for keeping ethnic peace of having decentralized decision-making bodies when they go hand in hand with centralized party systems.

## **CHAPTER 2. THE ARGUMENT**

### **2.1. Introduction**

In this chapter I lay out the theory underpinning this dissertation. I contend that the classical accounts of nationalist violence based on grievances need to be complemented with a focus on the internal political dynamics of the region under unrest. Thus, it is not only that the reluctance of the state to concede may enforce radicals willing to use violence, but also that radicals can take advantage of violence to build their own support group. In a nutshell, political grievances and mobilization go hand in hand. And the missing link is the role that local politicians play. Regardless of the level of regional autonomy, local political elites must react to nationalist competitors if they want to keep their regional support. By depending on how these actors react, and how state decision makers respond to nationalist challenges, the prospect for radical nationalists to create resilient violence will be different. In what follows I first discuss why sub-state nationalists should be interested at all in triggering violence against Western governments, given the fact that the possibility of seceding from an affluent state is almost null. This outlined, I then put forward the main argument.

## 2.2. The rationale for the use of violence

In this section, I briefly discuss the explanations for the onset of violence. Assuming that wars (violence, in general) are a costly phenomenon, why should rational actors get involved in costly conflicts instead of bargaining peacefully over plausible outcomes? Mainstream explanations claim that rational actors (states, nationalists, ideological contenders and so on) will have strong incentives to look for a peaceful deal within the set of pareto-efficient options for them (Fearon 1995). Since war is costly, only rarely will contenders not come up with an efficient bargain deterring it. However, rational actors sometimes find violence efficient for their goals. Under strict conditions, war will emerge. In what follows, I offer three different “rational” explanations for the emergence of violence, going from more demanding levels of *rationality* requirements to looser ones.

First, classic wars take place among states. On this view, states are seen as *unitary actors*, where their *capabilities are exogenously* fixed. Moreover, *war* is seen as an *outcome* of the bargaining process between both contenders. Under these assumptions (unitary actors, exogenous capabilities and war as an outcome), war may take place whenever: (a) actors face “commitment” problems to enforce peaceful efficient bargains;<sup>1</sup> (b) actors manage private information (advantage) whose public

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<sup>1</sup> In a context where actor A is very strong (and there are chances to become stronger in the future) and actor B is weaker, the latter has incentives to hit first in order to prevent A’s higher future strength. The rationale is that A’s efforts to offer a bargain will not be credible for B since A’s larger future capabilities will break down former bargains. Thus, there is no credible commitment, and B’s best option will be to fight first. Nonetheless, it’s still not clear why *commitment* problems prevent actors from getting agreements. As Gartzke (1999) points out, rarely war as an outcome of *commitment problems* solves the initial disadvantage of one of the two contenders. On the contrary, it lasts unless one of them becomes completely destroyed. In order to avoid this outcome, both actors have incentives to bargain in the beginning.

knowledge would defuse it so that they have incentives to misrepresent it; or (c) there is no plausible bargain since the issue in play is indivisible.<sup>2</sup> From this account, violence is the outcome of an unsuccessful bargain where unitary contenders (namely, states or quasi-states) have private information and incentives to misrepresent it (Fearon 1995).<sup>3</sup> It is in this case war that decides the contest.

Second, a variation from this account leads us to consider war as a *process* rather than an *outcome* of the game. Thus, if we consider not only the *imposition* of costs onto the rival but also the *bearing* of those costs, we may expect the rational emergence of violence when unitary actors face each other (Slantchev 2003). Loosely understood, the difference between *the power to impose costs* and *the power to bear the costs*<sup>4</sup> points towards an alternative rational explanation of violence: the war of attrition.<sup>5</sup> Here, actors take advantage of the process (violence) to make explicit their power to impose/bear the costs of fighting while they wait for the rival's defection. The rationale is to have the power to go one step forward in the process of fighting each other. As a consequence, the game ends when one unitary actor is defeated,

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<sup>2</sup> Issue indivisibility makes bargaining impossible, since there is no plausible allocation of the issue satisfying both contenders (Toft 2003). However, as long as side-payments would be available for the contenders, issue indivisibility will not necessarily trigger war.

<sup>3</sup> Recent theoretical efforts have somehow contested Fearon's main insights. Powell (2006) has showed that war can take place even if all actors have perfect information about the game, whereas Wittman (2007) has found that "commitment problems" are not necessary to predict the onset of war.

<sup>4</sup> The distinction carries theoretical weight. A terrorist organization may bear the costs of a campaign of violence against the state because it's taking advantage of prior levels of social mobilization, and at the same time, it may be unable to have enough power as to impose costs into the rival due to lack of future recruitment. In a war of attrition, both sides are necessary.

<sup>5</sup> See Sánchez-Cuenca 2007 for the formalization of this argument.

i.e., when either she is no longer willing to bear more costs in the contest, or she is unable to hurt her rival, or both.

Third, it is sometimes bizarre to impose a unitary nature on actors. Normally, groups with different strategies but similar goals compete with each other to take over the control of the whole movement. In these situations, intra-actor divisions may foster the use of violence as a rational mechanism to balance internal power among groups.<sup>6</sup> As a corollary, the incorporation of non-unitary actors opens the door for endogeneizing the capabilities of each actor, as described in the previous chapter (Lake 2002).

In this setting (non-unitary actors, endogenous capabilities, violence as a process), radicals will set up violence to build their own constituency of support through two strategies: to attract moderates' constituencies when moderates defect from collaborating with the state because the latter withdraws prior concessions; and to attract previously unmobilized constituencies when the state responds to nationalist violence with indiscriminate repression against those living in the contested region.<sup>7</sup>

Firstly, they may try to discredit moderates in the face of state-wide (majority) groups. Following state concessions to minority groups in exchange for loyalty to state institutions, radicals' violence will fuel distrust among groups and will push the policy outcome far away from minority preferences. The radicals' goal is

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<sup>6</sup> In this paragraph, I assume that there is a state-wide actor (majority) taking control of the state institutions, and two actors coming from a regional-based (minority) group: radicals, and moderates. Radicals do not necessarily have to defend more "radical" policies in ideological terms. It is enough if they have a shorter time-horizon that pushes them to call for independence more thoroughly.

<sup>7</sup> Radicals will use the first strategy to build their constituency by attracting disenchanting nationalist moderates. They will use the second strategy to build their constituency by broadening the potential support for nationalism from previously non-mobilized constituencies. In practical terms, however, the two strategies go together and it is difficult to distinguish in the presence of state concessions if terrorists pursued to bring them down or to activate the state backlash.

to capture the moderate constituency by charging state concessions as *smokescreens* –something becoming real when the state drops concessions after violence emerges (Kydd and Walter 2002).

Second, under certain conditions (i.e., *uncompetitiveness* of the state in the region<sup>8</sup>), radicals will foster violence with the expectation that the state will use indiscriminate repression in return (Bueno de Mesquita and Dickson 2007; Weingast and De Figueiredo 2001). This action-reaction round will push moderates and previously non-nationalist constituencies towards the radicals' standpoint, which will enforce – endogenously – the radicals' power in bargaining.

In both ways, withdrawal of state concessions or indiscriminate state repression, violence works as an instrument to balance the internal power between anti-state groups before facing the state directly. Once radicals attract enough resources (recruits, money, legitimacy) they are able to wage a more classic fight against the state.

To summarize, rational explanations for secessionist violence can be satisfactorily grouped under two labels. On the one side, violence works as a *voice* option. Clandestine unitary actors facing state unresponsiveness to their claims could take advantage of private information to promote violence directly against the state as a way of achieving concessions through war success.<sup>9</sup> On the other, violence works as a *tipping* option.<sup>10</sup> Non-unitary actors take advantage of violence in order to bring down minor moderate-oriented concessions and/or to trigger state repression with the intention of pushing moderates into the radicals' arms. Here, the radicals' goals aim at the internal balance of power, rather than at targeting directly the state. Let us briefly look at some examples.

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<sup>8</sup> See below for an explanation of this concept.

<sup>9</sup> This success could come out of either exhaustion of the state or its ultimate retreat from the disputed region.

<sup>10</sup> See Schelling (1978) for the seminal work on “tipping games”.

On the one hand, the Irish War of Independence (1919-1921) stands out as a straightforward case in point of violence as a *voiced* mechanism.<sup>11</sup> After waiting in vain for decades, Irish radicals became distrustful about British intentions over the devolution of power. Thus, after gaining large amounts of moderate support for their claims through internal campaigns of violence (the Easter Uprising would be an example) and British unresponsiveness to Irish MPs' claims for devolution,<sup>12</sup> IRA activists fostered guerrilla warfare against Westminster. Even though they knew that it would be impossible to throw *Brits out* from Ireland, they managed to wage a "war of attrition"-like campaign which finally forced the state officials to bargain a deal.

On the other hand, violence in Corsica from the 70's on has been aimed towards forcing moderates to take sides on the nationalist issue. In the face of a French state fearful of discussing any project about political decentralization, radicals fostered tipping-like violence with the object of draining local elites' constituencies that had developed around public patronage and land tenure. Violence has ever since been related to local control and electoral constituency-building rather than to defy state officials in a direct contest, even though state institutions have suffered most of the attacks (Briquet 1997; Crettiez 1999c).

In-between these two examples, it would be possible to include cases of successful transitions from control-like violence to attrition-like violence. Perhaps the most representative case here is that of the Basque Country from the 70's on, where radicals were able to become a credible partner in the local market of support leading to the escalation of a war of attrition against the Spanish state during the 80's and 90's (Sánchez-Cuenca 2001).

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<sup>11</sup> On the Irish War of Secession and, more generally, on the Irish Nationalist movement, see Fitzpatrick (1998) and Lustick (1993).

<sup>12</sup> In the 1917 British General Election, leaving Ulster aside, Ireland returned nationalist MPs mostly -124 Nationalists compared to 4 Unionists. They set up the Irish Dail and voted for independence. By then, several bills for devolution had been repeatedly turned down in Westminster.



Here, radicals rightly guessed that the Spanish state had a high likelihood of overreacting and polarizing the constituency. However, many other terrorist organizations were doomed to failure from the beginning without any chance of defying local control. In those cases, radicals wrongly foresaw that state reaction would force moderates to take sides (radical violence in Catalonia is a case in point).

It emerges from these examples that *tipping-oriented* violence addresses intra-group *control*-related issues, whereas *voice-oriented* violence looks at inter-group *attrition*-related issues. In short, radicals taking up *voice-like violence* fight against the state. On the contrary, those promoting *tipping-like violence* have to first convince their own brethren to share radicals' goals of going together against the state. Even if the state is the main target of the attacks in both types of violence, the goal in the second case is to mobilize support. Simply put, *tipping* seems a prerequisite for *voice*, as long as it is almost impossible to wage war-of-attrition strategies against modern states without some considerable level of minority group support (at least, with respect to ultimate goals).<sup>13</sup>

As a final implication of this discussion, we should expect the emergence of tipping-like violence if and only if radicals<sup>14</sup> are uncertain about the type of state they are facing. The basic idea is that second-wave nationalists interested in building their own constituency<sup>15</sup> will spend their resources on violence when they

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<sup>13</sup> Recall, as seen in the previous chapter, that terrorists may try to fake their real strength in the first stages of the fight. However, faking does not work in the middle-run in the absence of tipping mechanisms.

<sup>14</sup> To advance my argument, "radicals" resemble second-wave nationalists interested in building their own constituencies.

<sup>15</sup> There are three overlapping paths to the building of a nationalist constituency when one is already in place. Firstly, second-wave nationalists could try to radicalize existent nationalist constituencies with the result of draining the support for mainstream nationalist parties. Second, they could set up un-mobilised potentially nationalist constituencies by emphasizing previously ignored ethnic traits. Finally,

anticipate that state overreaction will yield greater gains than those coming from other “legal” investments (such as racing for office). If radicals know beforehand that the state will respond efficiently to violence (either by enforcing moderates with minor concessions<sup>16</sup> and/or by repressing selectively<sup>17</sup>), then they would prefer to avoid wasting their resources in violence. However, as the type of state is rarely known before a nationalist challenge takes shape, almost all radicals will have an incentive to try the “tipping” game, more so if they have a small chance of competing electorally against moderate nationalists and mainstream parties.

As there have not been any large-scale armed nationalist challenges against Western European countries in the second half of the 20th century,<sup>18</sup> this dissertation focuses on the first stage of

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they could activate new constituencies by using ideological appeals that broaden the definition of the national polity. In all of them, state overreaction gives salience and visibility to second-wave ideological claims.

<sup>16</sup> There is an ongoing discussion about the effects of appeasement policies on nationalist growth. On the one hand, several authors have consistently argued in favour of decentralization policies to put out nationalist challenges (Gurr 2000, Horowitz 1991 and Lijphart 1977). On the other hand, Toft (2003) and Walter (2006) assert that those governments facing nationalist challenges are less prone to making concessions when there are two or more potential nationalist regions in the country than when there is only one. The reason why is that they want to buy a reputation as tough bargainers before potential future challenges. However, governments made concessions in all the regions undergoing nationalist violence in Western Europe even if they faced other alternative internal focus of contestation. It seems that democratic governments have strong incentives to play the peaceful card as long as they can reap electoral benefits from it. In brief, I assume, with O’Neill (2003) that decentralization strategies always follow electoral incentives.

<sup>17</sup> See Kalyvas (1999, 2006) for the seminal work on the relevance of repressing selectively.

<sup>18</sup> Literature on civil wars tends to consider the Northern-Irish conflict as a case that qualifies as “civil war.” However, it seems to me exaggerated to assert that republicans and loyalists took overt control of the territory in the way as rebels do in more formal “civil wars.”

violence, where nationalists still have to convince their own potential constituency of the advantages of violence before heading thoroughly against the state. At this stage, violence will play the role of a mobilizational device by forcing potential nationalist constituencies to take sides. Only once radicals have achieved sufficient internal support are they ready to defy state power.

### **2.3. The model**

I discuss in this section under what conditions armed challenges will become resilient in the long-term. Going beyond classical accounts of nationalist violence that only look at the relation between challengers and states, I enrich the analysis by bringing the role of regional mediators back in. Whereas it could seem obvious the direct connection between state responsiveness to nationalist demands and violence, the link between regional elites and violence is less apparent. In modern states, central governments can implement their decisions regardless of the opinion of regional political actors, as long as the process of decision-making is centralized in their hands. However, state-wide ruling elites inescapably rely on the support of territorial constituencies to win votes and offices. Thus, those political actors selected in regions with nationalist claims will pursue to have a say on state reaction, since (i) they are the most affected actors from nationalist growth, and (ii) they are the best informed actors about the potential attraction of nationalist claims for the contested constituency. If state-wide political actors and regional political actors are members of the same political organizations –for instance, the party in power at the centre is the most voted party in the region- they will have incentives to coordinate their response. If, on the other hand, regional (or local) political actors do not depend on state-wide parties to win votes and regional/local offices, two consequences follow: (i) state-wide actors at the centre could feel less concerned about being responsive to

nationalist claims, since their power does not rely on these groups; and (ii) given that, autonomous regional actors could take advantage of this indifference to promote strategies that ironclad their power against nationalist mobilization. In both ways, I contend, state capacity to address nationalist claims and deter violence relies significantly on the strategies regional elites follow.

To summarize the argument, sub-state nationalist violence is the consequence of autonomous regional elites unconnected to institutional decision-making in the centre and the existence of potential for nationalist mobilization. If regional politicians foresee that successful nationalist claims will jeopardize their basis of local power, they will reject them and encourage the government to repress the challenge. If the government follows this advice and repression contributes to cement a new nationalist constituency articulated around the challengers, violence will become resilient in the long term. Let me show step-by-step how this explanation works.

Regarding the nationalists, my starting assumption is that there is no nationalist violence without some prior nationalist electoral mobilization.<sup>19</sup> Second-wave nationalists draw on the networks and electoral constituencies that have already been put in place by first-wave nationalists. First-wave nationalists are usually averse to launching a risky challenge that could jeopardize their political gains. Therefore, second-wave nationalists may take advantage of ethnic grievances by setting off violence against the centre with the object of building their own constituency.<sup>20</sup> However, if

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<sup>19</sup> Generally speaking, there have been two waves of sub-state nationalist mobilization in the Western World. The first one took place during the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The second one took off in the 60's, once the European economies had recovered and surpassed their pre-war levels of prosperity.

<sup>20</sup> Petersen (2001) has developed coherently this argument. Nationalist parties are organizations which want to get power. From that, to get a portion of the political pie is always better than getting nothing. The leadership knows that the higher the accumulated power, the stronger the challenge that could be done against the state. By

radicals willing to take up arms cannot count on those frustrated nationalists as early ideological supporters, recruits and funders, they will be unable to use violence as a trigger to mobilize additional nationalists.<sup>21</sup> In brief, without previous nationalist mobilization, violence does not emerge.

Regarding the state actors, their level of “competitiveness” is essential to understand the emergence of nationalist violence: If radicals anticipate that the state is “uncompetitive,” then they will have incentives, under certain conditions, to foster violence. But what does “competitiveness” mean? Broadly speaking, a state is competitive as long as it performs in the targeted region without any differences with respect to other regions of the country.

*Competitiveness* has two major dimensions.<sup>22</sup> First, competitive states spread their *main institutions* across the regions through voluntary compliance and, at the same time, are able to recruit locals for jobs in state-wide organizations (the army,

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anticipating that, the leadership tries to increase this leverage just playing the legal game a further period, which at the same time moves away the very possibility of the challenge. Put differently, first concessions or successes in organization make nationalists more risk-averse.

<sup>21</sup> I assume there was a pool of potential terrorist organization members in any nationalist region. The interesting question is why in some places terrorism took off while in others it did not.

<sup>22</sup> This concept is loosely based on Hechter’s indirect rule (Hechter 2000). Hechter tries to explain the emergence of nationalism (rather than violence) by looking at the ways in which the centre was organised with respect to its regions. According to him, there are two basic models of organisation: *direct rule* (the state tries to gather all the resources in the centre’s institutions), and *indirect rule* (the state governs by decentralising resources and decision-making down to lower territorial units). State attempts to accumulate resources and decision-making in the centre (direct rule implementation) foster peripheral nationalist-driven reactions against this move. This is a good way of explaining nationalist emergence in approximate terms. Unfortunately, it falls short of making a contribution to explain internal variation within supposedly “direct rule” states (for instance, Great Britain and France). Besides, his attempts to operationalize the concept has rendered fruitless so far.

schools, administration, party system, security forces, tax system, and the like<sup>23</sup>). The two sides are complementary. On the one hand, institutional unification paves the way for identity formation, centralized policy-making and ideological politics alike. On the other, fluid local recruitment in state institutions (army, schools, bureaucracy, etc.) enforces the processes indicated above by transforming state-promoted policies into *natural* outcomes.

Secondly, state-wide parties in competitive states will be responsive to regional electorates since they channel their demands towards higher levels of government.<sup>24</sup> This is the key variable, since it is the best empirical proxy for gauging *competitiveness* in regional settings. The intuition is very straightforward: if a state-wide party is competitive (seizing votes from several sections of regional voters –natives and others) in a polity with certain levels of ethnic capital, then it will have an interest in gathering information about potential rivals to deter competition and it will be able to do so at a low cost as long as there are no disenfranchised sections of the polity.

A competitive state has a better sense of plausible nationalist claims, so it will have more leverage to cope with them. If the potential of nationalist growth is high, then state officers will try to defuse that growth by making initial concessions. On the other hand, if the potential is weak, state officers will revert to a

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<sup>23</sup> Lack of volunteers would be working as a proxy of absence of collaboration. Looking at security forces' recruitment, if members of security forces come unevenly from the regions of the state, they might meet with trouble as trying to deal with defiance against the state in below-average-recruitment regions. Basically, the question here is absence of good information to anticipate challenges by putting in jail would-be agitators.

<sup>24</sup> The existence of electoral competition on "ideological" issues greatly contributes to the unification of local polities. Moreover, the centralization of decision-making in the centre pushes politicians to run in state-based candidatures by promoting ideological discussion further (Chhibber and Kollman 2004; Caramani 2004).

combination of selective repression and ideological ostracism against nationalists to avoid incorporating their claims into the political agenda. Competitive-oriented states will have strong instruments for stopping nationalist challenges and forcing radicals to play the legal game.

Finally, regarding the regional actors, they always exist by definition provided that politicians are territorially recruited - selected or coopted. Whether state-level MPs selected at the local/regional level, or politicians holding local/regional offices, it is common to observe the existence of a group of middle-level politicians interested in channelling demands from their constituencies to upper decision-making bodies. As mentioned above, state-wide parties normally prefer building the political competition around ideological policies, rather than around territorial policies. In those cases, the electoral fortunes of local political elites are heavily dependent on the general success of state-wide party candidates in the centre, since it is the ideological appeal of the party and its main leaders that attracts votes and distributes rents rather than the territorial strength of each candidate (Wibbels 2005).<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> State-wide parties always have an interest in promoting the nationalization of the country in terms of party competition (Chhibber and Kollman 2004: 80). Basically, the price of local politics is always higher due to absence of economies of scale emerging from the use of non-territorially-based ideologies. It comes as no surprise then that uncompetitive regions (from the state's point of view) are usually small in population size. In electoral terms, state-wide parties do not find strong incentives to compete in local-prone regions whenever investments in those regions yield lesser benefits than expected. For instance, if the price of a vote in a region oriented to local issues were \$10 whereas the price in a state-oriented region were \$5, then there would be strong incentives for investing party resources in the second region, keeping the number of seats at stake constant. As a corollary, the larger the size of the region, the higher the state-wide party interest in forcing the region to become "nationalized", since the influence of the region in making central governments will be larger.

However, sometimes territorial issues prevail over ideological ones and the political competition is more dependent on local networks and cleavages than on state-wide party platforms and leaders. In this scenario, local actors – such as patrons, notables and ethnic entrepreneurs – have a good chance of creating their own sources of power.<sup>26</sup> Usually related to territories owning ethnic traits not shared by the other regions of the state, the existence of autonomous local political elites raises a different scenario for state actors: on the one hand, their central power is not dependent on the contested region and therefore they have few incentives to concede; on the other hand, they are the ultimate target of nationalist claims, so they need to figure out what the best reaction is to address them.

A good way to gather information is to rely on local political elites. Although nationalists normally address directly the state as if they had full control of the regional polity, local actors are the first contenders of nationalist demands, since they compete to represent the same constituency. Faced with a nationalist challenge, regional actors can endorse nationalist claims if they think concessions will improve their position but reject them if concessions will jeopardize their regional primacy. The first can

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<sup>26</sup> Historically speaking, the failure of the nationalization process has different sources. Firstly, state leaders dealing with recently-incorporated peripheral territories decided to subcontract former regional elites to manage local affairs and keep unrest at bay. The deal was very simple: the state granted local political elites with several sources of power (land, patronage based on public office, customary law) in exchange for loyalty to national institutions and contribution to main state efforts (army and taxes, basically). Secondly, in other cases political groups losing power at the centre became entrenched in particular regions. Unable to compete at the state-wide level, these groups regionalised issues at expense of obstructing state-wide parties' efforts to enforce the ideological dimension. Finally, the emergence of strong nationalist groups also contributed to hinder the consolidation of a unique political arena articulated around ideological issues during the process of enfranchisement.



happen when regional elites have a good grasp on ethnic resources; the second is plausible when local actors are staunchly anti-nationalist, so that they foresee any alteration of the institutional status-quo will make their position completely vulnerable. Thus, state actors should deliver concessions in the face of nationalist challenges backed by local actors, but repress when the latter do not sponsor them.

Still, this response may not be efficient as long as either state-wide actors concede to weak challenges backed by regional actors or repress strong challenges rejected by regional actors. In the first case, state-wide actors would rather save unnecessary concessions to appease weak nationalists; in the second case, state-wide actors would rather save the high costs of repressing strong nationalists. State actors face a trust game: they would like to rely on local actors, but they know that under certain conditions, local actors have incentives to cheat them. On the one hand, competitive local actors could sponsor weak challenges in order to take advantage of the concessions. On the other hand, risk-averse local actors could reject strong nationalist challenges in order to force state actors to repress with the object of eliminating local rivals.

To summarize, responsive state-wide parties will face potential nationalist competitors with some leverage to cope with them: if the ethnic demand is strong, they will be in a perfect position to claim success for concessions; if it is weak, they will overlook it by emphasizing state links. On the contrary, whenever local politics control the agenda, state-wide parties will have trouble in pushing arguments beyond local boundaries. The absence of *embeddedness* of state-wide actors in regional politics is reflected in their structural apathy to local complaints and consequently their incapacity to find out how to best respond. In this case, local actors can use their intermediate role to help the state when facing nationalist challenges. The problem is that they may have also incentives to take advantage of their privileged position to pursue their own local agenda. Let us now see how this structure of incentives could contribute to the emergence of resilient nationalist violence.

The sequence of moves between these actors is as follows. Let us assume that second-wave nationalists set off a violent challenge against the government in order to mobilize their constituency and achieve concessions from the centre. There are two types of second-wave nationalists: those equipped with a strong potential for political growth; and those with limited capacities to make inroads.<sup>27</sup> The nationalist expectation is that if the state does not concede, at least it will repress heavily, and this will increase nationalist awareness within the potential nationalist constituency.

As described above, state response will depend on the level of “nationalization of politics” in the region. Thus, if state-wide parties (those taking part in central governments) are well represented in the region, they will have electoral incentives to deal carefully with the challenge that second-wave nationalists pose.<sup>28</sup> If they think it is strong, they will concede; otherwise, they will reject it. Violence will not become long-term in either of these scenarios. In the first case, concessions satisfy nationalists; in the second case, selective repression undermines nationalist movements with few chances of growing.

However, if state-wide parties do not gain their national share of the vote in the contested region, they will have to rely on local political elites to manage the situation. In the aftermath of an illegal challenge, state decision-makers will expect a signal from the local rulers to act. If this is the case, local political elites have a say in the resolution of the conflict. As actors on the ground, they

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<sup>27</sup> The strength of the challenge is exogenously determined – potential for mobilization, grievances and so on – but also endogenously so. Thus, if the state represses indiscriminately (or withdraws former concessions), that will increase support for the violent organization, keeping constant other factors. The interesting thing is under what conditions the state represses indiscriminately this type of internal challenges.

<sup>28</sup> Granted, there are electoral incentives only in democracies. However, I think this argument could also work for affluent dictatorships as well, as long as state-wide elites care about coopting to representatives of all the internal regions of the country.

will have information on the strength of the challenge: they may anticipate to a certain point the nationalist potential for growth. Being in their own interest, local actors will send clear information to the centre as long as they expect the state not to crack down their sources of local power.<sup>29</sup> On the contrary, if local political elites think that those sources are being wearing down or that potential concessions could endanger their position, they may well take advantage of the challenge to capture additional resources from the centre or deter local competition.

Under certain conditions local elites have incentives to misrepresent the real nature of the challenge: they may endorse weak nationalist challenges with the intention of monopolizing potential economic concessions (rents and transfers that feed the local system of patronage); and secondly, they may reject strong challenges in order to encourage state actors to repress with the goal of pushing potential competitors out of the market. In the first scenario, violence could last for some time, but with low intensity. Basically, radicals would be unable to build their own constituency in the face of a very competitive regional contender capable to achieve concessions. In the second scenario, on the contrary, we could expect the emergence of resilient violence. Here, local actors' incentives to reject concessions to potentially powerful nationalist contenders would force state actors to repress. Given nationalist potential for growth, state repression would contribute to strengthening regional distinctiveness, polarizing the constituency and intensifying the level of terrorist violence by feeding further nationalist grievances. We should expect resilient violence in regions where second-wave nationalists have some potential for growth, state actors are unresponsive to regional claims and local political elites are averse to changes in the institutional rules of the political game.

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<sup>29</sup> This is so because the government could blame local elites for negligence in forestalling the challenge. As a consequence, local power might switch hands.

## CHAPTER 3. AN EMPIRICAL APPROACH TO NATIONALIST VIOLENCE IN POSTWAR WESTERN EUROPE

### 3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I confront empirically the hypothesis that I have developed in the previous chapter with some of the best well-known hypotheses to account for nationalist violence. I use a twofold research strategy. First, I statistically test several hypotheses by using a new dataset with 29 nationalist-driven Western-European regions (plus Quebec in Canada). Secondly, I run a Boolean analysis on the same set of observations. Quite remarkably, my hypothesis fares reasonably well in both empirical tests.

Even though there is an astonishing literature on ethnic violence, few works have directly dealt with the relationship between sub-state nationalism and violence from a comparative perspective (see Brubaker and Laitin (1998) for a comprehensive review).<sup>1</sup> This distinction is not meaningless: since nationalist groups are territorially concentrated, the chances of using violence to achieve secession are always higher for these groups compared to non-territorially-based ethnic groups (Jenne *et al.* 2007; Sorens

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<sup>1</sup> Instead, the propensity of different extreme left-wing groups to turn to violence has been more widely analyzed. See, for instance, Engene (2004) and Sánchez-Cuenca (2009).

2007; Toft 2003; and Walter 2006). However, we still lack an account of the variation within nationalist groups in their propensity to trigger violence.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, many small-N studies have looked thoroughly at the best well-known cases of nationalist violence in order to find out what factors may explain it. Northern Ireland and the Basque Country are for obvious reasons on top of this ranking.<sup>3</sup> However, most of this research has avoided the rules of comparison, and has therefore suffered strong limitations as regards generalizing their outcomes.

I avoid these shortcomings in this chapter by testing general hypotheses against a set of Western European nationalist-prone regions. Given the fact that a cross-sectional dataset allows for the capturing of the phenomenon under analysis only in a fragmentary way, I will not claim that this proof can definitively reject hypotheses. On the contrary, I use these two empirical tests to show the reader that my hypothesis has empirical plausibility also when compared to more classical ways of accounting for nationalist violence. In what follows, I first describe several hypotheses to account for nationalist violence. Then, I present the dataset and describe how variables are coded. Finally, I run the two statistical tests, since both use the same data – with a different treatment though.

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<sup>2</sup> Allardt (1979), in his study of ethno-linguistic movements in Western Europe, mentioned their use of violence in passing. As far as I know, Hewitt (2001) is the only author who has studied from a large-n perspective why some Western European nationalist movements use terrorism whereas others remain peaceful. With a rudimentary analysis, he found that absence of minority grievances and concessions to moderate nationalists deter terrorism. Here I test in a more formal way these two hypotheses together with other potential alternative explanations.

<sup>3</sup> On ETA, see for instance Domínguez (1998b) and Sánchez-Cuenca (2001); on the IRA see, among many others, English (2003), and Moloney (2002). De la Calle and Sánchez-Cuenca (2006) and Sánchez-Cuenca (2007) compare both terrorist organizations.

### **3.2. Hypotheses**

After having outlined the argument of this dissertation in the previous chapter, I bring its implications to the empirical fore here. I start with mainstream hypotheses and, following on from that, I present those derived from my model. The first hypothesis considers the existence of potential economic grievances in the disaffected region against the centre as the cause fueling violence. The argument can work in two different directions. On the one hand, nationalist activists in poor regions (compared to country average income) could have incentives to use violence against the centre with two goals in mind: first, to raise regional awareness about the economic conditions of life in the territory; second, to force the central government to deal quickly with the breakdown of order in the region – for instance, restoring order with a mix of security force deployment and fresh rent transfers (Gurr 1972).

On the other hand, local activists in rich regions could think that centralized governments are not responsive enough to their preferences and consequently, that devolution is necessary to make sure the latter are adequately implemented. Whenever the government does not react to these claims, nationalists may trigger violence against the center to, first, force potentially nationalist constituencies to rally behind the nationalist flag and, second, make a show of force and signal strength against the government (Gourevitch 1979). Here, the contradiction between being economically powerful but politically powerless is solved by the nationalists through the triggering of violence. Then, if the government wants to keep the region at bay, it will need to either assume high costs of war (repression) or concede.

To measure the differences in wealth between the contested region and the state, I use the ratio between per capita income at the region-level compared with per capita income at the state-wide level. If a region with nationalist mobilization has a lower average income than its state, then we should expect violence according to the first hypothesis. On the contrary, the second hypothesis would

predict violence onset only when the region has a higher average income.

H1: *The less affluent a nationalist-led region is compared to the average country wealth, the more chances of triggering violence;*

H2: *The more affluent a nationalist-led region is compared to the average country wealth, the more chances of triggering violence.*

Second, by the same token, I consider the existence of cultural grievances as stimulating violence against the center. Here the argument is unidirectional: those regions with culturally distinct traits with respect to those dominant in the country as a whole could set off violence to defend their singularity when the government fosters fully-fledged programs of regional assimilation into the state's core characteristics (language, religion, institutions).

Even though this hypothesis takes different forms, its best well-known illustration corresponds with the so-called "sons of the soil's" mechanism: large internal migration flows from other state regions into a region with differential cultural traits activates ethnic awareness and defensive violence in reaction (Zariski 1989; Fearon 2004). To measure the existence of potential cultural grievances against the centre, I use two proxies. First, I consider the share of regional natives living in the hosting region compared to immigrants (and their offspring).<sup>4</sup> In regions where local powers do not have institutional resources to force newcomers to

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<sup>4</sup> The proportion of immigrants living in a region with nationalist traits could also have an influence on economic arguments. As it is known, immigration sets off job competition and that may trigger violence from natives infuriated by their lower chances of getting a good job. I contend that this argument works very well when dealing with communal violence but not so much with nationalism. In the latter case, nationalist intellectuals tend to see immigration more as a cultural threat than anything else, since they already occupy important positions within the regional social ladder (see, for instance, Krutwig 1973 on the Basque case; and Evans 1991 on the Welsh case).

learn the regional language, nationalists can see linguistically-alien immigration as a strategy to quicken the death of their regional culture. Additionally, I consider the linguistic distance between the regional language and the state core language. The rationale is that regional languages that stand very far from the core language will be repressed to a greater extent in order to force their speakers to switch to the state language.<sup>5</sup>

H3a: *The more immigrants moving from other regions of the state flow into the contested region, the larger chances of observing violence against the center.*

H3b: *The more differences between the regional and the state languages, the greater the likelihood of repression and therefore the fostering of regional violence.*

Third, I consider if indirect rule deters violence, as Hechter (2000) would predict.<sup>6</sup> According to him, the emergence of nationalist political mobilization was a direct consequence of state attempts to break up former local basis of territorial power. If we apply this theory to nationalist violence, we should expect that those regions wherein autonomous powers remained in the hands of regional actors should have suffered no violence at all. To operationalize this hypothesis, I control for the level of autonomy that the region enjoyed before the spread of nationalist unrest.

Obviously, the level of autonomy could also indicate former concessions delivered by the government, in accordance with the expectations of my model. Thus, centralized countries could have decided to grant political autonomy to regions where regionalists were strong – such as postwar Sicily or Bavaria. If this is the case, peace-preserving political autonomy could suggest absence of state incentives to centralize power, as well as state efforts to

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<sup>5</sup> This linguistic factor could also stand for a more primordialist argument: people living in regions with non-understandable languages for non-regional state speakers will have incentives to live alone and fight for secession.

<sup>6</sup> In the same book, Hechter proposes a more elaborated argument about the emergence of violence, which I discuss in chapter 4.



remain competitive in the region by granting concessions to early-rising nationalists.

H4: *The more autonomous powers does a contested region have, the lower chances of observing nationalist violence.*

Fourth, I consider whether larger nationalist-led regions have lower chances of experiencing violence. As the argument goes, larger regions are (i) more strategic for the state in terms of either rents, and/or population; (ii) more relevant for state-wide parties interested in winning the elections; and (iii) offer more resources for nationalists to stand up against potential state aggressions, a combination that normally ends with the onset of a civil war.<sup>7</sup> Then, in order to avoid the outcome of violence, state-wide parties would have incentives to concede in the face of strongly-supported nationalist claims. On the contrary, if facing nationalist claims from small regions within the state, state-wide parties will only be strongly concerned about them when reputation issues are at play (Toft 2003). To measure this variable I use the relative size of the region (in population terms) with respect to the state size. Larger regions will be more valuable for the state, so the latter will be more responsive to nationalist claims coming from them.

H5: *The larger the relative size of the region compared to state size, the lower prospects of expecting nationalist violence.*

Finally, I consider the empirical implications of my model. To recall, I contend that violence will climb wherever local politicians are not dependent on state-wide party fortunes to hold local/regional offices (basically, they do not run for public positions within state-wide party labels) and radical nationalists take advantage of the existence of prior networks of ethnic mobilization to mount their armed challenge. If local actors are fearful of potential concessions delivered by the state to

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<sup>7</sup> One of the control variables that most of the time comes out to be significant in empirical analyses of civil war onset is the size of the state. Apparently, larger countries are more war-prone. Therefore, wealthy countries would have incentives to avoid fighting against large regions since the cost of the conflict would be relatively higher for them (in terms of the dissipation of country wealth).

nationalists, then they will have incentives to cheat the government and force it to repress the challenge. Blind repression contributes to the creation of a new nationalist constituency articulated around violence by polarizing sides and raising nationalist consciousness. In brief, local politicians have incentives to take advantage strategically of the emergence of violence promoted by nationalists to deter competition and, on the other side, nationalists may use violence to attract potential constituencies alienated from center's responses to the uprising.

To operationalize these hypotheses, two caveats must be said. Firstly, I have renounced to distinguish among types of autonomous local political elites (competitive vs. change-averse), given the limited number of regions that would be included in each category. I think this modification of the argument should not bear drastic consequences for the testing process, since according to the model, violence is expected when autonomous politicians have incentives to cheat the government – with different intensity, though.<sup>8</sup> Secondly, I contend that the relation between previous levels of nationalist mobilization and the prospects of resilient violence is not linear. Nationalists should be interested in triggering violence to activate their potential constituency when they can rely on some previously-mobilized sections of the constituency. However, they should avoid violence if they already fulfilled the whole mobilization of the group.<sup>9</sup> I model this as an

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<sup>8</sup> Needless to say, I could have divided the eight regions with some level of autonomous local political elites between two groups (competitive vs. change-averse), according to my knowledge. However, I think this is a tricky exercise when the number of observations is low and the correlation between violence and the existence of autonomous local political elites high. The temptation to code cases by looking at the outcome of violence makes the effort worthless.

<sup>9</sup> In this scenario with full nationalist mobilization, violence would only follow if the state is reluctant to grant any concession at all. Given the large amount of support for nationalist claims, the possibility of large-scale violence should force wealth states to concede and avoid open conflict.

inverted U-shaped relation between previous levels of nationalist mobilization and the odds of nationalist violence.

H6a: *The more local political elites are not dependent on state-wide parties, the higher chances of observing violence fostered by nationalists;*

H6b: *The more first-wave nationalist mobilization remained in the middle of failure and success, the more chances of observing nationalist violence during the next wave of nationalist mobilization.*

Before ending this section, a word must be said about the relationship between H4 and H6a. Even if political autonomy could be the product of previous concessions delivered by state-wide politicians dealing with nationalists and local politicians, I claim that the contemporary existence of institutional autonomy and autonomous local political elites are not necessarily the same. It is possible to observe regions with devolved powers where state-wide party politicians rule as well as regions without any institutional autonomy but with non-state-wide party local politicians. Table 3.1 includes some examples.

Northern Ireland could be a case of autonomous local political elites ruling an institutionally autonomous polity (until 1972); on the other side, Wales could be a case of state-wide parties controlling a weakly-autonomous polity (before 1997). But there are also mixed cases: non-autonomous regions with autonomous politicians (the Basque Country and Catalonia during the Franco years; Corsica until 1982) and autonomous regions with state-wide parties in charge of local affairs (Sicily after 1949).

*Table 3.1. Potential combinations of politicians' and institutional autonomy*

		<i>Institutional Autonomy?</i>	
		yes	no
<i>Autonomous</i>	Yes	Northern Ireland	Corsica
<i>Politicians?</i>	No	Sicily	Wales

In what follows, I briefly present the dataset and the relevant variables that will be used in the next empirical analyses. I start with the dependent variables and I then proceed to describe the independent ones.

### **3.3. The dataset: Units and variables**

I have built a dataset with 29 regions from Western Europe plus Quebec. Each unit/region of observation has only one time observation, since the structure of the data is cross-sectional. However, even if all the variables are measured within the interval 1960-1995, the concrete point for each region is defined by its particular story of nationalist mobilization.<sup>10</sup> I include below the whole list of regions put into the analysis, with their host states in brackets.<sup>11</sup>

Flanders (Belgium), Wallonia (Belgium), Quebec (Canada), Faroe Islands (Denmark), Greenland (Denmark), Aaland (Finland), Alsace (France), French Basque Country (France), Brittany (France), French Catalonia (France), Corsica (France), Bavaria (Germany), West Frisia (Holland), Aosta (Italy), Friuli (Italy), Lombardy (Italy), Sardinia (Italy), Sicily (Italy), South Tyrol (Italy), Veneto (Italy), the Spanish Basque Country (Spain), Canary Islands (Spain), Catalonia (Spain), Galicia (Spain), Azores Islands (Portugal), Madeira (Portugal), Jura (Switzerland), Northern Ireland (UK), Scotland (UK) and Wales (UK).

As far as selection criteria are concerned, I have followed three rules for including regions in the database. First, I have considered only sub-national groups that are territorially

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<sup>10</sup> If the region did not experience any episode of violence during the whole period, then I measure all relevant independent variables by looking at the period of highest autonomist mobilization.

<sup>11</sup> The whole dataset matrix is included in table A.3.1 (see “additional tables to chapter 3”). The data are sufficient to replicate the empirical results I offer in this chapter.

concentrated.<sup>12</sup> This rule prevents me from employing cases as Occitania, the Swedish-speaking communities in Finland or the German-speaking groups in Denmark. Secondly, I have included all Western European regions where some sustained nationalist mobilization has taken place after World War II. This rule accounts for most of the cases. In regions such as Alsatia and Friuli, high levels of pre-war mobilization were barely matched afterwards, but they are still included because of the existence of small autonomist movements that could have used violence to increase their support. Finally, I have included these regions where regionalists have not jumped into nationalist claims because the state was willing to grant strong concessions in the beginning of regional unrest (Bavaria, Frisia, Sicily).

As far as the time structure of the data is concerned, each case has been coded independently. For those regions with violence, the independent variables were measured before its emergence. Thus, the variables used to capture the existence of competitive state-wide parties in the region under dispute were gauged –when possible<sup>13</sup>– before the onset of violence, since violence could have had an impact on the posterior configuration of the regional political system. This rule was not always respected, since the data for some of the variables –such as regional GDP, natives and population share– were actually collected after the onset of violence, because of the problems to find pre-violence data. Obviously, this procedure could have introduced bias in the analysis. However, as terrorism is a warfare technique with a low economic and demographic impact on society, figures on population and regional GDP should have not varied much. With

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<sup>12</sup> As mentioned earlier, there is an extensive literature showing that those territorially-concentrated ethnic groups have a larger propensity to use violence than disperse ethnic groups.

<sup>13</sup> For the Basque case, this rule was difficult to apply, since violence predated the arrival of democracy. As violence broke out in the Basque Country during the dictatorship, I have given the value of 0 in the variables related to state-wide competitiveness. This codification fits well the political structure of the region before and after the dictatorship.

regards to regions without violence, all variables were measured during their peak of nationalist mobilization, that is, during the period where violence could have been closer to break out.

### *3.3.1. Dependent variables*

I have generated two dependent variables. Both reflect on the duration of terrorist activities (*years*) and the intensity of violence (*attacks/deaths*). The first one weighs the number of attacks by the number of years of violent activity (*dv1*). In turn, the second variable considers the number of killings by the number of years of deadly activity (*dv2*). Therefore, the first dependent variable captures better low levels of violence, since it includes any type of terrorist attack (deadly or not), whereas the second one draws more on resilient deadly violence by taking into account the number of killings that each nationalist movement carried out. The formulas are as follows:

$$dv1 = \text{Ln} \{ [deaths \times years] + [attacks \times years] \} \quad (1)$$

$$dv2 = \text{Ln} \{ 1 + [deaths \times years] \} \quad (2)$$

The first dependent variable has been built from the TWEED dataset (Terrorism in Western Europe: Event Data) compiled by Engene (2004).<sup>14</sup> It covers domestic terrorist attacks (deadly or not) in Western Europe from 1945 to 2005. Unfortunately, this dataset seems to code some of the cases I include in my analysis incorrectly.<sup>15</sup> For this reason, I take the second dependent variable from the DTV dataset (Domestic Terrorist Victims), compiled by

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<sup>14</sup> The dataset is accessible at <http://www.uib.no/People/sspje/tweed.htm>.

<sup>15</sup> For instance, it counts more terrorist attacks in Scotland than in Wales, when the opposite actually happened. Nonetheless, this is the only available dataset that includes information on nationalist violent attacks of any kind in Western Europe.

De la Calle and Sanchez-Cuenca (2009).<sup>16</sup> This dataset is the most exhaustive compilation of killings carried out by domestic terrorist organizations in Western Europe since 1965. The data for Quebec come from a book that includes all the attacks carried out by Quebec nationalists since World War II (Fournier 1984; see also Ross 1995 on Québécois terrorism).

### 3.3.2. *Independent variables*

I test H1 and H2 by using the ratio between per capita regional GDP and the per capita state GDP. This variable captures how far the per capita income at the regional level is from the state-level figure.<sup>17</sup> Thus, values over 1 indicate richer-than-average regions – such as Aosta, Aaland, Lombardy and Spanish Catalonia- whereas values below 1 indicate poorer regions –such as Greenland, Sicily and Brittany. In order to control for the occurrence of H1 and H2 at the same time, I incorporate a squared term that allows for the finding of a potential non-linear relationship between wealth and violence. I took the regional and state values closer to the time point when violence (or nationalist unrest) emerged. I have relied on several official statistical sources to build this variable.

Next, I use two variables to test hypotheses on cultural grievances (H3). First, I proxy the existence of triggering events that set up nationalist awareness by considering the share of regional natives living in the region. The main idea here is that massive immigration coming from other state regions jeopardizes ethnic resources and raises grievances against the centre. The data

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<sup>16</sup> The dataset is accessible at <http://www.march.es/dtv/datasets>.

<sup>17</sup> As the variables are observed in different time-points, I think it does not make much sense to include a general measure of regional wealth that allows for direct comparison among units (for instance, in 1983 per capita income in Alsace was twice as big as in Sicily). Besides, as the argument goes, nationalists should not be concerned about the wealth of other countries but about the comparison between their regional wealth and that in the centre.

come from Minahan (2002).<sup>18</sup> Secondly, I have also compiled data on language family differences between the regional language (if any) and the state language. This variable comes from the Fearon and Van Houten (2002) dataset on regional assertiveness. It goes from 1 (absolutely different linguistic families –Basque and Spanish, for instance) to 10 (no difference at all –Canarian and Spanish, for instance) and the larger the value, the fewer differences between both languages.

Thirdly, I test H4 by using an indicator of political autonomy. I measure the level of institutional autonomy that each region had before the emergence of violence.<sup>19</sup> It goes from 0 (no autonomy at all – Brittany, for instance) to 4 (full devolution – Faroe). The data come from Jason Sorens' dataset on regional autonomy (available at his website).<sup>20</sup>

Fourthly, I control for the population size of the region to account for H5. I include a measure of the relative size of the region (in terms of population) compared to the size of the state, as the hypothesis would predict, instead of considering absolute figures alone. Again, I take the data from official sources, and I pick the figure closer to the time of nationalist onset.

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<sup>18</sup> Minahan includes his own assessment of the ethnic composition of the regions inhabited by “national minorities”. Thus, I divided for each region the number of natives living in the territory under dispute over its total population. Thus, the larger the value, the lower the number of immigrants living in the region. The regions with the highest presence of immigrants are Corsica, Aosta, Alsatia, Brittany, South Tyrol, Spanish Catalonia and the Spanish Basque Country. Special mention deserves Northern Ireland, where Protestants were counted as “immigrants” in order to capture the effect of religion on nationalist mobilization.

<sup>19</sup> Alternatively, I have also employed another measure of political autonomy, the one created by Gary Marks and his colleagues, and published in the journal *Regional and Federal Studies* (Volume 19, issue 2-3, 2008). The use of this measure did not vary significantly the empirical results.

<sup>20</sup> Available at <http://www.acsu.buffalo.edu/~jsorens/>



Finally, I have constructed several indicators to test H6. All these variables have been built from Caramani's *Elections in Western Europe since 1815* (Caramani 2000). For Quebec, the electoral data come from Beck (1968). I have built two proxies to capture the existence of autonomous local political elites (H6a):<sup>21</sup>

(I) A dummy variable measuring whether the largest party at the regional level in state-wide elections is one of the two main parties at the state-wide level (*majority*). If it is, then the variable takes the value of 1 –such as in Wales, Sardinia or Galicia. Again, to avoid trend variations, I average values from three elections.<sup>22</sup> A region has a state-wide party as a majority one when the most voted party at the regional level is one of the two largest parties at the state level. In order to have a value of 1, then this has to occur at least twice for the three electoral contests aforementioned.

(II) Finally, a variable gauging the matching between the electoral results at the state-wide level with the region-level for the same elections (*matching*). If neither of the two main state-wide parties commands the highest share of votes at the regional level in state-wide elections this variable takes the value of 0. If, on the contrary, one of these two parties is the majority party at the regional level, then the variable measures how the difference at the state level between these two biggest parties is matched at the regional level. For instance, assume that the two biggest parties at

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<sup>21</sup> I built an additional “fragmentation index.” It measured the closeness between the party fragmentation index at the regional level and the same index at the state level. It is the average mean for the three elections closer to the emergence of violence. If there was no violence, then I consider the three elections closer to the period when nationalist unrest took place. I have not included this proxy in the analyses reported in the chapter because it is the furthest away from reality, since we could have a two-main-party system at both the state-wide and regional levels without having any correspondence between the dominant parties at these two arenas. Obviously, it did not work empirically either.

<sup>22</sup> The last column of the data matrix in table A.3.1 (in appendix) includes the specific time points in which each nationalist movement was measured.

the state level are A and B. And that the difference of these parties at this level is 5 percent points. Then, if the difference between these two parties at the regional level is, let's say, 10 percent points [conditional on one of the two parties being the majority party at the regional level], the matching value for this case would be  $5/10 = 0.5$ . In other words, the general outcome of the election among the two largest parties would have been matched at the regional level only in a fifty-percent way. I generate a value for any region by considering again the three elections closer to the emergence of nationalist violence and/or unrest. The matching is very high in regions such as Walloon, Brittany and Lombardy. Quite the opposite, regions such as Alsatia, Wales and West Frisia scored very low in this variable, because they were electoral strongholds of the weakest state-wide party during the period under analysis.

On the other hand, I have generated one variable to measure previous nationalist mobilization (H6b). I call the variable *potential for growth* and it gives maximum values to those regions where prewar mobilization<sup>23</sup> was around 50 percent. This variable gives minimum values to those regions where nationalists were either very successful or very ineffective on mobilizing their

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<sup>23</sup> It would be better to measure the potential for nationalist growth just before the emergence of second-wave nationalists. However, this option raises a practical measurability problem. Those cases where nationalists did not put forward candidates before the emergence of second-wave nationalists could not be conveniently measured because of the absence of elections – such as in Spain – or the existence of nationalist-unfriendly electoral systems – such as in France. As most of the regions included in the sample had elections with autonomist parties during the interwar period, I measure the potential for growth there. This decision goes well with an intergenerational argument based on the transmission of nationalist ideas from parents to their children. However, it would not capture well the direct effect of an immediate nationalist mobilization led by moderates whose failure in making electoral inroads could have pushed radicals to trigger violence to broaden their constituency – as it happens to be the case in regions such as Corsica.

constituencies before World War II –such as Catalonia and South Tyrol (both successful cases) and the French Basque Country and Madeira (both ineffective cases). And the maximum value goes to those regions with intermediate levels of interwar mobilization – such as the Spanish Basque Country, Bavaria, Quebec and Northern Ireland. The variable ranges from 0 to 0.25. This strategy is useful to model my hypothesis about the existence of higher incentives for violence wherever prewar nationalists remained somewhere between success and failure.

$$potential = \{[mobilization \times (100 - mobilization)] / 10000\} \quad (3)$$

In the rest of this chapter, I use these data to run two empirical tests. First, I will present the statistical results. Finally, I will run a Boolean analysis on the same data.

### **3.4. Empirical results, I: Statistical models**

I first present full models and then I proceed to “clean” them out of non-significant variables. Finally, I run some simulations so as to show how my key independent variables affect the emergence of resilient violence. Tables 3.2-3.3 include full models (OLS regressions with robust standard errors). Table 3.2 refers to dv1, while table 3.3 deals with dv2. Remember that dv1 captures any nationalist violent activity, whereas dv2 looks only at deadly levels of nationalist violence –resilient terrorist violence. As some of the independent variables are highly correlated (see table A.3.2 in the appendix for correlations), I insert them into the model separately, and that explains the duplication of models for each dependent variable (models 1 and 3 – and model 5 in table 3.2 – include “majority”; models 2 and 4 – and model 6 in table 3.2 – include “matching”).

Table 3.2 shows that prior levels of political autonomy and the share of natives living in the region have a considerable, expected impact on the occurrence of nationalist violence. The economy has

a counterintuitive influence, since there is an apparent inverted U-shaped relation between the GDP gap ratio and violence, with the cut point around 90 percent of state-average wealth levels. This finding is puzzling, since it basically says that the effect of wealth on violence is positive for those regions with less than 90 percent of state per capita wealth (rejecting H1), but negative for larger values (rejecting H2). Regarding the size of the region (population share), its coefficients are negatively signed as expected, but rarely significant. Finally, majority and potential for growth have the right signs, and sometimes reach levels of significance, whereas matching does not seem to work well – not even if interacted with political autonomy. Thus, the existence of autonomous local political elites contributes to observe more nationalist violence and so does potential for growth too.

Model 5 has the best fit. This model includes an interactive term between “majority” and “autonomy” to check how these two variables work together to produce violence. The results are worth mentioning. The influence of political autonomy on the odds of violence is strong for regions with autonomous local political elites (-2.407), but it becomes almost null for regions controlled by state-wide parties (-2.407+2.069). Figure 3.1 displays the predictive values of the interaction, fixing the rest of variables on their means. The effect of autonomous local holders on violence is uppermost in the absence of political autonomy. However, the more autonomy those autonomous actors have, the less chances of seeing nationalist violence. In turn, regions led by state-wide parties display very low levels of violence when there is no

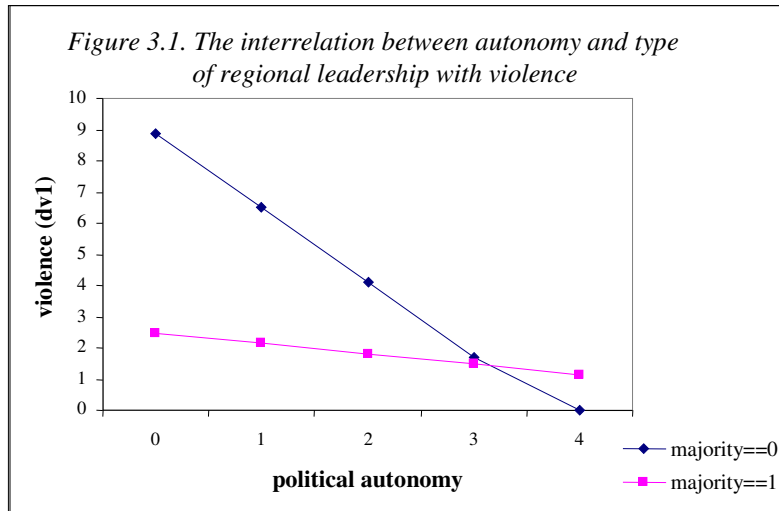
Table 3.2. Regression models of nationalist violence

	model 1	model 2	model 3	model 4	model 5	model 6
autonomy	-1.472* 0.49	-1.260** 0.49	-1.125** 0.5	-0.914*** 0.52	-2.407* 0.47	-1.095*** 0.64
natives	-0.076*** 0.05	-0.110** 0.05	-0.103** 0.04	-0.135* 0.04	-0.066 0.05	-0.136* 0.04
gdp gap	-2.448 2.52	-1.862 2.42	34.484** 12.98	34.551** 14.48	21.915** 10.03	25.084** 11.9
gdp square			-18.829* 6.5	-18.525** 7.41	-13.002** 5.17	-13.996** 6.22
population share	-0.033 0.03	-0.042 0.03	-0.049 0.03	-0.059** 0.03		
majority	-2.471*** 1.47		-2.31 1.52		-6.420* 1.26	
majority*autonomy					2.069** 0.77	
potential for growth	12.43*** 6.41	13.601** 6.23	9.486 5.89	10.668*** 6.31	12.010** 4.61	10.606 6.37

Table 3.2. Regression models of nationalist violence (continues)

	model 1	model 2	model 3	model 4	model 5	model 6
linguistic gap	0.027 <i>0.2</i>	0.036 <i>0.19</i>	-0.093 <i>0.19</i>	-0.104 <i>0.18</i>		
matching		-1.952 <i>1.52</i>		-1.24 <i>1.53</i>		-3.116 <i>3.21</i>
matching*autonomy						0.648 <i>1.65</i>
constant	14.389* <i>4.6</i>	15.148* <i>5.01</i>	-0.38 <i>5.37</i>	0.441 <i>5.78</i>	4.968 <i>4.86</i>	4.892 <i>5.27</i>
Prob>F	0.0021	0.0039	0.0002	0.0009	0.0000	0.0012
N	30	30	30	30	30	30
R2	0.55	0.5175	0.632	0.5947	0.7012	0.5612

Note: \*<1 percent significance level; \*\*<5 percent level; \*\*\*<10 percent level. Standard errors in italics.



autonomy at all, and consequently the effect of more autonomy on violence is also smaller.

Nationalist attacks, loosely defined, are inversely related to the share of native populations living in the region as well as to the levels of political autonomy –overall if there are autonomous regional power holders. The rest of the variables also go in the expected direction, but without robust coefficients. The wealth ratio shows an inverted U-shape relation with violence confirming neither of the two economic hypotheses. Region size goes in the expected way, since smaller regions have more chances of violence. And finally, medium levels of prewar nationalist mobilization would slightly increase the odds of violence.

Table 3.3 displays a somewhat different picture. Remember that the dependent variable here only regards deadly attacks. Therefore, this is a more demanding test of nationalist violence and a better proxy of real armed challenges against the government, since clandestine organizations that do not kill are rarely taken seriously. The first important point about table 3.3 is that political autonomy loses significance, and it only works when

interacted with the existence of autonomous regional power holders (model 3). On the contrary, the share of natives living in the region keeps working very well. Besides, the curvilinear relationship between regional wealth and deadly violence becomes weaker but still around the same cut-point. The linguistic gap does not work in these models either<sup>24</sup> and population share stays close to significance levels again.

Regarding the independent variables that measure H6, model 3 offers some encouraging evidence. After putting aside variables that do not perform well in previous models, model 3 shows that prior levels of nationalist mobilization and the existence of autonomous regional politicians are likewise good predictors of deadly nationalist violence. The interactive term between political autonomy and autonomous regional politicians exhibits the same result we saw for the previous dependent variable: the effect of autonomy on violence is very strong for regions with autonomous elites, but becomes weaker for those regions with state-wide regional elites. Intriguingly, that effect is slightly positive for the latter regions, as figure 3.2 illustrates. However, the effect disappears if Northern Ireland is not included in the regression.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> To make sure that the linguistic gap does not play a major role, I also included an interactive term between the linguistic gap and the share of natives in the region. The aim was to see whether the effect of “nativity” became larger in regions with a high linguistic gap. The results did not confirm this idea.

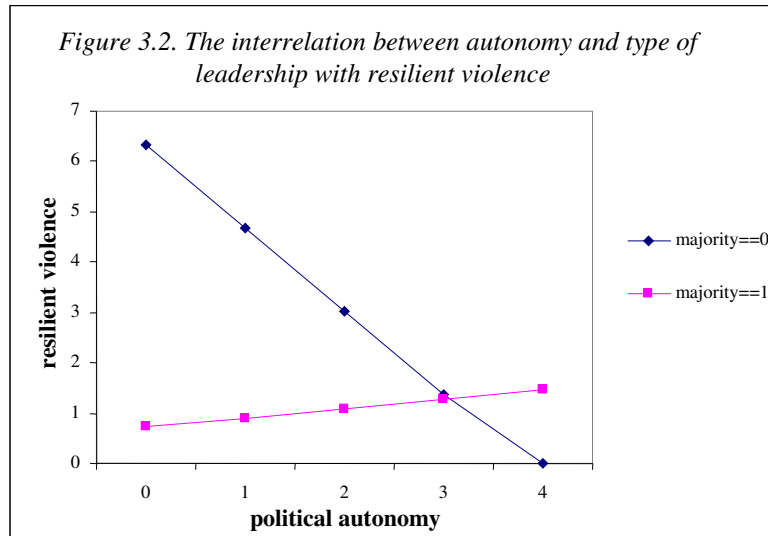
<sup>25</sup> Northern Ireland is no doubt a very difficult case to code. The region had almost full political autonomy from 1922 to 1972, but in practice it did not serve the interests of the Catholic minority. In this sense, it is dubious to claim this autonomy was granted to address autonomist grievances. However, in order to avoid discretionary coding, I did not alter the case.



Table 3.3. Regression models of deadly nationalist violence

	model 1	model 2	model 3	model 4
autonomy	-0.539 <i>0.54</i>	-0.389 <i>0.53</i>	-1.648** <i>0.7</i>	-0.721 <i>0.72</i>
natives	-0.107** <i>0.05</i>	-0.134* <i>0.04</i>	-0.075 <i>0.06</i>	-0.131* <i>0.04</i>
gdp gap	20.417 <i>12.27</i>	18.657 <i>14.39</i>	11.773 <i>9.93</i>	12.494 <i>12.84</i>
gdp 2	-11.093 <i>6.74</i>	-9.979 <i>7.86</i>	-7.136 <i>5.54</i>	-7.126 <i>7.1</i>
population share	-0.029 <i>0.02</i>	-0.034*** <i>0.02</i>		
majority	-2.153*** <i>1.27</i>		-5.611* <i>1.49</i>	
majority* autonomy			1.834** <i>0.67</i>	
potential for growth	9.674 <i>6.63</i>	10.843 <i>7.33</i>	11.759** <i>4.53</i>	10.217 <i>6.47</i>
linguistic gap	-0.032 <i>0.11</i>	0.001 <i>0.11</i>		
matching		-2.168 <i>1.34</i>		-4.546*** <i>2.41</i>
matching* autonomy				1.297 <i>1.18</i>
constant	3.446 <i>5.47</i>	5.085 <i>6.35</i>	7.227*** <i>4.19</i>	8.518 <i>5.51</i>
Prob>F	0.001	0.0059	0.0002	0.0051
N	30	30	30	30
R2	0.6564	0.633	0.7533	0.6348

Note: \* < 1 percent significance level; \*\* < 5 percent level; \*\*\* < 10 percent level. Standard errors in italics.



In order to best quantify the expected effects of my hypothesis, I run a simulation from model 1.<sup>26</sup> I present in table 3.4 the predicted level of violence for a region with average values of autonomy, GDP and relative size within the state, as we let majority, potential for growth and share of natives vary around selected values. I use the two values of majority (yes/no). As for the other two variables, I fit three values: low (it catches the 15<sup>th</sup> percentile of the variable distribution), middle (the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile) and high (the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile) for potential for growth and natives.

As a prediction, we should expect higher levels of violence for those regions with autonomous regional elites and high potential, keeping constant the share of natives. And this is basically what we observe. Besides, we see that majority always has a larger effect on the levels of violence independent of the levels of potential for growth. Thus, it doubles at least the expected levels

<sup>26</sup> I use the clarify package. See Tomz *et al.* (2003) to know more on how it works.

of violence when we move from autonomous regional elites to state-wide dependent ones. To make sense of the simulation, the role of the share of natives must be considered. Thus, a region with high levels of immigrants (around 30 per cent), autonomous local political elites and middle levels of previous nationalist mobilization would experience around 36 killings annually in 10 years of terrorist activity (358 killings). Quite the opposite, a region with low levels of immigrants (below 10 percent), state-wide dependent regional politicians and either full or no prior nationalist mobilization has no chance of observing deadly nationalist violence.

*Table 3.4. Predicted levels of deadly violence for selected values of potential for growth and majority by share of natives living in the region*

(a) Share of Natives= 71.9 per cent				
		potential		
		low	middle	high
majority?	no	3.71	4.08	<b>5.88</b>
	yes	1.27	1.64	3.44
(b) Share of Natives= 81.9 per cent				
		potential		
		low	middle	high
majority?	no	2.64	3.01	4.81
	yes	0.2	0.57	2.37
(c) Share of Natives= 91.5 per cent				
		potential		
		low	middle	high
majority?	no	1.64	2.01	3.81
	yes	<b>0</b>	0	1.37

To summarize the hypotheses, although the expected effects of the economy on violence do not receive any support (H1/H2), an unpredicted inverted U-shaped relation between wealth and violence has been found. Hypotheses related to cultural issues receive mixed confirmation: although the linguistic gap did not have any influence on violence (H3b), the share of natives living in the region appeared as one of the best predictors of violence (H3a). The effect of indirect rule on violence is substantial but mediated by the existence of autonomous regional elites (H4). Larger regions have lower chances of undergoing violence (H5). Finally, the role of local political elites in quickening nationalist violence has been also substantiated in some way (H6a) as well as the impact of intermediate levels of previous nationalist mobilization on the emergence of resilient nationalist violence (H6b).

It is possible to assert that (i) autonomy deters general violence –primarily when there are autonomous regional elites; (ii) large-scale immigration triggers violence; (iii) the size of the region matters (those regions accounting for a large part of the whole country experience lower levels of violence); (iv) potential for mobilization sets off violence; and (v) the existence of local political elites seem to contribute to the spread of nationalist violence. In the model, the worst-case scenario for nationalist violence is a region controlled by autonomous elites without devolved institutions that face potentially successful nationalist challenges activated in reaction to large-scale intra-state immigration. In this scenario, the absence of representative regional institutions forces state actors to rely on the existent regional elites. And the reluctance of the latter to accept concessions to redress nationalist claims would increase exponentially the odds of observing nationalist violence. In the rest of the chapter I analyze whether this explanation also works if Boolean techniques are used.

### 3.5. Empirical results, II: Boolean analysis

Some research problems are not well suited to statistical treatment. Sometimes the universe of units of observation is so small and the number of relevant factors having an impact on the dependent variable is so large that any probabilistic estimation becomes unfeasible. Furthermore, quite commonly the effects of relevant factors on the phenomenon under analysis are not linear and additive, as most statistical models would assume. It means that key interactive effects among relevant causal factors can barely be explored with statistical methods. Finally, neither is case-study analysis the best solution to these problems if the number of observations goes beyond a handful of cases, since the level of required knowledge on each case to run careful case-studies turns out to be insurmountable.

Charles Ragin's application of Boolean analysis to social science offers a middle-ground solution to the indicated problems (Ragin 1987). On the one hand, it allows the researcher to deal with a limited set of observations and use as much information from any of them as possible; on the other hand, it allows for the identification of different combinations of independent variables leading to the same outcome. Both characteristics fit the nature of my research very well. In addition to not having a large number of observations (my dataset has 30 observations), the possibility of tracing different potential mechanisms leading to the same outcome (nationalist violence) strongly encourages me to use Boolean analysis.<sup>27</sup> This technique has some disadvantages too. For instance, it is badly equipped to study longitudinal phenomena. Besides, the particular type of qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) I use, the crisp-set version, losses information because it requires dichotomizing all variables for the analysis.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> For a recent application of Boolean analysis to war termination, see Chan (2003).

<sup>28</sup> The fuzzy-set version of QCA, to the contrary, allows variables to adopt intermediate values between 0 and 1. However, I think it gives the researcher too much leeway to set the analytically relevant thresholds

Still, I think this Boolean research strategy is the perfect complement to the previous OLS analysis, since my dataset has a cross-sectional structure and the relevant independent variables have skewed distributions that facilitate their dichotomization.

### *3.5.1. Rules of selection*

In this section I describe the rules I have followed to generate the data matrix. The first step consists in coding for each case the set of relevant variables. Second, all variables must be dichotomized because the crisp-set version I chose only works with dummy variables (values of 0 and 1).<sup>29</sup> Third, every case must be assigned to a row in the table that includes the set of all potential combinations among the relevant causal variables.<sup>30</sup> Finally, each row in this table receives a single value on the dependent variable (violence, no violence).

For this Boolean analysis, I have selected the independent variables that turned out to be most representative in the previous statistical section. Thus, my four causal variables are: the share of natives living in the region (natives), the level of autonomy at the regional level (autonomy), the existence of state-wide dependent regional elites (majority) and finally the degree of prewar nationalist mobilization (potential for growth). General nationalist violence and deadly nationalist violence are still the dependent

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when recoding all variables within the interval. Obviously, the crisp-set version also gives a measure of arbitrariness to the researcher on recoding, but I think the procedure is more easily accountable, since the number of recoding thresholds concealing potential non-random biases is smaller.

<sup>29</sup> The transformation of raw data into dummy-based data is discussed below.

<sup>30</sup> This table is called "Truth Table". The number of rows depends on the number of independent variables. For instance, my Truth Table has 16 rows, since I consider 4 causal factors.

variables. I keep the same number of observations as in the statistical analysis.

In order to dichotomize the variables, it is necessary to establish cut-points to code each case in a binary basis. I have drawn on the average value of the variable to cut the distribution of autonomy and potential for growth, but moving the cut-point slightly left(right)wards to code uniformly similar cases. Majority is already a dummy variable. Regarding the dependent variables, the cut-point for DV2 is set on 5 killings at least, whereas I draw on the average cut-point for DV1.<sup>31</sup> Table A.3.3 in the appendix includes the cut-points (A1). If we apply these cut-points to the main data matrix (table A.3.1 in the appendix to chapter 3), we obtain table A.3.4 (also included in the appendix). Finally, cases are integrated within their corresponding row in the Truth Table representation.

To build the Truth Table, two important decisions must be done. First, it is possible that cases with a similar combination of variables produce different outcomes. For instance, a “0001” case could produce violence, whereas another “0001” case could generate no violence. In those cases, it is necessary to establish rules to break ties. The most applied rule forces all similar-combination cases to take on the most repeated outcome. Let’s take a real example: if there are four “0000” cases in the distribution, but only one of them leads to violence, then the whole combination is coded as “no violence”. The second decision is related to the existence of missing cases for some rows. We do not know if a “0101” combination does (not) lead to violence since it is out of the empirical record. To deal with this problem, I assume the most conservative view, which considers that those cases must be coded as instances of absence of violence.

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<sup>31</sup> The reason I do not rely on the average value of the distribution for DV2 is that this variable is significantly skewed. Moreover, as DV2 tries to capture durable nationalist violence, it made no substantive sense to code cases where terrorist attacks ended quickly without a large number of killings as instances of pure resilient violence.

By convention, upper-case letters show the presence of a factor in the outcome; lower-case letters illustrate its absence. Thus, in this analysis “A” means the presence of competitive state-wide parties at the regional level; “B” indicates that the region has considerable political autonomy; “C” shows that the share of natives in the region is small compared to people coming from other regions of the state; and “D” signals middle prewar nationalist mobilization. On the contrary, “a”, “b”, “c”, and “d” refer to the absence of these characteristics (autonomous actors at the regional level; no formal regional political autonomy; natives are the largest group living in the region; and very high/low prewar nationalist mobilization – respectively).

### *3.5.2. Results*

After describing the rules of selection, I now discuss the results. Table 3.5 includes the Truth Table on causes of (general) nationalist violence. The combination of factors leading to violence yields this initial equation:

$$V = abCd + abCD + aBCD + AbcD + AbCD + AbCd \quad (4)$$

It is possible to simplify this equation. The result is as follows:

$$V = aCD + bC + AbD \quad (5)$$

If we replace letters with names, it comes out that:

*Violence = (autonomous elites & high immigration & high potential) OR (no autonomy & high immigration) OR (state-wide dependent regional elites & no autonomy & high potential)*

In other words, there are three different processes leading to nationalist unrest. The first combination supports my argument, since the mix of autonomous local political elites with middle levels of prewar nationalist mobilization drives to violence, if intra-state migration inflames nationalist grievances. However,



there are two other mechanisms leading to nationalist violence. On the one side, a combination of low levels of formal political autonomy at the regional level with high levels of immigration may also trigger violence. On the other, regions whose main elites are state-wide dependent could experience violence if they do not have representative regional institutions. Thus, in accordance with the model, nationalists take advantage of autonomous elites to mobilize their potential for growth. But unexpectedly, they also foster some level of violence to publicize their claims in the presence of state-wide dependent local politicians if there are no formal regional institutions allowing them either to protest against immigration or to mobilize their potential supporters electorally.

*Table 3.5. Truth table representation of data on causes of nationalist violence*

majority (A)	autonomy (B)	natives (C)	polarization (D)	violence (V)	violent cases
0	0	0	0	?	
0	0	0	1	?	
0	0	1	0	1	2
0	0	1	1	1	1
0	1	1	0	0	
0	1	0	0	0	
0	1	0	1	0	
0	1	1	1	1	2
1	0	0	0	0	2
1	0	0	1	1	1
1	0	1	1	1	1
1	0	1	0	1	1
1	1	0	0	0	1
1	1	0	1	?	
1	1	1	1	?	
1	1	1	0	0	

If we move from general nationalist violence to deadly nationalist violence, we see a different story. Table 3.6 collects the data. Here, the initial equation is:

$$V = abCd + abCD + aBCD \quad (6)$$

In its simplified form, this equation becomes:

$$V = abC + aCD \quad (7)$$

If we replace again letters with names:

*Deadly Violence= (autonomous elites & no autonomy & high immigration) OR (autonomous elites & high immigration & high potential)*

This equation tells us that there are two necessary conditions to observe deadly violence. The first condition is the existence of a large number of immigrants living in the contested region. The second condition is the existence of autonomous local political elites. However, both are not sufficient conditions. They must be combined with (i) absence of formal political autonomy at the regional level or (ii) middle levels of prewar nationalist mobilization. My proposed mechanism leads to resilient violence when paired with high levels of immigrants living in the contested region. In turn, the absence of middle levels of prewar nationalist mobilization may be replaced by the absence of formal autonomy.

It is possible to illustrate these two pathways to violence with real cases of nationalist unrest. On the one hand, the South-Tyrol case fits very well the first violence-prone scenario. Accustomed to belonging to Austria but annexed by Italy in the aftermath of World War I, South Tyroleans suffered the arrival of thousands of Italians from the poorest regions of their new host-state. With a full-fledged nationalist constituency already mobilized during the interwar period, second-wave nationalists tried to protect their culture and minority rights but they confronted regional elites scarcely interested in sharing their powers. Thus, deadly violence was triggered to force the central government to recognize the

German-speaking minority, and had it conceded, the campaign of violence would have lasted longer. Together with the intervention of a third-actor, the state of Austria, violence pushed the Italian government to bargain and concede a large amount of regional autonomy for South-Tyrol (Alcock 1970).

On the other hand, Northern Ireland shows that the absence of political autonomy is not a necessary condition to predict the emergence of a resilient nationalist challenge. During the Irish war of independence, Nationalists were unable to mobilize all Catholics living in the Ulster counties. Successive elections in the North showed that Catholic candidates attracted consistently less votes than expected from sheer numbers of religious affiliation.<sup>32</sup> Therefore, the birth of the IRA as a “defensive” organization against Protestant sectarian attacks became quickly transformed into a new nationalist constituency articulated around violence and secession (English 2003). Still, first sparks of violence do not usually last if governments swiftly read the context and make concessions if needed. In this case, State reliance on Protestant-led regional elites to reestablish the public order barely contributed to stopping violence. Only after seeing the escalation of violence did the state decide to intervene, but to no avail. This intervention only worsened the situation by overreacting repressively to Catholic grievances. All in all, the existence of a pool of potential nationalist recruits in an intensely ethnically-divided setting, and the incapacity of the state to avoid being cheated by local actors about the most efficient reaction against Catholic claims created likewise the conditions for resilient nationalist violence.

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<sup>32</sup> Although not exactly the same, the deep divide between the two main religious groups in the province contributed to create for them the same “sons-of-the-soil” effect that the arrival of large numbers of immigrants produced in other nationalist conflicts. The novelty in this case is that the two communities felt likely to be besieged by members of the other religious group.

Table 3.6. Truth table representation of data on causes of deadly nationalist violence

majority (A)	autonomy (B)	natives (C)	polarization (D)	violence (V)	violent cases
0	0	0	0	?	
0	0	0	1	?	
0	0	1	0	1	2
0	0	1	1	1	1
0	1	1	0	0	
0	1	0	0	0	
0	1	0	1	0	
0	1	1	1	1	2
1	0	0	0	0	
1	0	0	1	0	
1	0	1	1	0	
1	0	1	0	0	
1	1	0	0	0	
1	1	0	1	?	
1	1	1	1	?	
1	1	1	0	0	

### 3.6. Conclusion

In this chapter I have checked empirically if an explanation based on the combination of unresponsive state officers and the potential for nationalist mobilization contributes to improve our understanding of nationalist violence. By taking advantage of a cross-section dataset with 29 nationalist-prone Western European regions (plus Quebec), I have followed a twofold empirical strategy: on the one hand, I have run several statistical analyses to test whether my hypothesis fares well even in the presence of

explanatory competitors. On the other hand, I have presented a more qualitatively-grained Boolean analysis of nationalist violence. These two different approaches have yielded some confirmation for my proposed explanation. Yet, both have also offered potential alternative mechanisms of resilient nationalist violence.

Thus, the combination of autonomous local political elites with nationalists that attained intermediate levels of prewar mobilization seems to generate high chances of nationalist violence, even if we take other relevant causal factors into account. Still, the effect peaks when these two variables are combined with lack of representative regional institutions and the existence of large-scale intra-state immigration. Alternatively, if we apply a Boolean analysis my two key independent variables are also well represented within the set of potential different causal mechanisms leading to violence. But again, it is necessary to recognize that they produce resilient violence only when combined with either absence of formal regional autonomy or large levels of immigration in the region. Furthermore, some causal mechanisms producing violence without the intervention of my key variables have also been discovered and discussed.

In a nutshell, the stylized story I proposed must be reframed in a “sons of the soil” way to match the empirical findings: faced with culturally dangerous large-scale migration, nationalists unable to mobilize their whole constituency will react with violence to raise ethnic consciousness and publicize their claims, given the absence of the necessary institutional resources to shield their group. As a reaction, fearful autonomous regional elites decide to trigger state repression in order to deter regional competition, but this solution emboldens radicals to go forward with more attacks. On the contrary, previous concessions to competitive autonomous regional politicians have a very strong effect on avoiding nationalist violence. Unfortunately, it is not possible with this data structure to find out whether the nature of the regional elite was related to the outcome on violence.

To further investigate this question, I pursue a comparative case-study strategy in the next chapters. From now on I put the focus on a particular set of regions with the intention of carefully analyzing what mechanisms took place in each case and how they worked. The goal was to maximize variation in the dependent variable by looking at cases with different levels of political violence, but that also share some common characteristics. I focus on those crucial factors that my argument underlines as most relevant for explaining resilient nationalist violence. Therefore, the model gives coherence to the comparative chapters, since all of them are articulated around the variation on the key independent variables.

Chapter 4 looks to the Basque Country and Catalonia. These two regions present a very intriguing puzzle: although the two had autonomous elites, lack of formal autonomy during the dictatorship and high levels of immigration – the conditions under which one would expect deadly violence, according to the boolean analysis –, resilient violence only endured in the Basque Country. According to my argument, unresponsiveness seems to be constant, but the potential for nationalist growth was clearly different. Chapter 5 deals with Corsica and Sardinia. This comparison gives me room to investigate how formal autonomy works, since Corsica had autonomous elites without autonomy, whereas Sardinia had the opposite situation – state-wide dependent elites with formal autonomy. Thus, in this comparison, similar levels of potential for nationalist growth were unpaired by a different state reaction to nationalist demands. The final comparison looks at Northern Ireland and Wales (chapter 6). Leaving aside the role of autonomy, the chapter analyzes the relevance of having elites that are responsive to territorial claims, and the potential for nationalist mobilization.

These regions were not only selected because of their theoretical consistency with the argument, but also because of their substantial interest: the Basque, Northern-Irish and Corsican nationalist movements have sheltered the largest armed organizations in Western Europe, and therefore much literature

has been written on them. Catalonia and Wales have attracted also scholarly attention because of the pacific nature of their nationalist movements. Finally, Sardinia is one of the least analyzed nationalist movements in Europe, despite the fact that nationalists were able to take up the government of the region in the early 1980s.

## **CHAPTER 4. THE BASQUE COUNTRY VS. CATALONIA: PRIOR MOBILIZATION AND DIFFERENT RESPONSIVENESS**

### **4.1. Introduction**

In the next three chapters, I present a systematic comparison between regions where nationalist violence has become resilient and regions that have mainly avoided it. Keeping constant several significant factors, I analyze the mechanisms leading to nationalist resilient violence. In this chapter I put the focus on two of the most relevant cases of current nationalist mobilization in the Western world – namely the Basque Country and Catalonia – both within Spain. As it is well-known, violence has been a fundamental component of the nationalist movement that appeared in the late '50s in the Basque Country, whereas it has played no major role in Catalonia.

These two regions constitute an excellent evaluation of the model, since their comparison allows for the controlling of several factors that have turned out to be statistically significant in accounting for nationalist violence – as seen in the previous chapter. More concretely, they share two key characteristics: (i) absence of political autonomy, since the dictatorship abolished the Republic-endorsed autonomous institutions that Catalans and Basques enjoyed during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic and moved all their



powers to provincial and central bodies;<sup>1</sup> and (ii) they underwent a second process of industrialization from the early '50s that attracted thousands of intra-state immigrants with the result of reducing the share of natives to around the 50 per cent of the regional population.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to these two characteristics, the Basque Country and Catalonia also experienced similar levels of post-war state repression.<sup>3</sup> Actually, some sources indicate that repression was heavier in Catalonia than in the Basque Country (Aguilar 1998: 135). Firstly, Catalonia was one of the last Republican regions to surrender and consequently the winning side had more reason to seek revenge. Secondly, many representatives of the Basque catholic clergy endorsed the Basque nationalist side during the war, so that strong Franco's reprisals against this Catholic constituency would have harmed his claims to represent Catholic Spain. Finally, the fact that one relevant branch of the rebellion was made of Basques – mostly from Navarre and Alava –

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<sup>1</sup> On the institutional configuration of the two regions during the Franco dictatorship, see Martí (2006) for the Catalan case and Mansvelt Beck (2005) for the Basque one. Whereas all Catalan provinces suffered the end of formal autonomy, Franco had a different reaction against the Basque Provinces. Thus, Alava and Navarre, solid strongholds of the rebellion, were rewarded with the upholding of their fiscal institutions. On the contrary, Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia lost them, in reaction to their support of the Republican side. The latter were labelled "Traitor Provinces."

<sup>2</sup> The Basque Country and Catalonia are the only regions that became industrialized in Spain (together with Asturias) before the Franco dictatorship, and consequently the only ones with a large number of working-class employees – mainly non-native. This fact can explain why the notable-based representative system implanted during the "Restauración" collapsed first in Catalonia and – in a lower way - in the Basque Country. See Delgado (2002) for an excellent account of the decay of vote-buying in the face of increasing nationalist competition in a Basque town, Bermeo.

<sup>3</sup> See Benet (1995) on the post-war repression in Catalonia and Torrealdai (1998) on the Basque case.

contributed to the good local knowledge on the potential enemies to be purged by the winning army. In any case, and leaving aside the discussion of the post-war death toll, it is clear that both regions suffered equally from a cultural standpoint: their languages were run out of the public sphere and its teaching was forbidden within the educational system.

On the other hand, Catalonia and the Basque Country also differ in four significant factors that may contribute to explain the different outcome on violence: (i) despite the fact that Catalonia and the Basque Country have long been two of the most affluent regions within the country, the first makes up 15 per cent of the country in population (and territory) terms, whereas the second represents a three times lower 5 per cent; (ii) the dynamics of nationalist mobilization have followed different patterns in the two regions, as I will show extensively below; (iii) the availability of ethnic resources was not the same in the two regions: while almost all Catalan natives –and also some immigrants- still spoke Catalan in the end of the Spanish Civil War, only half of Basque natives maintained fluency in their regional language;<sup>4</sup> and (iv) Basque regional elites during the Franco years remained staunchly anti-nationalist, whereas their Catalan counterparts tried to hedge with the central authorities by playing somehow the regionalist card.

In brief, the comparison between the Basque Country and Catalonia is worth pursuing. Despite the fact that Catalan nationalism was stronger during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic, and the war effort and its consequences were larger in Catalonia, nationalist branches triggering violence only became consolidated in the Basque Country. As this puzzle has caught the attention of a relevant number of scholars, I first address in the chapter this production and check its results. I show that most of the proposed hypotheses make sense but fail when confronted with the empirical record. After that, I present quantitative as well as qualitative evidence showing that only an explanation based on

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<sup>4</sup> See Joan *et al.* (1994) for data on Catalan fluency during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic and Tejerina (1992) for data on Basque fluency.

pre-war nationalist mobilization as well as the level of state responsiveness to second-wave nationalists tackles conveniently the variation in the outcome of violence between the Basque Country and Catalonia.

#### **4.2. The origins of Basque and Catalan nationalism: A short overview**

The territorial structure of Spain has been consistently contested from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by Catalan and Basque nationalists.<sup>5</sup> On the one hand, the last Carlist uprising against the Liberal monarchy ended in 1876 with defeat and the loss of Basque fueros.<sup>6</sup> Instead of maintaining the cooperation with the

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<sup>5</sup> As it is not my intention to describe in-depth the history of these two nationalist movements, I refer the interested reader to Marfany (1995) and Ucelay da Cal (1982) on the origins of Catalanism, and Elorza (1978), Jauregui (1979), De Pablo *et al.* (1999) and Solószabal (1975) on the origins of Basque nationalism. Diez Medrano (1995) and Linz (1973) offer general overviews on these two cases.

<sup>6</sup> The Carlist movement receives its name from the 19<sup>th</sup> century challenger of the Spanish Kingdom, Carlos de Borbón, brother of Fernando VII (king of Spain from 1808 to 1833). Fernando VII died without a son but with a daughter. As the prohibition of naming female successors was in place, Fernando VII tried in his last years of life to change the law to make his daughter legitimate heir of the crown. Traditionalists and defenders of the Absolutist Regime defied that decision after Fernando VII's death by backing Carlos' claims to taking over throne. That was the starting point of the 1<sup>st</sup> Carlist War (1833-1839). There would be two additional Carlist wars during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, all of them lost by the Carlist faction. Despite those defeats, Carlism remained a strong ideology embraced by low nobles, peasants and the local clergy who rejected any liberal concession. Its main hotbed was the Basque Country, where anti-liberalism coexisted with defence of the Traditional Laws of Autonomy (but in no case they defended independence). On the influence of the Carlist movement in the Basque Provinces, see Real (1985) and Ugarte (1998).

Spanish legitimist branches, first Basque nationalists came to the conclusion that separation from Spain was the best way to preserve the Basque race and culture. Deeply anti-liberal, those petit-bourgeoisie Basques thought that the only safeguard of Basque Catholicism against Spanish assimilation was secession. However, neither Basque industrialists nor the mainly immigrant working class rallied with them: the former had strong economic interests in the Spanish territory, whereas the latter remained alien to the race-based nationalist discourse. The result was a considerable incapacity of Basque nationalists to grow electorally beyond Bilbao and its surrounding areas. The Carlists and the two majoritarian state-wide parties controlled most of the offices in the Basque territories.

On the other hand, the Spanish loss of its last overseas possessions – especially Cuba – pushed Catalan industrialists to call for devolution as a way to better defend their economic interests. This move overlapped with the renaissance of Catalan culture fostered by middle-class natives. The combination of bourgeoisie leadership with cultural activism proved successful to build a well-rooted pro-autonomy constituency. Even though the working class stood initially aside the movement, mobilized by pro-Spanish republicans (so-called Radicals), autonomists were able to soon get the Mancomunitat in 1914 – an institution with some powers to coordinate the provincial governments.

Thus, when General Primo de Rivera suspended the constitution and took over power with the king's approval in 1923, Catalan nationalism had already had experience of government, whereas Basque nationalists were still looking for a political strategy. They remained divided between the purists' strategy – uncompromising secession – and the temporizers' strategy – autonomy as a partial step towards independence. In fact, the short control of the provincial government of Bizkaia in 1919 merely strengthened the internal feud, solved with the split of the party in 1923 between the moderate sector –called the *Comuni3n* – and the radical sector – holder of the official name (*de la Granja et al.* 1999).

After the joint collapse of the dictatorship and the crown in 1931, the arrival of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic opened up avenues for nationalist claiming. In the aftermath of the King's abdication, Catalan nationalists moved quickly to establish a Regional Government (*Generalitat*) with autonomous powers endorsed by the Madrid republican provisional government. Basque nationalists, on the contrary, had neither legitimacy<sup>7</sup> nor enough electoral support to follow suit. The quick reunification of the two branches of the PNV favoured a good electoral showing in 1931, but its attempt to pass a pro-Church statute of autonomy for the four Basque Provinces in coalition with the Carlists was rejected in Madrid under allegations of non-constitutionality. Further attempts without Carlist support to gain autonomy for Alava, Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia also failed in the State Parliament. Only in 1936, after the outbreak of the Civil War, were Basque nationalists rewarded with the first Basque statute of autonomy in exchange for their loyalty to the Republican government. By that time, Basque jurisdiction was limited to the provinces of Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa, which passed to Franco's hands in less than a year. On the contrary, the Catalan government was in place until the end of the war, even if the central government held back some of its powers.

Finally, Francoist repression was harsh in both "separatist" regions. Although there were clandestine nationalist organizations theorizing about the use of the armed fight to bring down the dictatorship since the early '60s, it was only in the Basque Country where a clandestine nationalist organization became resilient. After breaking its ties with the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV), ETA began a deadly campaign against the Spanish state to achieve secession. In Catalonia nationalists remained mainly peaceful. There were some attempts to mimic the Basque

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<sup>7</sup> Some months before the decay of the Primo de Rivera's regime, the main state-wide republican parties together with Catalan nationalists met in San Sebastian to plan the set up of a Republican regime in Spain. Although the meetings were held in the Basque Country, no relevant Basque nationalist party took part.

experience but without success. If Catalan nationalism was stronger during the democratic years of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic, why is it that Basque nationalists were more willing to take up arms against the state? In the next section, I proceed to discuss several hypotheses to account for this variation.

#### **4.3. Hypotheses for a puzzle: Why did violence break out in the Basque Country but not in Catalonia?**

Scholars have offered two major sets of hypotheses to try to explain violence in the Basque Country. On the one hand, nationalist violence has been considered as a consequence of the degree of internal competition within the regional polity. There are three different ways to operationalize this. Firstly, the number of competitors in the market to represent regional citizens' demands may be very relevant to account for the emergence of a new contender. Secondly, the degree of internal cohesion of the political movement could also be an important factor to explain the emergence of violence. And thirdly, the class composition of the nationalist movement could also contribute to clarify the use of violence, since not all socioeconomic groups have the same opportunity cost to jump into violence. Hence, who controls the organization could say something on the strategies it follows.

On the other hand, other scholars have emphasised the role cultural institutions play in the emergence of nationalist violence. Thus, if nationalists' main potential group of support does not have strong ethnic identifiers that secure a winning coalition, they could cover this weakness with violence as a mobilizational device. Besides, if there is such an ethnic identifier, but potential supporters are not backing the movement, nationalists could trigger violence to attract government's repression onto the potential constituency with the result of tipping them towards nationalism. Let's now see more in-detail the two sets of hypotheses.

Several scholars have used the “internal competition” hypothesis to explain the Basque case. This is the case of Diez Medrano, who wrote in 1995 one of the most influential analyses of the differences between Basque nationalism and Catalan nationalism. By emphasising regional economic structures, he found the roots of Basque nationalism in a coalition of anti-modernisation enshrining social groups, whereas the roots of Catalan nationalism lay in a coalition of upper-middle social groups interested in extracting political concessions from the centre in order to defend their predominant positions in economic markets.

Diez-Medrano also tries to explain why nationalist violence took off in the Basque Country but not in Catalonia. As his hypothesis goes, whenever radicals face a crowded market, their chances of capturing previously non-mobilized individuals through the recourse to violence will be small. Therefore, the larger the number of oppositional groups, the lower the space for those willing to use violence. Basque nationalism became violent because the level of internal competition within the Basque oppositional field was lower than the Catalan one. In Diez-Medrano’s account, while ETA did not find any serious competitor in the market of anti-regime opposition, similar organizations in Catalonia did have to cope with a more heterogeneous and fragmented scenario of oppositional groups (unions, parties, neighbourhood associations). Unfortunately, the empirical record does not fit well Diez-Medrano’s expectations. On the one hand, the oppositional market in the Basque Country was not so empty. On the other hand, the assumption of a crowded market in Catalonia can be also refuted.

During the 1950s, the future members of ETA tried to change the oppositional path the old PNV had chosen, which was based on the defense of the legal all-party Basque government in exile and the expectation that the end of the dictatorship would involve the commitment of the Spanish political forces to bring the Basque autonomy into life immediately. This strategy of “non-violent resistance” was complemented with an active role within the tissue

of local associations and with the intergenerational transmission of nationalist values within the Basque families (De Pablo, Mees and Rodríguez 2001: 245-52). Thus, the creation of ETA was not prompted by the lack of opposition but by the demand of a new strategy against the dictatorship. During the late 1960s, ETA contributed to move the booming labor movement towards adopting nationalist claims –such as the right of self-determination and the defense of the Basque autonomy (Ibarra and García 1993). This adoption, which happened around 1967 –consequently, before the great repression of 1968 that so much benefitted ETA recruitment- increased left-wing competition and broadened the oppositional market with several non-violent ETA schisms that favored class politics over national issues (Garmendia 1996; Sullivan 1988; Unzueta 1988). Far from being empty, the boom of ETA in the early 1970s took place in a quite flourishing oppositional environment.

In Catalonia, in its turn, the strong 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic Catalan nationalist parties had been run out of business by the early 1960s and there was no replacement around (Pujol 2008; Surroca 2006). The disbandment of these parties contrasts with the permanence of the PNV, better structured inside and abroad, as the same Pujol recognized: “El catalanismo, tal y como yo lo concebía, aplazaba excesivamente la decisión de organizarse políticamente. Se podría decir que nos habíamos entretenido demasiado construyendo el país (...) Los partidos que ya existían no me servían. En el País Vasco hubo una presencia constante del gobierno exiliado y del nacionalismo representado por el PNV. Aquí, no. Ya me he referido a la nula influencia del gobierno de la Generalitat y del exilio político en general. En el interior, el Front Nacional tampoco tenía mucho peso. ERC era casi inexistente en los años setenta. Unió Democràtica era débil, encerrada en sí misma y demasiado confesional. No me podía acoger a los partidos de izquierda por convicción” (Pujol 2008: 251). Although left-wing organizations led the opposition to the regime, their nationalist claims were actually quite moderate –recovery of the 1932 Statute of Autonomy and amnesty for political prisoners. Thus, a radical



nationalist organization such as ETA could have found a niche to grow if all that matters were the number of rivals, more so if we consider that the main nationalist organization during the 1960s, the FNC, had already positively theorized about the use of political violence against the dictatorship (Surroca 2006: 65). In sum, Díez-Medrano's argument cannot convincingly account for the Basque-Catalan comparison.

In his prominent "Containing Nationalism", Michael Hechter (2000) also analyzes the likelihood of observing violence in nationalist settings. Although he does not deal explicitly with the two cases under analysis in this chapter, it is worth testing whether his hypothesis has some explanatory power with them. By building on a similar "internal competition" logic, Hechter considers state capacity (weak vs. strong states) and the level of solidarity within the ethnic group (internal fragmentation vs. cohesion) as the most relevant factors to account for nationalist violence. According to him, when weakly solidary nationalist organizations face strong states, the emergence of violence can be expected but with low chances of resilience (since the capable state will crush the rebellion easily). In turn, highly solidary nationalist movements facing weak states will have big chances of promoting violence with escalation. By applying these predictions to our case, we take advantage of knowing the outcomes beforehand to track backwards the origins of violence.

On the one hand, we should expect a higher internal cohesion in the Basque nationalist movement than in the Catalan one if the Francoist regime is considered as a weak state, since the outcome was "resilient terrorism" in the former rather than in the latter. On the other hand, if we consider the Francoist regime as a strong one, none of Hechter's predictions would work because of the existence of persistent terrorism.

Yet, there is an additional possibility. We can consider the Franco regime as weak in the Basque Country and strong in Catalonia. If *uneven* state capacity is combined with differential patterns of nationalist internal cohesion, there is another way of explaining the actual outcome: a weak state in the Basque Country

was unable to cope with a tough challenge promoted by internally-cohesive nationalists while a strong state in Catalonia was able to deal efficiently with the nationalist movement regardless of its internal characteristics.

There is a major problem with this explanation: nobody would assert that Basque nationalists during the '60's were more internally-cohesive than their Catalan counterparts. As seen above, Basques were much more divided during the Civil War between nationalists and Franco supporters (Carlists) than Catalans. And the same ETA is born as a splinter from the PNV, whose rejection of ETA methods (armed fight) and ideology (revolutionary secessionism) did little to unite the movement internally (Álvarez 1997; Garmendia 1996; Sullivan 1988). Indeed, there are good reasons to think that it was Basque nationalist weakness rather than its strength that pushed ETA founders to activate violence against the regime, as discussed below. Additionally, Hechter does not suggest that the same state can have "differential" capacity within its regional territories (Hechter 2000). In brief, Hechter's explanation of nationalist violence would not be able to deal with our comparison.

Waldmann's account of Basque violence also relies somehow on the logic of internal competition (1997). He offered one of the first comparative studies on the field of nationalist terrorism, but with the caveat that he mainly looked at movements with violence (the PIRA, ETA and the FLQ).<sup>8</sup> His explanation points to the role that middle-classes play inside nationalist movements. According to him, as long as middle-classes can impose their economic-constrained preferences by working as intermediates (brokers) between lower classes and the nationalist intelligentsia, working-class nationalists will fail to take the lead and foster violence to get state concessions. However, when they disappear and/or refuse to carry out this job, they are overwhelmed by radicals imposing

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<sup>8</sup> He uses Catalonia and sometimes Quebec as counterexamples to prove the emergence of violence. But his use of these cases is mostly anecdotal and unsystematic.

their preferences. If radicals think that the survival of the ethnic group is strongly endangered by the state, violence will become resilient.

Thus, the reason why Northern Ireland and the Basque Country – compared to Catalonia and Quebec – experienced large episodes of nationalist violence lies in the transformation of Northern-Irish and Basque nationalist movements in working-class strongholds beyond the control of middle-class groups. This transformation is enforced by the existence of state repression that jeopardizes the possibilities of survival of the minority group. Radicals foster violence and the state reacts with repression, which feeds further violence. On the contrary, Catalonia, according to Waldmann, experienced lower levels of post-war repression, which contributed to the maintenance of the nationalist movement under middle-class leadership.

The analysis of nationalist mobilization as a multi-stage process where a number of potentially-nationalist socioeconomic groups pursue similar goals but with different strategies is worth taking. However, Waldmann's empirical proofs fail. To begin with, the author does not show convincing data on the working-class composition of Northern-Irish and Basque violent organizations.<sup>9</sup> But if this criticism is left aside, it still remains unclear why middle-classes were overrun by radicals only in the Basque Country, given the fact that its economic structure mostly mimicked that of Catalonia. The PNV had been led by middle-class politicians during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic, and so had the ERC in Catalonia. All formerly legal nationalist parties became mainly

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<sup>9</sup> Although the argument can work reasonably well for the Northern-Irish case (as we will see in Chapter 6), it is more dubious whether ETA recruits came overwhelmingly from working-class strongholds, at least not from unskilled blue-collar jobs. ETA during the dictatorship recruited mainly students and members of the lower middle class (Clark 1984; Unzueta 1988). As for the democratic period, the majority of activists had clerical or skilled jobs, with only around 15 percent of unskilled blue-collar workers (Domínguez-Iribarren 1998a: 47; Reinares 2001: 199).

inactive and dormant during the first two decades of the dictatorship. Yet, radicals only took over in the Basque Country. State repression could explain this outcome. But most descriptions of post-war repression identify similar patterns in both regions. Also repression in the early '60s had been eased in the two regions, because of the better economic opportunities and the regime interest in cleaning its international image (Juaristi 1997; Martí 2000).

The second main hypothesis relates the emergence of violence with the different level of ethnic resources that Basque and Catalan nationalists could use in their quest for devolution. Thus, when ethnic resources – mainly, language – are not as broadly owned as to organize a winning constituency, nationalists recur to violence to prompt mobilization through either increasing the cost of reneging from nationalist membership (Laitin) or creating a new base of support consistent in joining violent organizations (Conversi).

Laitin's work on Basque terrorism cautions us against relying blindly on path dependency. Despite the fact that Catalan nationalism was stronger and more open to violence during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic,<sup>10</sup> Catalan nationalist violence from the '60s remained feeble, compared to ETA violence. By looking at the micro-motives that moved violence forward in the Basque Country but not in Catalonia, Laitin points out three basic mechanisms.

First, he recurs to tipping games to account for the goals of violence. If radicals overvalue some ethnic resource that is actually undervalued by a relevant section of coethnics, radicals could force the latter to increase the added value of the resource by punishing its non-use. Secondly, the existence of a dense *rural*

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<sup>10</sup> Despite the well-known Basque nationalist taste for inflammatory proclaims until the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic (Elorza 1978), the party remained peaceful. On the contrary, Catalan nationalists launched some controversial violent challenges – such as the planned invasion of Catalonia from France during the Primo de Rivera's dictatorship and the Catalan government-backed coup against the Madrid government in 1934 (Poblet 1976: 201-224; Ucelay da Cal 1979).

*structure* that facilitates the development of networks of support around the terrorist organization is a necessary condition to resilient violence. Third, some sustaining mechanisms – such as the tyranny of sunk costs and the influence of small victories – may contribute to the maintenance of violence in the long-run.

Needless to say, Laitin categorizes the Basque Country as a region with: (i) more chances of holding a tipping game around the contested topic of the Basque language (which is spoken only for half of Basque natives); (ii) higher levels of dense rural structures; and (iii) with an abundance of sustaining mechanisms for the continuation of violence. For Laitin, ETA nationalists were deeply concerned with the fate of Basque language. Absent institutional incentives to encourage coethnics to recover the language, radicals tried to reverse its decline by increasing the cost of defection through violence. Then, ETA would have targeted those social groups mocking the language. This initial violence became resilient when the other mechanisms started to work. On the contrary, the Catalan language was widely spoken and therefore violence could not make any contribution to its spread.

Unfortunately, this account of violence fails in several respects. First, there is no definitive evidence showing that the rural structure of the Basque Country is much thicker than that of Catalonia and consequently, more likely to sustain a terrorist organization.<sup>11</sup> Second, even if there is no doubt about the importance of Basque language for radicals in the Basque Country, Laitin misses the point by upholding his tipping game on terrorist pressures on native non-Basque speakers. This never happened, since ETA never targeted non-speakers and it did not send explicit messages against them either (Domínguez Iribarren

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<sup>11</sup> Actually, measures of rough terrain for the two regions are quite close. Also the share of people living in towns with less than 20,000 inhabitants is not very different (37 percent of Basques vs. 29 percent of Catalans in the early '80s), as it is the share of people living in the provincial capitals (38 percent of Basque people lived in the three provincial cities in 1980, compared to 35 percent of Catalans in the four provincial cities in 1981).

1998a; Clark 1984). Besides, Laitin's explanation does not seem to fit well the empirical record about language learning during the last two decades in the Basque Country (Mansvelt Beck and Markusse 2008).

Finally, Conversi develops a similar argument (1997; 1999) but he elaborates better the mechanisms leading to violence. Conversi envisages two different pathways of nationalist political mobilization: culture or violence (Conversi 1997: p.255). If nationalists can take advantage of ethnic resources that all members of the potential constituency own, then they will pursue the cultural path, mobilizing through the establishment of a network of socio-political associations around the main ethnic trait – normally, language.

On the contrary, when nationalists cannot count on a particular ethnic resource that identifies the whole potential community, they will resort to violence in order to confront directly the state and therefore build a new “ethnic boundary” that includes all coethnics supporting the challenge – regardless of whether they may not qualify for membership because of absence of other relevant ethnic traits (such as language knowledge). Thus, violence stops cultural assimilation by raising ethnic consciousness, draws new ethnic boundaries (support vs. rejection of violence) and forces people to take sides (for vs. against the aims of those using violence). However, this mechanism only works when the state reacts with harsh repression against nationalist violence.

Conversi's account of the emergence of violence in the Basque Country goes in three steps. Firstly, he observes that post-war “repression was blind and unable to distinguish nuances” in the Basque Country (p. 225). The fact that there was no external trait – such as language – that allowed Francoists to screen nationalists from non-nationalists forced them to repress randomly. In the Catalan case, language worked as a signal for the victors, and it facilitated a less tough repression.

Secondly, the catastrophic situation of the Basque language – spoken by barely 25 per cent of Basques in 1970 – pushed cultural activists to rally around the language issue with a focus on

violence to awaken consciousness.<sup>12</sup> On the contrary, Catalan nationalists had a better time during the Francoist years since they could conceal themselves behind the strength of the cultural movement. Obviously, Basque nationalists could not rely on this movement, since it had been hitherto inexistent.

And finally, state indiscriminate repression contributed to the creation and reinforcement of a new Basque nationalist identity that went beyond language knowledge, since participation in clandestine armed organizations became a sufficient condition on its own to acquire ethnic membership. This voluntaristic definition of membership replaced the former race-based definition, but it was still unable to compete with the “civic” version of ethnic membership that the Catalan nationalist movement had created around the knowledge of the Catalan language.

This explanation is sensible. State repression, the uneven distribution of language knowledge and the creation of voluntaristic definitions of membership seem likewise to have played a role in accounting for Basque violence. However, I contend that the way in which Conversi presents his mechanisms does not match the empirical record. To repeat again the point, it is doubtful to argue that post-war repression was tougher in the Basque Country. If there are reasons to suspect a differential treatment, we should expect more random violence in Catalonia, since the Basque Country was more deeply internally divided between nationalists and Franco-backing Carlists. These internal divisions could have contributed to produce a more selective type of repression because of better information on targets (Kalyvas 2006). On the other hand, Catalonia was under Republican control until the end of the war, and that fact drained the possibilities of a pro-Franco faction inside its territory.

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<sup>12</sup> Payne (1971; 1975) also contends that when the nationalist movement is unable to make electoral inroads, then they may move towards fanaticism – violence – to extract concessions from the central government. On the other hand, stronger nationalist movements tend to contemporize and bargain, since they can only lose from an open confrontation with the state.

Secondly, there is some literature showing that Basque culture was also the safe shelter for nationalists (Alvarez 1997; Gurrutxaga 1985: 255-270; Lamikiz 2005; Pérez-Agote 2008: Ch. 4). Mountain groups, language and dance associations, friends' societal networks (*cuadrillas*) all contributed to the maintenance of the nationalist spirit during the Franco years. Indeed, it seems that before the emergence of ETA, the Basque language was less politicized than Catalan, since it had not been the monopoly of Basque nationalists before the war.<sup>13</sup> Quite the opposite, Catalan and Catalanism were inextricably linked from the Republic years (Canales 2006: 320-21).

Thirdly, in his discussion of the ETA's internal debates about the constituency on which the organization should focus for mobilizational purposes, Conversi seems to support the idea that ETA was more interested in the growing immigrant group, given the limited capacity of the Basque-speaking constituency. This internal tension was punctuated by several splits and internal takeovers, most of them characterised by Marxist views (Sullivan 1988; Garmendia 1996). However, the ETA that carried out most of the killings claimed openly the defence of the Basque language at the expense of reducing the socioeconomic components of the fight.<sup>14</sup> And this was the winning discourse for ETA, and the one

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<sup>13</sup> Contrary to what is commonly thought, school teachers in the Basque Country were from Basque origin. Thus, as late as 1969, 53 percent of teachers had been born in the region, a figure resembling the regional average of natives. 64 percent of teachers in rural schools spoke Basque (and 22 percent in cities), which means that there was no scarcity of local candidates for the educational system (Iztueta 1981: 310-12). In turn, the Academy of the Basque Language – Euskaltzaindia – was saved from prohibition because of the traditionalist leanings of many researchers of the language. However, the association remained low-profile to avoid being involved in politics (Álvarez 1997).

<sup>14</sup> That was even clearer after the last split of ETA in 1974. The new ETA-pm thought that the armed struggle had to be coordinated with the rest of fronts: the socioeconomic and the cultural ones. The remaining ETA-m thought that any legal effort had to be subordinated to the armed



that sustained its fight with resources (recruits, legitimacy and funds). It is not that ETA forced non-Basque coethnics to learn the language (as Laitin maintains), but that ETA found its stronghold in Basque-speaking-rich towns.<sup>15</sup>

Thus, Conversi overlooks the fact that few immigrants became radical nationalists.<sup>16</sup> On the contrary, part of this constituency was successfully mobilized by moderate nationalists in the aftermath of the dictatorship because they slowed down linguistic claims at the expense of emphasising more civic definitions of membership.<sup>17</sup> And, as a corollary, Conversi cannot account for the differential success of second-wave Basque nationalists in towns of Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa that otherwise share similar

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struggle and its goal of independence. It comes out that the last strategy was more successful in the long-run (Sánchez-Cuenca 2001).

<sup>15</sup> Statistical analyses of the voting patterns of the ETA-backed political party, HB, show that its votes come overwhelmingly from towns where the Basque language is broadly spoken (Mansvelt Beck 2005).

<sup>16</sup> It is usually argued that the existence of immigrants within the rank-and-file of the terrorist organization proves its openness to the immigrant constituency. However, all statistical data so far show an over-representation of Basque natives in ETA membership (Clark 1984; Domínguez-Iribarren 1998a; Reinares 2001). According to Reinares, up to 61 percent of ETA recruits between 1970 and 1977 had two Basque surnames (Reinares 2001: 198). This figure went slightly down during the '80s and '90s, but it was never below 40 percent, despite the fact that Basques with two surnames comprised 21.5 percent of the Basque population in 1991. With other words, although immigrants (those without Basque surnames regardless of whether they were born in the Basque Country or not) made up 54.1 percent of the population living in the Basque Country in 1991, they comprised only 23.1 percent of ETA activists on average between 1970 and 1995 (see Aranda 1998 for the data on Basque surnames).

<sup>17</sup> Indeed, there is some evidence to doubt that the Catalan nationalism is more civic than the Basque one. De la Calle and Miley (2008) show that Basque nationalism has been more successful in assimilating immigrants and their offspring into the nationalist milieu than Catalan nationalism.

ecological conditions. Whereas Bizkaia had been fully mobilised during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic for the PNV (first-wave nationalists), Gipuzkoa largely remained the hotbed for the Carlist organizations. Therefore, the “cultural constituency” ETA longed to mobilize only became real in those Basque-speaking towns that had resisted the PNV electoral surge during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic.

#### **4.4. An alternative explanation: Pre-war mobilization and dictatorship responsiveness**

In the previous section, I discussed several hypotheses that tried to explain why nationalist violence only emerged in the Basque Country and not in Catalonia. I have shown that most of these hypotheses have some explanatory power, but they also fail in some respects. The use of violence as a technique to mobilize new constituencies and the relevance of state repression appear likewise in almost any explanation. I also consider these two variables, but I propose a different mechanism that comes from the model presented in chapter 2. In this final section, I draw on several sources of empirical evidence to test the argument.

According to my model, violence should break out when local political elites that are for the most part dependent on the status quo face nationalist challenges with high chances of growth. If this is so, local political elites will have incentives to reject the challenge and force the government to repress it and deter competition. From the nationalist standpoint, violence rises when nationalists with chances of capturing new constituencies face local elites whose grip on power relies on the maintenance of the political status quo. If these local elites are intensely opposed to conceding and state decision makers follow their advice, violence is set to spiral. Local elites’ autonomy incapacitates the state from reacting efficiently and this feeds nationalist violence through repression.

Adapted to the Basque-Catalan comparison, second-wave Basque nationalists had more chance of capturing new

constituencies, since their electoral strength during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic was substantially lower than the Catalan one. At the same time, local power offices were broadly held by idiosyncratic groups in each region: the Carlists and the Monarchists<sup>18</sup> in the Basque Country, and the former Catalan regionalists in Catalonia. The difference is that whereas Catalan regionalists contributed to the cultivation of the Catalan culture and gave shelter to oppositional activities against the dictatorship, Basque local elites remained fiercely anti-nationalist in Bizkaia, and very quickly disappointed with the regime in Gipuzkoa. The dictatorship barely responded to the nationalist demands coming from these two regions, but whereas it purported to destroy nationalism in the Basque Country, it tried to contain it in Catalonia.

Violence broke out in the Basque Country because (i) second-wave nationalists could still mount a strong challenge based on the mobilization of Basque-speaking constituencies fearful of the extinction of the language and (ii) they faced local institutions whose holders had no chance of competing in an open market against nationalism. Gipuzkoan Carlists tried to build a regionalist platform, but they did not find support from their fellow Bizkaian elites in the undertaking. With a shrinking constituency, Carlists and Monarquists alike gave a free hand for the government to repress ferociously any nationalist dissidence in the expectation that it would have no chance of recovery. The result was just the opposite. In Catalonia, nationalism had been able to mobilize its whole constituency during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic and consequently, second-wave early-risers had difficulty in finding fresh nationalist pockets. Besides, regionalist-prone local politicians behaved more

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<sup>18</sup> Whereas the Carlist movement made up the main rival of socialists and nationalists in Gipuzkoa, Alava and Navarre, pro-monarchy politicians sponsored by the upper bourgeoisie were strong in the remaining province of Bizkaia. With strong ties to the deposed king, Alfonso XIII, the Basque financial and industrial oligarchy, the so-called *Neguri* elite, supported the coup to avoid the social chaos enraging the Republic but remained aloof from the political centres of power, basically concentrated on defending their businesses (Morán 2003).

carefully with regards to clandestine nationalism and that made the state react with much more caution.

In what follows, I analyse separately the two parts of the argument. I firstly show data that demonstrate the differential strength of the nationalist parties during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic and after the decay of the dictatorship. These data confirm that nationalists were much more able to mobilize their potential constituencies in Catalonia than in the Basque Country, where the PNV found a resistant rival within the fringes of marginal political forces – such as the Carlist movement in Gipuzkoa and the Neguri elite in Bizkaia. But at the same time, the data make clear that the gap had mostly disappeared by 1980 due to the emergence of a new nationalist competitor (ETA). Secondly, I use qualitative evidence to illustrate that the state reaction against second-wave nationalists was different in the two regions. Whereas security forces and courts worked hard to punish nationalist activities in the Basque Country, some leniency was found in Catalonia, where formerly-regionalist catholic politicians intermediated to soften sentences and avoid escalation.

#### *4.4.1. Levels of pre-war nationalist mobilization*

In order to better understand patterns of nationalist mobilization, we need go back to the collapse of the Monarchy in Spain, after the Primo de Rivera dictatorship (1923-1930). This dictatorship had had three major goals: to deter nationalist mobilization, to stop the class war taking place in Barcelona, and to solve the colonial problem in North Africa (González-Calleja 2005). When it was obvious that the regime was not going to work out any of them, it gave way to fresh elections for municipal councils. The broad victory of the Republican and nationalist candidates in the main cities of the country forced the King into exile. The power vacuum was filled with the proclamation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic, first in Eibar (a Basque industrial town where the socialist party was strong) and later everywhere.

In Catalonia, nationalists moved swiftly to declare the Catalan Republic within the so-called Federal Iberian Republic hours before the latter being proclaimed in the capital of the country. Nationalists and Republicans were also joined by the leaders of the old regionalist party (La Lliga), since its members realised that they would have few opportunities to compete against the new system because of their discredit for collaborating with the monarchy. The association between regionalists and nationalists built a strong challenge that the nascent regime stopped basically by making concessions. The bargaining process to devolve power to Catalonia was immediately initiated, and both nationalists (Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya – ERC) and regionalists (Lliga Catalana) took over all the relevant offices and seats in the autonomous institutions. Thus, Catalan nationalists were able to catch their potential constituency during the Spanish 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic, when all Catalan MPs in Madrid and Barcelona came from the two main Catalanist parties (Ucelay da Cal 1982).<sup>19</sup> The ERC was a large middle-class-based party led by professionals and the petit-bourgeoisie (Poblet 1976; Ucelay da Cal 1982),<sup>20</sup> whereas the Lliga attracted rural owners and the well-off (De Riquer 1977; Molas 1972). This party system exceptionality was no doubt related to the fact that Catalonia made up the only industrial society in the Spain of the 30s.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> The first regional election to the Parliament of Catalonia was held in 1932. ERC won an overwhelming lead of 40 seats ahead of the second party, the Lliga (56 against 16 seats). Six minor autonomist parties collected the remaining 13 seats.

<sup>20</sup> The working-class constituencies in Catalonia remained staunchly anarchist until the end of the Civil War. As they renounced to create party structures, they backed ERC candidates in exchange for institutional responsiveness for their claims (Ucelay da Cal 1982).

<sup>21</sup> The autonomy of the Catalan party system can be supported with two additional examples. Firstly, state-wide parties decided to imitate the two-party Catalan model for the highly polarized 1936 elections. Thus, the average citizen had to choose between two coalitions backed by state-wide parties (the Popular Front and the Counterrevolutionary Coalition).

In the Basque Country, the republican political scenario remained much more fragmented. Basque society was broadly divided in three roughly equally-sized groups: anti-Republicans (with Carlists composing the largest plurality), nationalists (PNV) and Republicans (with the state-wide PSOE as the largest single party). The Carlist movement, deeply catholic, Spanish nationalist and authoritarian, viewed the new regime with suspicion, since it heralded all the “modern evils” that the Carlists combated. Carlist support came mainly from agriculture-based small towns with no industry where the social influence of the Catholic Church was overwhelming (Real 1985; Ugarte 1998). Basque nationalists were in the same position regarding Catholicism and liberalism. Yet, they rejected the link between Spain and the Basque Provinces. Nationalist support came from the main cities and overall, from Bilbao and its surroundings – where there was a combination of Basque-speaking rural towns with some level of industry (De la Granja 2007: Ch. 7). At the same time, Carlists and nationalists competed for those rural Basque-speaking towns with small industry.<sup>22</sup> Finally, republicans based their strength on the large

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The interesting thing is that they decided not to race in Catalonia: the left did not field candidates against the ERC, and the right decided to back the Front d’Orde, coalition whose main candidates came from the Lliga. Secondly, during the Civil War the ERC’s position in power became weaker because of the communist claims to control the government with the intention of improving the war coordination between the allied countries and the republican institutions. The Communist party created a regional cell called the PSUC with full autonomy from the Madrid branch (the PCE), and called for the maintenance of regional institutions (Ucelay da Cal 1982).

<sup>22</sup> Even if there is no doubt that he exaggerates the point, the leader of the Lliga Catalana, Francesc Cambó, underlined this competition for similar electoral niches when he wrote: “Aleshores, l’argumentació que es dedueix d’aquest número primer, és molt forta, no sols perquè la gran majoria dels països bascos han estat sempre al costat dels nacionals, sinó pel fet, que convé senyalar, de que és a Biscaya, i principalment a Bilbao, on menys es conserva l’esperit basc, fins al punt que la llengua basca no la saben parlar ni el nacionalistas. En canvi a Navarra i a Guipúzcoa, que

cities. More concretely, socialists relied on pockets of working-class immigrants, who favoured class politics over nationalist issues (Eguiguren 1994).

In the face of this division, nationalists had a more difficult task in trying to achieve decentralized institutions. Initially, they fielded candidates together with the Carlists in the four Basque Provinces for the 1931 Constitutional election.<sup>23</sup> Carlists backed nationalist demands on the devolution issue in exchange for support in their fight against the new openly anti-Catholic electoral majority sitting in Congress. Their joint program basically aimed at obtaining a statute of autonomy that would give the Basque government a free hand on religious matters. But once approved the new secular Constitution, the joint Carlist-PNV project became anti-constitutional, and it did not assemble a majority of the votes in Congress.

This fact forced the PNV to move towards the socialists. A new project of statute crafted by the socialist MP Indalecio Prieto had better chances of passing, but the republican government collapsed in Madrid and the project still had to wait until 1936. In the meantime, the Carlists had abandoned the project, since this had lost the chapter that guaranteed the control of religious affairs for the autonomous government. The consequence of this detachment was that Navarra, where Carlists were overwhelmingly dominant, was no longer associated to the project of Basque regional autonomy. Thus, when the armed uprising began, the initial nationalist doubts about what side to take came to an end when the Republican government granted political autonomy to the region in exchange for loyalty. As the revolt had already succeeded in Navarra, Alava and large parts of Gipuzkoa,

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estan del costat de Franco, tots parlen la llengua basca" (quoted in De Riquer 1996: 120).

<sup>23</sup> The Spanish Basque Country is divided currently in two autonomous regions. On the one hand, the Basque Autonomous Community is composed of Alava, Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia. On the other hand, the Foral Community of Navarra includes the old Province of Navarra.

the new regional institutions could only rule during one year in Bizkaia. By mid 1937, nationalist rule was over.<sup>24</sup>

In sum, the Catalanist movement could count from the beginning of the new regime on regional institutions absolutely controlled by parties whose headquarters were in Catalan territory. These parties – the ERC and the Lliga Catalana – were able to capture all the relevant nationalist constituencies. Quite the opposite, the Basque Country was characterised by the presence of a strong state-wide republican coalition led by the socialist party, and two regional parties: the nationalists and the Carlists. Thus, Basque nationalists did have trouble achieving a similar level of mobilization. They thrived in Bizkaia, and the industrial towns of Gipuzkoa and Alava, but remained a minor competitor in the rest of Basque areas. The long presence of socialists and Carlists did hinder their claims for monopolising Basque representation. Second-wave nationalists found potential for nationalist growth after the consolidation of the Francoist regime.

The best way to validate the resilience of nationalist mobilization empirically, as well as the existence of potential constituencies, is to compare the distribution of nationalist voting during the Republic years with the distribution after the decay of the dictatorship. In order to do so, I have collected electoral data at the municipality level for all the Catalan towns (around 1,000 towns) and also for the Basque Provinces covering the 1933 election (for Alava, Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa and Navarra) and the 1931

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<sup>24</sup> Despite the short term period the government was in place (from October 1936 to June 1937), its influence was long-reaching. The PNV headed a coalition government with the PSOE and other minor parties. Each party had the right to organize its own military battalions, so that nationalists were able to boost nationalist feelings by creating their own army units. Moreover, the fact that the PNV remained close to the Catholic Church kept the regions out of the terrible executions of the clergy that were taking place in other regions under Republican control (Aguilar 1998: 128-32). As we will see below, the link between the Catholic Church in the Basque Country and the nationalist movement had lasting consequences.



and the 1936 elections (for Catalonia) within the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic and the first regional elections after Franco (1980 in Catalonia and the Basque Country; 1983 in Navarra).<sup>25</sup>

Table 4.1 includes bivariate correlations<sup>26</sup> of the share of votes that the most relevant parties assembled in Catalonia before and after the Francoist dictatorship.<sup>27</sup> In this case, I have also gathered information about the 1931 Constitutional election. My findings show that the PSC and the CiU are the parties representing best the electoral distribution of the ERC and the Lliga – respectively – during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic. The result is quite strong for CiU, which proves the resilience of Catalan nationalism along the time.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Data for Catalonia come from Vilanova (2005) for the elections during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic, while data for the 1980 regional election has been downloaded from [www.gencat.cat/governacio-ap/eleccions](http://www.gencat.cat/governacio-ap/eleccions). 1933 Election data for the Basque provinces during the Republic come from Villa (2007). Data for the 1980 Basque Autonomous Community election is accessible at [www.euskadi.net/elecciones](http://www.euskadi.net/elecciones). Finally, the website of the Regional Government of Navarra provides access to the 1983 regional election data in this region ([http://www.navarra.es/home\\_es/Navarra/Instituciones/Elecciones](http://www.navarra.es/home_es/Navarra/Instituciones/Elecciones)). I use data from different elections during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic because the whole series of electoral results is, as far as I know, not available for the Basque Provinces.

<sup>26</sup> For those with a preference for the visual distribution of the data, figures A.4.1 to A.4.5 include two-way plots with the relationship between the main political parties in the two periods (see “additional figures to chapter 4”).

<sup>27</sup> The 1980 parties are: CiU, the main nationalist party; the PSC, an autonomous socialist party that makes common cause with the state-wide PSOE; the PSUC, an autonomous communist party that cooperates with the state-wide PCE; and finally, the UCD, the Catalan non-autonomous branch of the then governmental state-wide party. See Molas (2000a) on the Catalan party system after the recovery of democracy.

<sup>28</sup> Malló and Martí (2000) speculate about the match between the distribution of the Catalan Carlist movement in 1869 and the support for CiU in 1980. If their speculations and my data are true, it could be the case that the transition between Carlism and nationalism took place

*Table 4.1. Bivariate correlations between shares of party votes in each town for the 1931, 1936 and 1980 elections, Catalonia (N=855 towns)*

	PSC 1980	CiU 1980	PSUC 1980	UCD 1980
ERC 1931	0.22*	-0.27*	0.11*	0.04
Lliga 1931	-0.24*	0.43*	-0.20*	-0.18*
ERC 1936	0.37*	-0.30*	0.21*	-0.16*
Lliga 1936	-0.37*	0.30*	-0.21*	0.15*

Note: There were 1,063 towns in Catalonia during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic. This number decreased to 935 in 1980. As several existing towns in 1936 were merged in larger units with different names, I have been able to identify 855 towns for both periods. However, there is no reason to think that those towns from which votes are not included in the analysis may alter significantly the results. \* < 1 percent significance level.

In turn, the resilience of the main Basque nationalist party (the PNV) can also be considered by looking at tables 4.2 and 4.3. Table 4.2 collects bivariate correlations of the share of votes for the nationalist, Carlist and socialist parties in the Basque Autonomous Community – BAC, made up of Alava, Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa – during the same two electoral periods: the 1933 general election and the first Regional election after the democratic comeback (1980).<sup>29</sup> Table 4.3 collects the same type of information for the Foral Community of Navarre (FCN), in this case for the 1933 general election and for the first regional

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earlier in Catalonia than in the Basque Country, since industrialization touched off the rural Basque heartland only after the '60s.

<sup>29</sup> The 1980 Basque parties are: the PNV, the main first-wave nationalist party; the so-called IA (Patriotic Front), the radical second-wave nationalist force; and finally the PSE, the socialist Basque branch of the state-wide PSOE. The IA is a combination of the two parties giving political coverage to the two ETA wings: HB (Popular Unity) representing ETA-m, and EE (Basque Left) standing for ETA-pm. I added up for each town the votes these two parties received separately.

election, held in 1983.<sup>30</sup> I separate Navarre from the other Basque provinces because its party system was remarkably different from the one existent in the BAC at the end of the dictatorship.

Table 4.2. Bivariate correlations between shares of party votes in each town for the 1933 and 1980 elections, Basque Country (224 towns)

	<i>Gipuzkoa</i>			<i>Alava</i>			<i>Bizkaia</i>		
	IA 1980	PNV 1980	PSE 1980	IA 1980	PNV 1980	PSE 1980	IA 1980	PNV 1980	PSOE 1980
Carlists 1933	0.31*	0.19	-0.53*	-0.24	-0.14	-0.28	-0.04	0.13	-0.26**
PNV 1933	-0.07	0.32*	-0.18	0.51*	0.35**	-0.03	0.22**	0.49*	-0.55*
PSOE 1933	-0.25**	-0.48*	0.69*	-0.33*	-0.17	0.43*	-0.2	-0.52*	0.71*

Note: PNV, HB and EE were all of them nationalist parties in 1980. PSE is a state-wide socialist party. \* < 1 percent significance level. \*\* < 5 percent significance level.

There are several interesting things to discuss here. First of all, the electoral resilience of the Socialist Party is quite remarkable: socialist strongholds seemed to remain unaltered after more than four decades of dictatorship. Secondly, the PNV was also able to keep its constituencies, however, this was more unevenly. Thus, the most politically competitive and economically industrialized Basque province, Bizkaia, returned the PNV in both periods as the main party, with a similar geographic distribution of support in the

<sup>30</sup> The 1983 parties are: PNV, the main first-wave nationalist party; IA, the radical second-wave nationalist party; UPN, the right-wing regional party; the PSN, the socialist Basque branch of the state-wide PSOE; and finally, the PK, an extreme tiny left-wing schism of the old Carlist Party. As in the previous case, I added up HB and EE into a new category: the IA.

two elections. Alava and Gipuzkoa resemble that pattern, but their smaller coefficients also mean more electoral volatility. Finally, IA's correlations show a puzzling pattern: whereas Bizkaia and Alava carry positive correlations between votes for the PNV in 1933 and votes for the IA in 1980, the same does not hold for Gipuzkoa, where the sign is actually negative. Quite strikingly, the high correlation between the Carlist vote in 1933 and the vote for the IA in 1980 could be pointing to the fact that ETA was able to mobilize a new constituency that had remained aloof from nationalism until the late '60s. Therefore, it seems that Carlist votes in Gipuzkoa became nationalist strongholds during the dictatorship.<sup>31</sup>

*Table 4.3. Bivariate correlations between shares of party votes in each town for the 1933 and 1983 elections, Foral Community of Navarre (N= 260 towns)*

	Carlists 1933	PNV 1933
PNV 1983	-0.28*	0.52*
UPN 1983	0.41*	-0.17*
IA 1983	-0.20*	0.39*
PSN 1983	-0.12**	-0.38*
PK 1983	0.26*	-0.04

Notes: UPN is a regionalist right-wing party standing for the rejection of any link with the Basque Autonomous Community. PK was the left-wing transformation of the old Carlist Party. Although EE was a minor party in this community, it was still added to HB. \* < 1 percent significance level.

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<sup>31</sup> Given the high mobilization the 1936 general election prompted, it would have been better to use that election to check the hypothesis. Still, I only found the town-level information for Gipuzkoa. It is worth noting that the positive and strong correlation between Carlist votes and HB votes in 1980 still holds for that election (p-pearson= 0.31, significant at the 1 percent level).

Navarre resembles Alava and Bizkaia in that it has a negative and statistically significant correlation between 1933 Carlist votes and IA votes. Unlike Gipuzkoa, Carlism in Navarre has perpetuated itself through the UPN ( $p=0.41$ ), the current party in office at the regional level in the Foral Community of Navarre. On the contrary, it seems that ETA-backed political forces had to compete with the PNV in trying to mobilize the same potential nationalist electorate. Although the PNV retrieved votes from places where it was already strong during the Republic ( $p=0.52$ ), it was unable to maintain the 10 percent mark it received in that period. The emergence of a new nationalist competitor, the IA, reduced the PNV's strength, but also increased the nationalist electoral appeal – the IA got 13 percent of the votes, which in combination with the 7 percent of the PNV doubled the electoral record of the nationalist parties in Navarre during the Republic.

Table 4.4 includes a statistical analysis to test the Gipuzkoan effect in a more formal way. It presents two regression models for the 479 towns of the four Basque provinces (all towns pooled together) with electoral data for both periods. The goal is to check whether the relationship between IA voting during the early '80s – more concretely, in 1980 for the BAC and in 1983 for the FCN – and Carlist voting in 1933 still holds after controlling for other relevant predictors of nationalist voting. Thus, model 1 only includes the interaction between the province of Gipuzkoa and the share of Carlist votes. It turns out that this share depresses the number of votes for the ETA political fronts except in Gipuzkoa, where the coefficient is positive. Model 2 includes controls for the best predictor of nationalist voting: the share of Basque speakers in the municipality (Llera 1986; Mansvelt Beck 1999; 2005).<sup>32</sup> I also control for the PNV support in 1933. As expected, radical nationalists get more votes in towns where Basque is widely spoken. It is still quite surprising that the effect of Carlist votes remains positive and significant for Gipuzkoa even if we take the

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<sup>32</sup> Data on Basque knowledge was collected at the websites of the Statistical institutes of the two autonomous governments.

level of Basque speakers into account. In other words, the existing ecological conditions in those Carlist-prone towns in Gipuzkoa made them hotbeds for nationalist diffusion.<sup>33</sup>

*Table 4.4. Regression models of IA voting in the Basque provinces, 1980 and 1983*

	MODEL 1	MODEL 2
Gipuzkoa	0.08 <i>3.93</i>	3.30 <i>3.90</i>
Carlists 1933	-0.20* <i>0.02</i>	-0.06* <i>0.02</i>
Gipuzkoa*Carlists33	0.44* <i>0.09</i>	0.22** <i>0.1</i>
PNV 1933		0.11* <i>0.03</i>
Euskera		0.13* <i>0.02</i>
constant	28.84* <i>1.22</i>	14.36* <i>2.16</i>
N	479	479
Prob>F	0.0000	0.0000
R2	0.4850	0.6114

Note: Standard Errors in italics. Share of Basque speakers is measured from 0 to 100. \*<1 percent significance level; \*\*<5 percent significance level.

<sup>33</sup> I am not claiming that the people voting for the Carlist party became diehard nationalists four decades later. Rather, the argument is intergenerational: rural, Basque-speaking towns in Gipuzkoa had the best preconditions to become the seedbed of radical nationalism, once industrialization eased the structures of local control and repression pushed many youngsters towards political activism.

#### 4.4.1.1. The dynamics of mobilization in the Basque Country

Why did the Carlist effect not work in Alava and Navarre, two provinces where nationalism had mobilized below the average during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic? Responsiveness may have something to do with this. As Carlist strongholds during the Civil War, Alava and Navarre were able to keep their Fiscal autonomous regimes even under Franco rule. Both regions spared ETA mobilization<sup>34</sup> thanks to their rural structure and its largely Spanish-speaking population. Leaving aside the few border towns where nationalist expansion followed contagion dynamics thanks to the influence of Basque knowledge,<sup>35</sup> the main mechanism producing ETA support in Alava and Navarre came with late industrialization and the radicalization of a not necessarily native new working class (Pérez Agote 1989). For those constituencies, the normal pathway into politics was not about moving from identity issues (the defence of

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<sup>34</sup> ETA violence was also relatively smaller in these two regions (Calleja and Sánchez-Cuenca 2006). With data from 1978 to 1992, whereas 39 percent of the attacks were carried out in Gipuzkoa and 31 percent in Bizkaia, Navarra experienced only 9 percent of the attacks and Alava 7 percent (Domínguez-Iribarren 1998a: 259). Furthermore, fewer recruits came from the two provinces. Using data from 1970 to 1995, Reinares shows that recruits came overwhelmingly from Gipuzkoa (46 percent) and Bizkaia (35 percent). Navarra (8 percent) and Alava (4 percent) contributed much fewer than their share of the whole population (Reinares 2001: 192).

<sup>35</sup> Anecdotal evidence proves the influence of Carlism in those towns in Navarre characterised for having large numbers of Basque speakers. Thus, the former rector of the University of the Basque Country, Gregorio Monreal, declared that his family split politically at the end of the dictatorship, with some members supporting the new regional right-wing party – the UPN- and others endorsing the project of radical nationalists – HB. One of the leading Spanish novelists, Miguel Sánchez Ostiz, a Navarrese himself, asked where all former Carlists had moved to politically. According to him, there was a transfer towards socialist-like parties, but also towards radical nationalism (these two testimonies quoted at Vaquero n.d.).

the language) towards ideological issues (socialism vs. social-democracy), but rather the contrary: from ideology to identity. Hence, once the economic crisis passed by and the new democratic institutions became consolidated, this ETA-backing left-wing constituency started to fade away. By the mid '90s, only a tiny proportion of non-Basque speaking voters still supported HB candidatures. Furthermore, right-wing parties fared quite well in these two provinces from the first democratic elections. Thus, it is no surprise that there were right-wing parties only in Alava and Navarre – but not in Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia – whose electoral strength was concentrated in the same towns where Carlism had been so strong four decades before. Some minor episodes of partial responsiveness to nationalist demands contributed to make the right-wing inheritors of the Carlist legacy in Navarre very successful in attracting votes from some sections of the Basque speaking community in the province.<sup>36</sup> In Alava, concessions were not even apparently necessary.

On the contrary, Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa – together with some border areas of the two other provinces –, experienced a different process of nationalist mobilization, whose success was based on attracting for the nationalist cause thousands of Basque speakers that had not lived the glorious days of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic. In the aftermath of the Civil War, the PNV kept quiet in the Basque Country. Its leadership in exile opted for collaborating with the US during the world war effort under the assumption that the Allies' victory would involve Franco dismissal and the return of autonomous institutions (Beltza 1977; Morán 2003). Once the Francoist regime became internationally recognised in the early '50s did nationalist youngsters based in Bilbao start to talk about the need to create a new strategy to relaunch the nationalist project. As a result, young Basque nationalists decided to emphasise strongly the role of the language in the definition of

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<sup>36</sup> According to Payne (1975: 239), the Provincial Government of Navarre passed in 1967 a plan to teach Basque within the public educational system, which lay under its authority.



Basque nationality and nation (see one of the most relevant books by second-wave nationalist theoreticians: Krutwig, 1973; also Alvarez 1997).

The PNV reluctance to accommodate youngsters' demands forced them to walk out of the party and set up their own organization, Euskadi ta Askatasuna (Basque and Freedom), in 1959 (Clark 1984; Garmendia 1996; Sullivan 1988). Four features distinguished the new organization: (i) the emphasis on the Basque language as the main attribute of the Basque nation and national group – instead of the surname-based racist discourse that the first PNV pursued; (ii) the secularization of the movement, by breaking ties with the Church and its teachings as moral foundations of nationalist policies; (iii) the defence of the armed struggle as a legitimate technique for quickening the end of the dictatorship and the arrival of independence; and (iv) the turn towards a loose sense of socialism as a relevant dimension of the nationalist discourse.

It is not accidental that the first ETA groups were born in Bilbao (Bizkaia). This city had also been the seedbed of the first nationalism, and consequently, many ETA leaders came from nationalist families (Unzueta 1988). Furthermore, many of them did not speak Basque, because the city and its outskirts had remained a Spanish-speaking area for some decades (Tejerina 1992). However, they felt that the only way to save the nation from extinction was to raise awareness about the fate of the language. Given the dictatorial nature of the regime, only violence could polarize the constituency and force people to lean against the government (Garmendia 1996). Finally, as university students, they repudiated the clericalism of the elder nationalists and got involved in the ideological clashes taking place at the time between different Marxist factions. The organization spent the '60s trying to formulate an ideological synthesis that attracted alien migrants without repudiating the support of the native bourgeoisie. As it was not an easy mix, ETA was doomed to the same failure of the rest of clandestine anti-Francoist organizations. It was clear for them that the only way to bring the regime down required the cooperation of the working class, which was

becoming more and more alien to Basque culture because of its migrant component.

Two facts contributed to save ETA. On the one hand, industrialization took off in the late '50s, and thousands of intra-Spain migrants flooded the Basque Provinces –mainly Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa (Gurruchaga 1985). The arrival of a massive Spanish-speaking working class population and the absence of the necessary policy instruments to halt the decrease of the number of Basque speakers boosted the demands for action. Absent a Basque university system that would have created some sort of Basque-speaking intelligentsia interested in the language,<sup>37</sup> the Basque clergy took up the task. Evenly divided between Nationalists and Carlists during the Civil War, the Basque low clergy started to move overwhelmingly towards nationalism in the early '50s.

By chastising Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia as “traitor” provinces and taking away their fiscal powers, Franco very soon left the door open for the start of local complaints. And the more militant clergy took issue with the prohibition of using the Basque language to preach (or teach directly the language). Many priests and members of religious orders in the Basque Country shared a similar extraction: rural Basque-speaking strongholds, where the land was passed to the eldest son, whereas his brothers had to thrive on their own.<sup>38</sup> Thus, the seminary was seen as an alternative to out-migration with the added value of providing some education. Industrialization created the propitious environment for those priests and monks to spread their nationalist

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<sup>37</sup> The Basque Country did not have a public university until the early 1970s. There was only a Church-run private university in Bilbao, with a limited number of degrees.

<sup>38</sup> Gurruchaga (1985: 358) offers information on the province of origin of all seminarians in the Basque Country from 1950 to 1975. The province supplying the largest number of recruits was Gipuzkoa (1091 seminarians), despite being the second province in population (Bizkaia had 871 seminarians).

apostolate against the regime.<sup>39</sup> Already in 1959, 339 members of the Basque clergy wrote an open letter to their bishops where they called for the defence of human rights as well as the rights of the Basque people.<sup>40</sup> Later the contact of rural priests with the new underclass neighbourhoods that hosted the recently-arrived migrants radicalized their message towards left-wing ideologies. From then on, it was usual to have Basque priests fined and arrested under charges of collaboration with clandestine organizations. Given the privileges the Catholic Church enjoyed

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<sup>39</sup> According to a private report on the Basque clergy in Gipuzkoa commissioned by the Civil Governor of the province in 1968, the seminarists received “el primer lavado antiespañolista en Saturrarán [the headquarters of the lower seminary] y los muchachos que salen de sus casas tradicionalistas regresan a ellas separatistas rabiosos” (quoted in Barroso 1995: 128).

<sup>40</sup> The distribution of the provincial origin of the 339 priests who signed the letter is very significant: 52 percent are from Gipuzkoa, 37 percent from Bizkaia, 6 percent from Alava and 4 percent from Navarra (Barroso 1995: p. 64-65). This picture is at odds with the distribution of the clergy support for nationalism during the Republic. If we check, for instance, the provincial origin of those priests who worked as military chaplains within the Basque army during the Civil War, it comes out that most of them were born in Bizkaia (76 percent), compared to 22 percent in Gipuzkoa and 3 percent in Alava (data calculated from E.A. Talde 1978). In the last source a rough list of priests who suffered any type of postwar reprisals is included. It shows that 54 percent of them were born in Bizkaia, 41 percent in Gipuzkoa and 5 percent in Alava (E.A. Talde 1978: 23-100). These data match well the provincial ranking of electoral support for the Nationalist Party during the Republic years, but have trouble to account for the composition of the 1959 letter, with a majority of priests from Gipuzkoa. Although unfortunately I do not have the breakdown of the 339 by province and age, data on this last variable indicates that 35 percent of the signing priests had been ordained after 1950, that is, their involvement in the war could have barely been the reason to become nationalists. If we add this 35 percent to the 16.5 percent of signers who were ordained in the decade of the 1940s, more than 50 percent of the signing priests had almost no experience of the war at all (Barroso 1995: 66).

within the dictatorship, it was easy for the rebel clergy to take advantage of their privileges to promote all types of labour and nationalist initiatives (Iztueta 1981).<sup>41</sup> The contribution of the Basque nationalist clergy to the legitimization of ETA violence and the spreading of its goals was priceless (Barroso 1995: 124; Letamendia 1994: 317).<sup>42</sup> Many of them finally opted for secularization and pursued political careers within the ETA-backed political front (Unzueta 1987).<sup>43</sup> For the Basque case, the

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<sup>41</sup> ETA was very aware of the relevance of having the support of the lower clergy. In one of its internal leaflets, the leadership gave the following recommendation to its cells with regards to the clergy: "Clero. Hay que guardar la clandestinidad más absoluta. Hay que aprovechar este trabajo para influir en el clero, para comprometerles más en la lucha de su pueblo, para hacerles militantes y para obtener más apoyo y ayuda de su parte (casas, información, buzones, influencias, listas de futuros militantes, etc.). si en la zona o pueblo hay algún sacerdote militante activo, es el más indicado para colaborar..." (quoted in De Arteaga 1971: 240).

<sup>42</sup> As Barroso recognises, "en estos primeros años de los 70 algunas voces eclesíásticas abogaron claramente por los métodos violentos como los más eficaces para la liberación del pueblo vasco. La máxima expresión de esta tendencia fueron las homilías pronunciadas en los funerales de activistas de ETA, teniendo un extraordinario valor de legitimación para la causa vasca por la que había gente capaz de morir" (Barroso 1995: 404).

<sup>43</sup> The story of priest Ulazia is a paradigmatic case. Born in one of the Carlist strongholds in Gipuzkoa, Azkoitia in 1928, he was still at his formative period when the famous letter of the 339 priests was sent to the Basque bishops. Frustrated at his non-intervention in the letter, he decided to deliver unilaterally a politically overcharged Sunday sermon against the Franco institutions in 1962, which was applauded by nationalists and criticised by the regime. Apparently, the day before he delivered his sermon, he had participated in a walking march towards the shrine of Aranzazu, in which there was talk about the need of giving steps against the regime. Despite being brought to court (and acquitted), he kept on serving spiritually two small towns in Gipuzkoa: Altzaga until 1964 (a town with a third of Carlist supporters during the Republic that turned fully nationalist with a large support for the radical parties after

secularization of religiosity consistent in canonizing the nation is one of the main engines leading the process of nationalist awareness, as several monographs have well documented (Arregi 1999, Morán 2003, Onaindia 2001, Pérez-Agote 2008).

The second factor contributing to the consolidation of ETA was the start of the action-reaction spiral. By the end of the 1960s, ETA theorists had realised that the only way to attract support for the Basque revolution entailed the use of violence pursued in order to raise nationalist awareness by forcing the state to over-repress. The mechanism was easy: initial attacks carried out by unknown militants would prompt the security forces to gather information by raiding broad segments of potentially suspect groups. The use of indiscriminate methods to collect information jeopardized full sections of society, which turned away from supporting the state. For instance, the failed attempt to derail a train carrying old Civil War Combatants to San Sebastian to celebrate the Anniversary of the Military coup was followed by the arrest of more than 100 suspects (Anasagasti 2003). After the first ETA killing in 1968, a state of emergency was called and more than 1,000 arrests were carried out (Garmendia 1996).

As ETA recruited well within nationalist environments – dance associations, mountain groups, Basque-speaking voluntary schools, Catholic-led unions – all these groups were specially touched by the repressive effort (Gurruchaga 1985; Lamikiz 2005: 470; Pérez-Agote, 2008). The dense network of associative ties, articulated around the *cuadrilla* (peer groups), quickened the spread of radical nationalism.<sup>44</sup> And the broad use of torture and

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the end of the dictatorship) and Arama until 1968 (a town with 64 percent of Carlist voters and practically this share of votes for the IA parties in 1980), when he exiled in Paris. After returning to the Basque Country, he became secularized (Esnaola and Iturrarán 1994: 419). Unfortunately, I have been unable to find information about his political activities afterwards. Still, there would not be a big surprise if he would have joined some of the political movements backing ETA violence.

<sup>44</sup> As this network structure is more usual in small towns, it is no wonder that ETA recruited mostly from them during the 1970s. Thus,

illegal methods to extract information accelerated the process of state delegitimation and increased the numbers of ETA recruits and supporters (Della Porta and Mattina 1986; Irvin 1999).<sup>45</sup> Thus, many Basque-speaking youngsters with non-nationalist family origins were attracted to ETA and linguistic nationalism, thanks to a combination of sympathy towards an organization standing for a language-based nationalism, and the direct effect of repression.<sup>46</sup>

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although towns with less than 50,000 inhabitants comprised 44 percent of the Basque population, they were the breeding ground of ETA during that decade, with 72 percent of recruits (Reinares 2001: 194). Domínguez-Iribarren shows that this trend changed during the 1980s, with an increasing inflow of recruits from the largest cities. According to his study of ETA members between 1978 and 1992, 77 percent of recruits from the rural Basque Country (towns with less than 5,000 inhabitants) joined ETA before 1982 (Domínguez-Iribarren 1998a: 57).

<sup>45</sup> According to Irvin (1999), around half of the members of the ETA-backed political front, manifested to have been harassed by the security forces; 25 percent declared to have relatives or close friends wounded or killed by the security forces (Irvin 1999: 142). As expected from my argument, the figures were higher in Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa than in Alava and Navarre.

<sup>46</sup> Anecdotal evidence in this regard is very scattered, given the difficulty of finding testimonies of ETA members recognising their lack of nationalist patina. A monography dedicated to praising the lives of dead ETA activists rarely commented on the political loyalties of their parents, if they were not nationalists (Zabalza 2000). However, there are well-known cases. For instance, Izco de la Iglesia, one of the first ETA gunmen, had Carlist roots, as his mother recognised in a private letter (Zaragoza 1993). Several ETA leaders of the second generation – such as Argala and Txikia – also seemed to come from Carlist backgrounds, given their deep religiousness (Casanova and Asensio 1999: 36-37; Morán 2003: 401). Another example comes from one of the leaders of the ETA-backed political front, Jon Idigoras, who tells in his memoirs how a leading local figure of the dictatorship used to harass him and his fellows during their childhood. The interesting thing is that the author refused to give the name of the Francoist figure “para no dañar la sensibilidad de sus descendientes, inocentes de aquella situación” (Idigoras 2000: 23). It is almost sure that he would have written down the

By the end of the 1970s, Gipuzkoa had already become the hotbed of ETA support, with a majority of recruits and support coming from this province (Clark 1984; Letamendia 1994: 374; Lluich 1995; Unzueta 1988).

#### 4.4.1.2. The dynamics of mobilization in Catalonia

Why did this dynamic not work similarly in Catalonia? As I have argued before, it is not the case that the associational nationalist life was less dense in Catalonia than the Basque provinces. On the contrary, figures on the levels of associational membership show equal above-country-average rates in both regions – data from the 1978 CIS survey on associationism (no. 1157) corroborates this. It is not the case that the Catholic clergy were less nationalist in Catalonia either.<sup>47</sup> The explanation must look at the incapacity of radical nationalists to attract core supporters to their cause and the bad timing they selected to trigger an armed strategy. Firstly, when the Front d'Alliberament Català (Liberation Front of Catalonia) tried to use violence against the dictatorship in the early '70s, it found that the only constituency interested in joining the organization was made up of left-wing radicalized immigrants. None of the main separatist political organizations wanted to back the FAC, since they preferred to stay within the unitary platforms (Vera 1985).<sup>48</sup>

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name of the Francoist leader if his kinship would have not turned into nationalism.

<sup>47</sup> I deal with this point in the next subsection, but suffice it to say now that the clergy in Catalonia became very nationalist from the early 1950s onwards, when the Church played the role of reconciling the two communities that remained divided during the war. However, the influence of the church in the transmission of nationalism and the spread of oppositional movements against the dictatorship was lower than in the Basque Country, since it had to compete with universities and unions.

<sup>48</sup> Like in the Basque Country, radical youngsters split from the main oppositional nationalist force, the FNC, following ideological quarrels about the need to switch the party towards left-wing leanings. From the

Besides, state reaction against FAC terrorist attacks (around 100 attacks until the transition period) was cleverer, either out of rational learning after the Basque experience or out of a special treatment for Catalan opposition. For instance, the killing of one civilian in 1971 was silenced by the government, and the FAC did not claim the attack (Rubiralta 2004). By avoiding broad diffusion of the terrorist attack, the state was able to soften the action-reaction dynamic. In general, security forces were much more careful in dealing with terrorist activities in this region.<sup>49</sup>

And secondly, when all Catalan small terrorist cells with a nationalist agenda coalesced together on the eve of the current constitutional period, they faced very bad timing, since regional democratic institutions were being negotiated and the nationalist parties had positive expectations about the result of the constitutional bargain. The attempt to create a broad secessionist political movement that would somehow give public legitimacy to the new clandestine group, Terra Lliure (Free Soil), came to nothing because the division over the use of the armed struggle (Rubiralta 2004). This limited support for nationalist violence just at a time when state weakness could have granted important concessions hindered the capacity of Terra Lliure to carry out relevant attacks, limiting itself to actions of so-called armed propaganda (Castellanos 2003: 95; Fernández Calvet 1986).

Only when radical nationalists became disappointed with the Statute of Autonomy passed for Catalonia did a movement of support for violence start to emerge around the defence of the

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late '60s, there are secessionist political forces in Catalonia, but they remained broadly subordinated to the Assembly of Catalonia, an all-party clandestine association that articulated Catalan demands for democracy (Rubiralta 2004).

<sup>49</sup> Aguilar and Sánchez-Cuenca (forthcoming) have shown that Catalonia experienced during the transition fewer incidents between demonstrators and the police than expected from sheer numbers. Given the fact the number of demonstrations was actually high there is room to assume that the police had instructions to avoid large-scale street confrontations in the region.



prisoners and the demand of recognition for the Catalan nation and the right for self-determination (Bentanachs 2003; Fernández Calvet 1986). The set up of the Movement for the Defence of the Land (MDT) in 1984 involved the best period for the organization, with a known political front<sup>50</sup> and a terrorist organization trying to jump into real violence -so far, they had only planted small bombs against empty public premises (Vilaregut 2004: 72-75). But Terra Lliure's leadership was arrested in 1985 and the political front started to suffer splits around ideological and strategic issues. Since 1986, Terra Lliure was practically a moribund organization, unable to create a movement of support to legitimate violence in favour of secession.

In Terra Lliure's failure the nationalist regional government played an important role. The moderate nationalist party, CiU, pursued a twofold strategy consistent in demanding quick concessions to avoid the escalation of violence<sup>51</sup> and endorsing direct-action, non-violent nationalist organizations whose main aim was to defend Catalan speakers' rights as well as self-determination (Monné and Selga 1991). The strategy was largely successful, because the state granted some important concessions to the nationalist constituency – such as the approval of an educational system with Catalan as the main language of instruction – and at the same time CiU sponsorship of the language movement made difficult for Terra Lliure to recruit

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<sup>50</sup> According to the MDT leader Carles Castellanos, the creation of this organization involved the real rupture between the pro-Lliga nationalism and the pro-secessionist forces. Although the ideological break-up took place in the late '60s, the then new forces remained largely dependent on the moderate parties, and therefore relied on their leadership to get a good deal from the transition to democracy (Castellanos 2009).

<sup>51</sup> For Fernández Calvet, a Terra Lliure leader, the necessary condition to build a lethal, resilient nationalist challenge was that the nationalist constituency turned away from the transition process. As most nationalist parties remained loyal to the game, Terra Lliure could not take off (Fernández Calvet 1986).

easily within the flanks of the linguistic movement (ibid: 118). Catalan radical nationalists found neither the necessary support from fresh constituencies nor the necessary repression from the state to pull new recruits.

#### 4.4.1.3. Summary

To recapitulate, I have shown in this section that the Catalan nationalist movement was more able to mobilize its potential constituencies during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic than its Basque counterpart, since the latter faced an internal rival with huge appeal for rural-based Basque-speaking voters. At the end of the dictatorship, however, these Basque-speaking constituencies had been transferred to a new Basque nationalist movement, led by the terrorist organization ETA. This makes explicit that the potential for nationalist growth during the dictatorship was higher within the Basque Country than in Catalonia. For instance, 75 percent of Catalans claimed in 1970 to be in favour of decentralized institutions against 58 per cent of Basques (Linz 1973). Eight years later, when the new Constitution was put to the voters to be ratified, decentralization short of independence seemed too little for many Basques, who did not turn out to vote in favour. In the meantime, ETA had become a successful competitor to the PNV, mainly in Gipuzkoa. To complete the picture, I look in the next section at the other side of the model: the relationship between the local elites and state decision-makers.

#### 4.4.2. *Different state responsiveness*

We have already seen that republican institutions were more receptive to Catalan nationalism than to the Basque variant. The military victory of the right-wing camp led by General Franco switched the situation, since the Carlist movement had contributed broadly to the war effort with militias and ideological support. Thus, whereas only 4 percent of cabinet members came from the

Basque Country during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic, the figure escalated to 13 percent during the Franco dictatorship – most of them from Carlist ideological backgrounds.<sup>52</sup> In absolute terms, there were 12 ministers born in the Basque Country against 8 ministers from Catalonia (De Miguel 1975). As a prestigious member within the winning coalition, Carlists brought into practice what Canales (2006) has called the “logic of political victory.” Carlists had won the war and consequently there was no doubt that most political offices at the local level should remain under their control. Thus, Carlism remained loyal to the dictatorship in exchange for broad perquisites in the control of the local administration.<sup>53</sup>

#### 4.4.2.1. Responsiveness in Catalonia

In Catalonia, the logic of political victory was missing. The main ideological supporters for the war – fascists, Carlists and the military – had failed to take root in the four Catalan provinces.<sup>54</sup> Absent political winners, the regime had to rely on the “logic of

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<sup>52</sup> Despite this large presence in central cabinets, it would be misleading to consider the Carlist movement as a largely state-wide competitive political force. Quite the opposite, the success of this group was limited to the Basque provinces and its influence in Madrid was very restricted. When the government decided to switch the economic path and move the country towards liberalization in the late 1950s, Carlist presence in the cabinet suffered, keeping the Justice portfolio as their only jurisdiction.

<sup>53</sup> There is not a systematic study of the spread of Carlist political control, but some scattered evidence points to a broad presence in the local administration (Canales 2006; Urrutia 2006). According to Calvo (1998: 171), between 1936 and 1942 37.14 percent of all members of the provincial diputation of Gipuzkoa were Carlists.

<sup>54</sup> It could be argued that several relevant members of the Lliga signed and sent a letter to Franco in which they backed the Coup d’Etat (de Riquer 1996). However, they did so after suffering the religious persecutions that took place in Catalonia in the aftermath of the failed uprising. Besides, their support was limited to counterpropaganda tasks and financial help, with no relevant support at the battle-fields.

social victory” to rule local institutions. According to this logic, those suffering religious persecution and those experiencing expropriation within the republican side had the right to collaborate in the task of reconstruction. The only problem is that these social groups had been mainly Catalanists before the Civil War. Thus, during the first decade of the regime they were granted few local positions and always in exchange for explicitly renouncing to their Catalanist ideology. Once the regime decided to abandon its policy of economic autarchy and replace it with another one based on attracting foreign investment, ideological constraints were lifted and those cadres of right-wing former Catalanists flooded the local administration (Canales 2006; Hansen 1977; Martí 2000, 2006).

As a result, former regionalists came into power at the local level in Catalonia because of the absence of legitimate claimers, whereas fiercely anti-nationalist Carlists banned any internal competition for office in the Basque Country and Navarra. Economic institutions also played a role in guaranteeing areas of power to former regionalists in Catalonia. The most important economic sectors (the wool and cotton industries, the drug industry and others) maintained autonomous associations from the official state-wide syndicates (Molinero and Ysàs 1991).<sup>55</sup> Moreover, it seems that their main leaders bore a “Catalanist feeling” that propelled them to contribute with Catalan culture and

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<sup>55</sup> De Miguel (1975) describes how the wealthiest Catalan businessmen, concerned with the bad shape of the economy, met Franco in 1956 to convince him to incorporate a Catalan bourgeoisie member into the cabinet. Apparently Franco accepted. Interestingly, the then Civil Governor of Barcelona, Felipe Acedo, was the instigator of the meeting. For him, there would be peace in the region as long as the old Catalan bourgeoisie saw its economic interests well served. His tenure was over when the new Catalan rising star within the cabinet, Laureano López-Rodó, imposed his candidate to the mayorship of Barcelona, Josep M. Porcioles, against Acedo’s candidate. Porcioles and López-Rodó promoted to power a new Catalan upper class, more related to the dictatorship (De Riquer 1989: 21-22).

exile institutions. One of his protagonists, Manuel Ortínez,<sup>56</sup> tells in his autobiography how he proposed in 1957 to the top textile businessmen to collaborate economically with the Catalan government in exile. The discussion that followed his proposal reflects well the difference between the Catalan elite and the Basque one:

Els més assenyats copsaven que la idea tenia un sentit que la seva obligació era preveure totes les possibilitats de futur polític per tal de defensar els negocis. La situació podia canviar i calia que tinguessin tots els angles oberts. També s'hi van formular opinions sinceres a favor de defensar els interessos generals de Catalunya, més enllà dels particulars (Ortínez 1993: 125).

Ortínez highlights also the work that several former regionalists carried out within the institutions. Porcioles, long-time major of Barcelona, was involved in codifying the Catalan Civil Code and also got the transfer of the Montserrat Castle from state to local ownership. The architect of the new economic strategy, Minister López Rodó, included many Catalans in his portfolios, who tried their best to bring economic growth and prosperity to Catalonia (Ainaud 1996; Keating 1996: 148-49). Several initiatives in defence of the Catalan language were backed by right-wing Catalanist figures.<sup>57</sup> Although few of them were successful, this convergence between oppositional Catalanists and those working within the institutions forced the government to

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<sup>56</sup> State secretary for monetary affairs during the 1960s, he did not have any concern about becoming afterwards the main sponsor of the return of Catalan president-in-exile Josep Tarradellas together with the reestablishment of the Generalitat (Ibáñez 1990).

<sup>57</sup> According to Colomines (1979: 115), one of the most important associations in defence of the Catalan language, *Omnium Cultural*, was legally created in 1961 thanks to the collaboration of renowned right-wing Catalanists who remained close to the institutions. Despite being closed down between 1963 and 1967, the association was definitively legalised in 1967, and it thereafter played a major role in the promotion of Catalan language and identity.

deal more carefully with the region. In 1966, Pablo Roig, an ex-alderman of the Barcelona council, being questioned about the heritage of the Lliga, summed up this right-wing Catalanist attitude by answering that:

El amor a la lengua, a la cultura, a la tradición, a la tierra, tan españoles como los de cualquier otra región; la convicción de que todo ello forma parte del común patrimonio nacional y que debe ser no sólo tolerado, sino protegido y fomentado por el Estado; la idea de que España es y debe ser un hogar común, una unidad de vida armónica y varia, no una uniformidad de tumbas en las que sólo tenga voz el sepulturero. (quoted in Paniker 1966: 181).

The role that the Catholic Church carried out in Catalonia seems to have been very significant to explain the resilience of Catalanism. As an anecdote, a player of Catalan traditional music recalls very vividly one concert he gave in a Catalan town in 1952, since the town radiated catalanism, with Catalan flags waving and people dancing sardanas. According to him, that entire Catalanist showing counted on Bishop's authorisation (Servíà 1975). But the role of the Church goes beyond the maintenance of Catalan cultural activities. From an ideological standpoint, the Montserrat Abbey contributed to the closing of the wounds that the war had opened within the Catalanist family. Its discourse emphasised that all Catalans had been defeated: those supporting the Republic had lost the religion; those supporting Franco had lost the nation (Malló and Martí 2000; Linz 1973).<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Cleverly enough, Cambó had foreseen that Franco's victory could be more useful to assemble together the nationalist field faster than a republican victory. According to him, the victory of Franco would unleash such a high level of repression against the Catalan culture, that this would force nationalists of any type to rally together in defence of his heritage. On the other hand, a Republican victory would have deepened the class cleavages among Catalan social groups (de Riquer 1996).

The fraternization act took place in 1947, when the virgin of Montserrat was granted the title of Protector of Catalonia (Ibáñez 1990). From then on, the task of Catalan Catholics should be to rebuild the country regardless of the type of regime that there were in Madrid (Colomer 1986). This “fer pais” would consist in protecting and promoting the language through different cultural enterprises, but also in founding new firms in key sectors (as the financial one) and pressing the institutions for carrying out investments in infrastructures (Pujol 1980, 2008).

From this position of authority, the jump to the vanguard of the oppositional movement was relatively easy. Jordi Pujol together with other Catalan Catholic friends set up several campaigns based on the diffusion of leaflets against particularly anti-Catalan personalities of the regime. For instance, they publicly repudiated the director of the main Catalan newspaper, *La Vanguardia*, because this person had said that “all Catalans are shit.” The boycott campaign was successful, and Franco forced the director to resign. After that, the group mounted another campaign against the presence of Franco in a concert at Barcelona, but this time the act went badly and several arrests followed. Jordi Pujol was tortured over the course of two days and later brought into trial. He was sentenced to 10 years in prison, but he could leave in less than two (Pujol 2008). This arrest had shocking effects over other members of the group, since they thought that the government was not going to dare sentence him because of his social background (Lorés 1985).<sup>59</sup> Moreover, it allowed Catalanists to gain the reputation of an oppositional force and to incorporate the statute of autonomy and the knowledge of Catalan language into the set of legitimate claims embraced by the whole oppositional movement (Johnston 1991; Molinero and Ysàs 1999: 123-24). This broad consensus around the devolution issue tied the hands of the radical nationalists, and only the “failure” of the process encouraged them to openly support the jump into

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<sup>59</sup> Despite this sentence, being a Catalanist continued to be a low-risk activity, as Johnston remarkably shows (Johnston 1991).

terrorist campaigns to achieve secession. By then, it was too late – as we saw in the previous subsection.

There are several examples of regionalist intermediation attempting to deter violence. Ortíz recalls that Pujol asked him in the late 1950s about pursuing an armed pathway against the state. Ortíz answered him that he did not think that the armed conflict was a good option; just the contrary, it was the best way to destroy Catalonia (Ortíz 1993: 154). Pujol also plays the lead in other episode, but this time he is the one deterring violent behaviour. Thus, the Front National of Catalunya was thinking about running a campaign against the construction of a highway in Catalonia. Pujol, one of the main promoters, met the council of this organization and convinced them about taking no action against a relevant infrastructure for the future of Catalonia (Pujol 2008).

But it is not only that moderates convinced radicals within the nationalist movement about the futility of violence. In addition to that, the quick move for hundreds of local politicians in rural Catalonia from the francoist institutions to the new dominant nationalist party, CiU, contributed as well to the effacement of the remains of the dictatorship and the highlighting retrospectively of its responsiveness in Catalonia.<sup>60</sup> Thus, in the VI Congress of the CDC (the main partner of the coalition CiU) held in 1981, whereas 6 percent of the delegates recognised their father was affiliated with ERC, around 7 percent mentioned father's affiliation with the Lliga or the Francoist unique party (Marcet 1987: 222-226).<sup>61</sup> Given the fact that having links with the previous regime was not

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<sup>60</sup> Although many of them could have simply changed their political colors, it was no doubt more difficult to pass from Spanish nationalism to Catalan nationalism in the presence of strong nationalist rivals ready to criticize the move.

<sup>61</sup> A high 81 percent did not report any father's political affiliation. Unfortunately, respondents were not asked the same question about their previous political affiliations. There was actually a question about a respondent's prior political militancy, but it did not include Francoist organizations as a possible answer.



a passport to success, it is possible to guess that the actual number was indeed higher. Interestingly, Pujol seems to recognize that his new nationalist party (CDC) relied on those local elites when, paraphrasing de Gaulle, he mentions the need to count on former collaborationists who simply obeyed orders to build the new democratic regime (Pujol 2008: 274).<sup>62</sup>

#### 4.4.2.2. Responsiveness in the Basque Country

It was unthinkable to expect by 1977 a similar clean transition between collaboration and democratic offices in the Basque provinces, at least in Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia.<sup>63</sup> For one, the low Basque clergy, instead of playing the role of reconciliation seen in Catalonia, contributed powerfully to the spread of nationalism and the discredit of the regime. Secondly, the francoist Basque economic elite – the so-called Neguri 2<sup>nd</sup> empire – did little to forget past confrontations with their fellow nationalists. There was no way to appease them: the economic elite had lost tens of its members in the Franco crusade against the *enemies of Spain* (communists and nationalists) and it had no intention to share its renewed rule.<sup>64</sup> Thus, most of the nationalist members of the

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<sup>62</sup> There is also anecdotal evidence about local mayors during the last stage of the dictatorship becoming CDC members (Riera 1999: 446; 476).

<sup>63</sup> Anecdotal evidence shows that the survival rate of local politicians in the transition from dictatorship to democracy was practically zero in these two provinces, while local office holders resisted democracy better in Navarre and Alava, where two strong right-wing parties hosted many of them.

<sup>64</sup> There were also economic reasons to explain why the Basque elite remained so staunchly anti-nationalist in comparison to the Catalan one. As Diez-Medrano showed, whereas the Neguri elite built its economic empire around heavy industries whose main customer during the dictatorship was the Spanish state, Catalan entrepreneurs diversified more their investments, with the result of being less dependent on the Spanish state-based market (Diez-Medrano 1995).

distinguished Neguri elite were ousted from their traditional clubs and banned to sit in the main firm boards the group controlled – such as the two largest private banks of the state, and one of the biggest steel corporations (Morán 2003: 146-149). Far from collaborating with the Basque institutions in exile or the revival of the language, this economic elite strengthened its links with Madrid and did everything possible to bury nationalism forever – for instance, to support the destruction of the PNV founder's building in 1960 (Anasagasti 2003: 263).

But the key group in Gipuzkoa (and, in a lesser extent, in Bizkaia) was made up by the Carlists. The Carlist elite was deeply traditionalist and anti-nationalist. Especially concerned about the defence of the Catholic Church, their world started to collapse when Basque society quickly secularized in the late '60s and the Carlist pretender for the Spanish crown moved towards opposition against the dictatorship within a new left-wing platform (Clemente 1990: Chapter 4).<sup>65</sup> In that sense, it is understandable that the last Carlists in power pursued a policy of firm hand against nationalist agitators and burnt their boats in suffocating any rebellion against their reduced power.<sup>66</sup> Aware of losing their face would some late concessions be granted, they pressed for repression and avoided recognizing that radical nationalism could become a serious contender against the regime.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> The move was prompted by the designation of Juan Carlos, grandson of the last crowned Borbón, Alfonso XIII, as Franco's successor.

<sup>66</sup> Lamikiz shows that the main enemy for those interested in setting up local Basque associations came from the local council. In Oiartzun, a nationalist town during the Republic, many town councillors opposed the creation of local association, since they feared it became a "separatist refuge" (Lamikiz 2005: 211).

<sup>67</sup> In such a lately date as 1976, the still Francoist governor of Gipuzkoa complained about legalizing the ikurriña, current official flag of the Basque Autonomous Community. The governor said the flag only represented a limited section of the Basque society –that of the PNV (Urrutia 2006).

However, it was not always in that way. In the aftermath of the war, Carlist leaders aspired to the creation of a regionalist platform that could consolidate their power and attract right-wing nationalists<sup>68</sup> without questioning the Spanish link.<sup>69</sup> To that end, the reinstatement of the provincial fiscal powers and the teaching of Basque seemed to be essential. The Carlist base was initially disappointed with Franco's mistreatment of the *Fueros* and his demotion of Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa as "traitor" provinces (Clemente 1990: 128). Other initiatives, such as the promotion of Basque in rural schools, were also slowed down.<sup>70</sup> Given that the

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<sup>68</sup> Carlist retaliation against nationalists did not reach the level that repression got in other provinces, since in many areas they were members of the same families (Barruso 2005). According to a well-known Basque Carlist writer, it was normal that nationalist volunteers within the Republican army switched sides and join the Carlist battalions (the IV Division of Navarre) after the end of the war in the Basque Country (Ibáñez 2000: 52). Furthermore, friendship networks at the local level cut through identity issues, since kids from nationalist and Carlist backgrounds used to play and hang around together (ibid: p. 26).

<sup>69</sup> After the creation of the new diocese of San Sebastián in 1950, around 100 nationalist priests sent a letter to the incoming bishop to let him know the problems he was going to face. In reaction to this nationalist letter, the governing body of the Carlist party in Gipuzkoa wrote its own letter to the bishop. Carlists said to the bishop that "Por lo referente al nacionalismo vasco, dentro de su masa se han creado diversos matices, cuyo porcentaje es imposible de calcular exactamente. Se perdió la magnífica oportunidad que hubo para incorporarla a soluciones españolas, incorporación que sólo a través del Carlismo era factible (...) Podemos afirmar y afirmamos, que el nacionalismo vasco no constituye en Guipúzcoa ningún problema grave. Es un pequeño grupo perfectamente identificado, el que pone en boca del pueblo sus propias cavilaciones. La verdad es que el pueblo guipuzcoano desea y hasta anhela el respeto a sus legítimos derechos, a su lengua y a sus costumbres y tradiciones, pero ni cree ni intenta una nación distinta de España" (quoted in Esnaola and Iturrarán 1994: 75).

<sup>70</sup> This disappointment with the regime is what leads the Carlist party in Gipuzkoa to write, in the aforementioned letter sent to the new bishop of Gipuzkoa (see fn. 107 above), that: "En cuanto al Carlismo, su gran

PNV's definition of Basqueness had relied on race and surnames rather than Basque knowledge, Gipuzkoan Carlists strongly opted for producing bilingual children in the countryside.<sup>71</sup> Already in 1931, the Carlist-controlled provincial diputación of Gipuzkoa had launched a plan to provide rural kids with literacy both in Basque and Spanish (Calvo 1998: 167). Although the plan was truncated by the Civil War, Carlists took it up again afterwards, to no avail. State decision makers rejected the plan once they realized that Basque priests would be in charge of the teaching responsibilities. For the Francoist central authorities, the gains from creating loyal bilingual subjects were not worth risking the potential spread of nationalism through the school (Calvo 1998).<sup>72</sup>

With regards to the *Fueros*, Carlist leaders tried several times to restore the fiscal autonomy the province had enjoyed before the war, given the importance of having their own fiscal resources to pursue regionalist initiatives. There were some interesting

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masa está descontenta y desilusionada y apartada del regimen actual, siendo contados los tradicionalistas que han aceptado y desempeñan en la provincia cargos políticos y, los cuales, por otra parte, claro está, no han llevado a ellos otra representación que la suya personal" (quoted in Esnaola and Iturrarán 1994: 74).

<sup>71</sup> The relationship between Carlism and the Basque language had always a degree of ambivalence. For instance, Euskaltzaindia, the Academy of Basque Language, was controlled by traditionalist writers, closer to Carlism than to nationalism in political terms. On the other hand, Alvarez Emparantza, one of the ETA founders and a member of Euskaltzaindia himself, recalls how the meetings of this institution were run in Spanish and French but not in Basque. According to him, traditionalists did nothing to foster the language and maintained the meetings with a low profile to avoid confrontation against the authorities (Alvarez 1997).

<sup>72</sup> The government did make some symbolic concessions about the official recognition of a Basque cultural identity, consisting of dancing, singing and the practice of rural sports. Language was going to be praised, but only as a dead language, with no chance of recovery. This strategy did not succeed in attracting the loyalty of Basque speakers (Lamikiz 2005: 219-229).

initiatives during the '60s to contain the increasing nationalist activity with some concessions. Thus, the local council of Tolosa, in the heart of Basque-speaking Gipuzkoa, voted in 1966 for a motion that called for the repeal of the 1937 decree that had revoked the fiscal powers this province and Bizkaia hold since 1878. The Carlist initiative was endorsed by the provincial government, which organized a meeting with the minister about the issue. The minister, a Carlist from Navarre, apparently gave a positive answer, but later qualified his support to simply revoke the offensive definition of the two provinces as "traitors". Interestingly, whereas Carlists in Gipuzkoa manoeuvred to deescalate nationalist demands, the provincial government of Bizkaia, led by members of the Neguri elite, backed the proposition down and rejected to make a common front with the other "traitor" province (Anasagasti 2003: 291-293). Given the division over the issue, local elites did not push it forward.<sup>73</sup> Once violence broke out, Carlist's last chance of keeping power consisted in encouraging the state to repress any dissidence with the intention of avoiding local competition.

The so-called Burgos trial in December 1970 was the point of no return for the local administration in Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa. The regime decided to run an exemplary trial against 16 ETA militants charged with the killing of a police detective. Brought into an old-fashion military court, the defendants took advantage of the trial to spread their ideology and rally the previously-unmobilized Basque society against the expected sentences. The mobilization was a success, since not only large segments of the Basque population but also thousands of people in Spain and abroad went to the streets to demand leniency and protest against the regime. The surprising verdict included sentences far beyond the district attorney's recommendation: nine death sentences and

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<sup>73</sup> A last-minute effort was done in 1975, as the then president of the provincial government proposed in the Spanish parliament the granting of fiscal autonomy to Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa. The repeal was finally passed in October 1976, in the middle of the starting transition to democracy (Arrieta and Barandiaran 2003: 81-84).

519 prison years (Morán 2003: 79). The Basque towns roared against the regime, and the government signed the state of emergency for Gipuzkoa, later extended to all Spain. For the first time, nationalism openly demonstrated in the streets of the Basque provinces (Gurruchaga 1985: 270-274). Finally, 16 days after the verdict, Franco exchanged the death sentences for life terms in prison. Faced with the wave of mobilizations, local elites did nothing to ameliorate the sentences or reduce the tension.<sup>74</sup> On the contrary, regional media and authorities did as much as they could to deter people from demonstrating in favour of a gang of separatist killers (De Arteaga 1971: 222-228). The situation was quite paradoxical, since the large weakness of the terrorist organization due to police blows paralleled the increasing support for the armed struggle and radical nationalism in broad pockets of Basque-speaking Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia. From then on, there was no way out for local political elites but more repression.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> The government too was divided on how to deal with the trial (López-Rodó 1991). Traditionalists and the army wanted to make a show of strength and decapitate the terrorist organization for good, whereas the increasingly powerful technocrats opted for soft measures. Local figures as the then Home minister, Garicano Goñi, a Basque himself, called for establishing the state of emergency in the Basque Country. Franco seemed to endorse this firm-hand strategy, but in the face of broad revolt against the death penalties, he had to lean towards the technocratic group and commute them. The strategy had backfired. As an analyst wrote: “Con este juicio, con el que se pretendía dar un golpe mortal a la Organización terrorista ETA, lo que se consiguió fue precisamente lo contrario. El Gobierno se mostó débil, mientras que ETA aprovechó la ocasión y utilizó el error que suponía agrupar a tantos acusados y tantos delitos, sin distinguir los de sangre de los puramente políticos” (Zaragoza 1993: 210).

<sup>75</sup> It is worth asking whether Carlist authorities could have actually pursued a different path, instead of backing repression. According to the model, a better coordination between state decision makers and regional authorities could have deterred the growth of nationalist violence, if they would have been responsive to some of the initial demands of the second-wave nationalists. Thus, if regional authorities would have

In brief, repression against second-wave nationalists was qualitative and quantitatively higher in the Basque Country. From a quantitative point of view, arrests in the Basque Country resembled a manhunt during the late '60s and early '70s, well before that ETA started to kill daily, whereas arrests in Catalonia were always more target-based. Related to this, the Basque Provinces stayed on top of the ranking of states of emergency declared during the dictatorship. And Gipuzkoa, the province with the highest number of Basque speakers, was the area with more states of emergency and mass searches (Gurruchaga 1985: 292-309). From a qualitative point of view, sentences on nationalists in the Basque Country were noticeably more severe than those on nationalists in Catalonia. It appears as if there would have been a clear mandate of punishing early-risers to head off the movement.<sup>76</sup>

The state became engulfed in a dynamic of action-reaction that contributed enormously to the rise of nationalist consciousness within Gipuzkoa. And once democracy arrived, local political elites were swept away in Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia but showed a stronger resistance in Navarra and Alava because of the absence of the Basque-speaking dimension. Indeed, there was a curious

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formed a unitary front to achieve the restitution of the lost economic rights, it is quite possible they would have succeeded in defusing violence, but they would have also fed some sort of regionalism. Furthermore, the disorganized spread of Church-backed private schools where Basque was taught and used as main language of instruction was overlooked by the regional authorities. Perhaps more support to these efforts could have also contributed to a hindering of the growth of Basque-speaking support for ETA.

<sup>76</sup> Compare, for instance, the 20-year sentence a member of the Catalan FAC obtained in 1972 for carrying out terrorist attacks and the death penalty the ETA member travelling with Txabi Echevarrieta when the latter decided to shoot dead a traffic civil guard that was searching the car, received in 1968. His initial sentence of 58 years was increased to the death penalty one week later. Even the council of San Sebastian and the provincial government of Gipuzkoa asked for a life term instead of execution (Morán 2003: 24).

political phenomenon in the interim years between Franco's death and the first democratic elections. In several towns of Gipuzkoa, local nationalist citizens were selected as mayors by the provincial government. ETA's threats against collaborators<sup>77</sup> had sharply reduced the willingness of inside candidates to risk their lives for a moribund regime. The irruption of the so-called 'Group of Mayors' in Gipuzkoa contributed strongly to counterbalance the dominant presence of the PNV in Bizkaia.<sup>78</sup> In the absence of democratic institutions, the group of mayors used their positions to call for a statute of national autonomy for the four Basque provinces. However, their main victory was the legalization of the Basque nationalist flag, *ikurriña*, in early 1977. After the first general election held in June 1977, the group collapsed and its members headed towards the different nationalist parties in formation. Curiously, the last communiqués of the group were signed by almost all the mayors of Gipuzkoa and a minor number from the Basque-speaking towns of Northwest Navarre. By then, most of these towns had already switched sides. In contrast, mayors in Alava and Spanish-speaking Navarre did have fewer problems to make the political transition. The fear regional authorities in the Basque Country had to deliver concessions to nationalists encouraged state repression, and this violence

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<sup>77</sup> They were not only threats. The mayor of Oiartzun (a current radical nationalist stronghold) was the first to die, four days after Franco's death. The president of the provincial government of Gipuzkoa was killed in October 1976. One year later, his colleague from Bizkaia was also assassinated (Calleja and Sánchez-Cuenca 2006: 193-197).

<sup>78</sup> As the main leader of the Group, José Luis Elgoro, saw it: "El PNV era el partido hegemónico entonces, el único partido abertzale que tenía cara, se le veía la cara y además se consideraban "el Partido", y con ello se interpretaba como que era el único en Euskadi y ellos así lo sentían... [Pero] había ya otro movimiento en el fondo, que todavía no había aflorado y el PNV era consciente de ello, pero ignoraba qué fuerza pudiera tener. Sin embargo, sabía de su existencia" (quoted in Urrutia 2006: 79).



facilitated the incorporation of Basque-speaking constituencies into the nationalist fold.

#### **4.5. Concluding remarks**

In this chapter, I have dealt with one of the most interesting comparisons regarding nationalist violence: the Basque Country vs. Catalonia. I have discussed several hypotheses with some explanatory power but that fall short of accounting for the full outcome. Still, I have taken advantage of some of their findings to offer an alternative argument based on the model presented in chapter 2. To remember, violence emerges when second-wave nationalists with possibilities of growing face autonomous regional elites that are afraid of any change in the institutional status quo.

It has been shown that Catalan nationalism was able to mobilize its whole constituency during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic. Quite the opposite, the Basque nationalist party faced two non-nationalist contenders: the socialist party and the Carlist party. This incapacity gave more chances of success to a second-wave challenge in the Basque Country than in Catalonia, since the potential for growth was larger.

Regarding the role of local political elites, I have described how former right-wing Catalanists were able to take up local institutions and develop a low-level program of defence of Catalan cultural institutions with the passive consent of the state. In addition to maintaining alive the nationalist spirit, this responsiveness to second-wave nationalists seems to have been useful in deterring radical behaviour. Local nationalist elites in Catalonia repudiated terrorism by emphasising former electoral conquests and developing a strategy of anti-regime coalition-making that pointed basically to institutional reconstruction after the forthcoming collapse of the dictatorship.

In the Basque case, local offices were occupied by Carlists, loyal supporters of the Francoist camp during the Civil War.

Despite their political legitimacy, Carlists lost social ground very quickly because of two reasons: the reluctance of the central power makers to allow Carlists to run their own regionalist project; and the process of industrialization having place in the former Carlist rural constituencies of the interior of Gipuzkoa and Northern Navarre, which drained off their foundations of political support. Second-wave Basque nationalists took advantage of this erosion by emphasising a new nationalist identity consistent in speaking Basque. The use of violence to raise consciousness was responded by harsh state repression. Local politicians rejected to endorse nationalist demands, since any potential concession would have jeopardized their grip on power in the two largest Basque Provinces (Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia). Indiscriminate repression, together with potential for nationalist growth, both set the conditions for the emergence of a resilient nationalist constituency assembled around the existence of a violent organization.

## **CHAPTER 5. CORSICA VS. SARDINIA: PRIOR AUTONOMY AND DIFFERENT RESPONSIVENESS**

### **5.1. Introduction**

In this chapter, I move the comparison from the Iberian Peninsula to the Mediterranean Sea. Corsica and Sardinia have several things in common beyond being two of the most picturesque Mediterranean islands. Both islands maintain regional languages that are different from their respective official state languages. Sparsely populated,<sup>1</sup> both islands contain wide areas of mountainous terrain, making social and human exchanges within them problematic, and leading to the secular isolation of native communities from each other. One of the most dramatic consequences of this socioeconomic structure has been the large number of Corsicans and Sardinians migrating out of the island to leave poverty behind and thrive economically (Mattone 1998; Renucci 1974).

But there are more similarities, too. It is not only that Corsica and Sardinia were fully integrated very late into France and Italy,

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<sup>1</sup> Compared to the rest of the Mediterranean Islands, Corsica and Sardinia have very low density figures. Thus, with 260,000 inhabitants (1999), Corsica has 32 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>. Sardinia has 69 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> (for a population of 1,565,000 inhabitants). These figures pale before Sicily's rate (197 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>) or Majorca's rate (214 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>).

respectively; rather, both central governments decided to maintain intact the existent local structures of power based on strong hierarchically-defined patron-client structures. As a result, local actors (notables – also called clans – with their “political families”), relying heavily on the rigid agrarian nature of the local economy, were able to run the regions by exchanging loyalty to the elites in the centre of the country for a free hand in local matters. In sum, the Italian and French states chose to give “control” up to local actors rather than directly taking over local power.

Only in the 1960s did this situation dramatically change. The industrial take-off in Sardinia tore the old social fabric and created new opportunities for political outsiders in search of local power (Soddu 2006). In Corsica, the collapse of the French Empire also jeopardized the old social fabric, since, on the one hand, it cut off the possibility for young Corsicans to work at the Imperial Civil Service and, on the other hand, it involved the return of a large number of former colonial settlers (Lefevre and Martinetti 2007). These shifts produced in the two islands a considerable wave of ethno-nationalist politics during the ‘70s (Roux 2005). However, and here comes the puzzle, this nationalist revival became violent in Corsica but not in Sardinia. In the former, nationalists have been able to set up a robust and durable nationalist violent challenge since 1976 (including several killings); in the latter, even though fostering some unrest, nationalists have kept playing within the institutions and have renounced the use of violence to pursue their goals.

Obviously, there have also been remarkable differences between our two regions, and I will refer to them in order to account for the puzzle aforementioned. Corsica and Sardinia belong to different states, and this may have had an influence on the particular relationship between centre-based political holders and their local counterparts. Thus, the majoritarian run-off electoral system dominant in France made extraordinarily difficult for the nationalists to become politically recognised, whereas the

PR Italian system allowed Sardinian nationalists to get their fair share of the electorate at any time.

Secondly, first-wave Sardinian autonomists were much more successful than the Corsican ones. Before the Fascist take-over in 1923, Sardinian autonomists were able to win a third of the electoral votes (Sechi 1969). At that time, the best that Corsican autonomists could do was to call for abstention, given their electoral weakness (Yvia-Croce 1979). This differential autonomist strength received political momentum in the immediate aftermath of World War II, when Sardinians took advantage of the collapse of the Italian monarchy to extract a statute of political autonomy from the new central institutions. France, on the other hand, remained centralized, with no opportunity for regionalists to get some sort of internal devolution.

Finally, the drastic socioeconomic changes initiated in the 1960s had different demographic consequences. By industrializing Sardinia in a very short time-span, Sardinians could drop their huge rate of outmigration and find jobs in the island. The low population density in Corsica turned this region onto a refuge for thousands of former French settlers, with the resulting breakup of human ecology in the island. In less than two decades, the share of natives living in Corsica went down to 50 percent of its inhabitants.

In the rest of the chapter, I will discuss how these variables have interacted so as to produce a different outcome about the emergence of resilient nationalist violence in Corsica and Sardinia. The comparison seems to be meaningful, since both islands share enough characteristics as to make us wonder why violence broke out in Corsica but not in Sardinia. I spend the next section telling the story of nationalist emergence in the two regions. Once the cases have been presented, I confront the puzzle. Unlike the previous chapter, few works have dealt directly with it, since most studies have tried to figure out why there is terrorism in Corsica but without putting the case into a more general comparative context. Again, I show that most of the hypotheses that can be derived from this literature make sense but fail when confronted

with a larger set of cases. After that, I show how the early conquest of political autonomy in Sardinia modified the preferences of the local political elites, and forced nationalists to play within the existent institutions.<sup>2</sup> To the contrary, local political elites in Corsica were afraid of the emergence of nationalists and tried to block any potential concession to them by cheating central power holders about the potential growth of the nationalist constituency. French overreaction in the face of minor nationalist challenges generated the optimal conditions for the escalation of violence regardless of the weakness of first-wave Corsican nationalism.

## **5.2. The origins of Corsican and Sardinian nationalism: An overview**

In this section, I describe the process of nationalist emergence in Corsica and Sardinia. Given the fact that these processes are less well-known than the rest of cases included in this dissertation, I will elaborate more in-depth on the nationalist rise in Corsica and Sardinia. In order to do so, it is necessary to explain how such under-developed regions remained loyal backwaters of their respective countries. Local elites deterred harmful competitors by extracting office perquisites in the island and job opportunities in the mainland in exchange for loyalty to state institutions. Loose indirect rule avoided the emergence of regionalist competitors but at the same time it did little to smash potential ethnic resources – such as local languages or well-rooted customs of retribution (vendetta).<sup>3</sup> Thus, as soon as these local equilibria collapsed,

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<sup>2</sup> That was also the case in Sicily and the non-speaking Italian regions that were granted political autonomy in the 1947 Constitution. Only South Tyrol, gerrymandered within the Italian-dominated region of Alto-Adige, saw some level of nationalist violence (see chapter 3).

<sup>3</sup> This argument has been theoretically developed by Hechter (2000). Several demands from local actors to give official recognition to this loose type of indirect rule were voiced but to no avail. See the Mottet

aggrieved local populations took advantage of the extremely unbalanced distribution of power between the island and the metropolis to enforce their claims.

*5.2.1. Corsica in France: The reign of the political notables*

With cultural and political links to the Italian Peninsula (part of Genoa until 1768, and with an Italian-like language), Corsica was absorbed by France in 1769, after some unsuccessful Corsican efforts to get independence (Ettori 1971; Ramsay 1983).<sup>4</sup> With this conquest, French decision-makers took advantage of a privileged point in the Mediterranean Sea, but without making huge efforts in integrating it within France. It was only in the aftermath of the French Revolution that Corsica became another province of the state.

Nevertheless, the French institutions did nothing to change the state of affairs in the island. On the one hand, local power was kept in the hands of clan chiefs who occupied internal offices and worked as brokers between the central administration and the island in exchange for loyalty to republican and French *ideology* (Gil 1984; Lenclud 1986, 1988; Pomponi 1987; Ravis-Giordani 1976).<sup>5</sup> By taking under control a huge system of (formal and

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Report in Culioli (1999) and Hauser (1909) for the Corsican case and Birocchi (1998) on Sardinia.

<sup>4</sup> Paoli was the leading character of the Corsican revolution. Praised by Rousseau and the American Founding Fathers, Paoli's liberal ideas found more room in Revolutionary France and in Great Britain than in his fatherland (Vergé-Franceschi 2005).

<sup>5</sup> The success of clan structures of power in achieving that is remarkable. In the dataset that Tilly built on violent disturbances taking place in France from 1830 to 1860 and from 1930 to 1960, only three times does Corsica appear as experiencing contentious political behavior. And all of them corresponded to the second period. On the other hand, and quite extraordinarily, Corsica kept all along the 19<sup>th</sup> century and parts of the 20<sup>th</sup> one its championship in the number of violent deaths

informal) patronage, clan networks ran the island without external opposition. On the other hand, potential internal competitors to clan power decided to out-migrate by taking advantage of meritocratic job opportunities found in the state bureaucracy (*civil-service* positions) (Pomponi 1987). Once prompted to take the “exit” option, the “voice” one was meaningless.<sup>6</sup>

*Patronage* (or *clientelism*, I shall use both terms interchangeably) is roughly based on the exchange of resources (jobs, promotions, lands, titles, licences, contracts, immunity from the law, tax exemptions and the like) for economic and political support (Eisenstadt & Roninger 1980). A world-wide phenomenon, it has been a characteristic of societies with agrarian economies sustained over sizeable non-monetized sectors and a general scarcity of resources.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, poor communications and low levels of literacy have both contributed to the distrust among different groups. As a corollary, all these traits make people rely more on brokers and patrons to get life opportunities than by relying on inefficient distant (if existent) state institutions (Theobald 1982).

The strength of the clan (a set of patron-client relationships) is built in the local level, where several families cooperate among each other to pool as many resources as possible and push contenders out of the market. Then, *family* (and – by extension – *clan*) membership is the key *skill* to thrive in the society, since the fact that everybody knows everybody in small towns makes it

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caused by civil crimes (Weber 1976). Doubtless, the infamous Corsican *vendettas* had something to do with that (Gould 1999, 2000).

<sup>6</sup> Several authors have intuitively understood the importance of this double mechanism. See, for example, Briquet 1997, Lefevre and Martinetti 2007, Molas 2000b and Tafani 1988.

<sup>7</sup> Almost no society has been always free from clientelism. For example it was a common practice, in early modern Europe (Kettering 1986). However, it is also a common practice in developing countries, and even in backward regions within developed states, as Chubb (1982) superbly showed in her study of Southern Italy.



credible.<sup>8</sup> However, not all families have similar levels of power. On the contrary, the existence of hierarchical inequality in the possession of assets makes the role of patrons (clan chiefs) necessary. They work as patrons when managing their own resources. But they turn to brokers when managing public affairs.<sup>9</sup> The slow expansion of French institutions into the island did much to professionalize the role of clan chiefs, who became fulltime politicians.<sup>10</sup> Mainly lawyers, doctors and bureaucrats, clan politicians enjoyed the pleasures of high-politics in Paris (as MP's or senators)<sup>11</sup> while at the same time running the old system of

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<sup>8</sup> Medina and Stokes (2007) model the interactions between politicians supplying "spoils" in exchange for votes and voters. A quite interesting implication of their model is that small-size constituencies not only favour bottom-up accountability (voters can make politicians responsible for their performance) but also the other way around: politicians can monitor how voters vote and punish those not turning out for the winner.

<sup>9</sup> Historically speaking, the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the replacement of the land for public jobs as the main asset in the hands of clan chiefs. Their central political position on the ground guaranteed them to take over the control of those new resources (Briquet 1997).

<sup>10</sup> The existence of growing overlapping (local, provincial and regional) institutions could jeopardize the whole system of clan power due to the creation of new offices. Given that each institution has different jurisdictions, clan networks needed to extend their presence to any potential resource-allocating institution in order to avoid potential competitors. So, two (not necessarily opposite) solutions were implemented. First, the accumulation of offices in the hands of few professional politicians closed more and more the chances to get into the electoral game for outliers. Second, vertical integration of clan networks was pursued by presenting pan-clan electoral coalitions to reap votes beyond their natural-limited constituencies and doing so to cartel the allocation of public resources. Both were extremely effective (Briquet 1997).

<sup>11</sup> Rossi (2001) mentions that from the proclamation of Napoleon II (1851) until the end of the III Republic (1945) it was customary for presidents and prime ministers to have at least one Corsican-born minister in their cabinet. This pattern came to an end in the aftermath of

pork-barrel inside the island (Lefevre and Martinetti 2007: 83-84; Ottavi 1979: 143; Santoni 1976).

Why did this state of affairs pass unchallenged? The Napoleonic heritage offers an explanation. Taking advantage of the impressive reputation of Napoleon Bonaparte (a Corsican himself) inside the republican and patriotic circles, the growing French demand of civil service workers for the rising Empire gave to hundreds of educated Corsicans the possibility of joining the Civil Service, and more concretely, the Colonial Civil Service.<sup>12</sup> As far as I know, there are no systematic data on geographic patterns of civil-service enrolment. However, there is anecdotal evidence that at least allows me to not reject the *exit* hypothesis.

To begin with, geographic data on births for the 1939 “*ecole nationale de la France d’outre-mer*” promotion showed that 7 out of 149 members came from Corsica (VVAA 1998). Taking into account that Corsica was around 200,000 people and France around 30 million at that time, the corresponding Corsican rate would be one position in the whole promotion (one position for each 200,000 inhabitants). However, Corsica afforded seven times more positions than statistically expected!<sup>13</sup> According to Jaffe (1999), “by 1930, it is estimated that 20 to 30 percent of people in the colonial services (military and civilian) was Corsican; in some colonies, this figure rose to 50 percent” (p.53). Lefevre and Martinetti (2007: 113) mention a 1953 study revealing that 20

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World War II. It would take for almost 50 years to see another Corsican back in government.

<sup>12</sup> I cannot deal here with the matter whether Corsicans were more intelligent than people coming from other French regions, whether Corsicans self-selected themselves to this kind of public positions or whether it was only a matter of positive discrimination due to Napoleonic legend. In any event, it’s clear that Corsicans bid for these jobs because of wide facilities to early retirement, something they took advantage of to return to the island.

<sup>13</sup> According to Crettiez (1999a), if there were 56 Frenchmen per 100,000 inhabitants in the French colonies, the average for Corsicans was of 281 (p.204).

percent of the Colonial Service jobs, 22 percent of the Colonial Army and 6 percent of its Officialdom were held by Corsicans; Briquet (1997) corroborates this finding and adds that the experience of working under the state fold contributed to generate pro-French feelings that deterred any internal demands when returning to the island (p.214).

It turns out that the French colonial service worked as the escape-valve for educated youths willing to make a career. Obviously, this segment of the local population built such strong links with France that they had no interest in contesting local sources of power when, under very flattering schemes of early retirement, they were back in the island. The prospects of the island to progress from its historical backwardness paid the price of such a perverse equilibrium.

Still, the prospect for ethnic mobilization did not disappear because of such equilibrium. Demographic data<sup>14</sup> on the French regions at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century show that Corsicans did not match the average French regional figures on indicators as education, economic activity or rural density. For instance, regarding education,<sup>15</sup> Corsica had the lowest schooling (60.9 percent compared to 79.3 percent in France) and literacy rates (62.9 percent compared to 85.6 percent state-wide) in the whole country, only matched by some Brittany provinces. State efforts

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<sup>14</sup> These data come from the 1911 French Census. The matrix database was downloaded from the ICPSR archives. The reference is: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research. DEMOGRAPHIC, SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL AND ECONOMIC DATA FOR FRANCE, 1833-1925 [Computer file]. ICPSR version. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [producer and distributor], 2002.

<sup>15</sup> I developed two indicators of education. First, *schooling rate* gauges the share of children (from 5 to 14 years-old) who know how to read and write confronted with children who don't. Second, *literacy rate* measures the share of over-14-year-old children who know to read and write confronted with children who don't know.

for alphabetizing children in these two regions were very far away from getting good results.

In sum, it is possible to assert that Corsica had not covered yet the path to become plain French (Santoni 1976). But turning a negative argument into a positive one, that is, that failure of French assimilation meant the existence of a rich pool of ethnic resources<sup>16</sup> ready for autonomist mobilization, is more difficult to test with data. Some indirect evidence may help. For instance, the Corsican language was openly spoken and used in the beginning of the century, as surveys collected in the 1990's show. According to the respondents, their older generations (grandparents and parents) would have a worse command of French and a larger propensity to speak Corsican than their siblings and partners (see Tables 5.1 and 5.2).

Even if the survey items are not very good, I think we can take for granted that the Corsican language was still widely known and used in the beginning of the century. Two more indicators work in the way of showing ethnic capital potential. First, French acculturation was low, as I discussed above. And second, immigration came mainly from Italy.<sup>17</sup> This fact rarely introduced tensions in the local society because of cultural affinities.

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<sup>16</sup>Light and Karageorgis (1994) offer us a broad definition of ethnic resources. "Typical ethnic resources include kinship and marriage systems, trust, social capital, cultural assumptions, religion, language, a middleman heritage, entrepreneurial values and attitudes, rotating credit associations, relative satisfaction arising from nonacculturation to prevailing labour and living standards, reactive solidarities, multiplex social networks, employer paternalism, an ideology of ethnic solidarity, and underemployed and disadvantaged co-ethnic workers" (p.660).

<sup>17</sup> On the contrary, out-migration to mainland France ensured wide support for the insertion of Corsica in France rather than, for instance, in Italy (Briquet 1997).

Table 5.1. Relative's French ability

	Very good		Quite good		Little		None		N/A
Paternal grandparents	85	31%	94	34%	54	<b>20%</b>	42	<b>15%</b>	25
Maternal grandparents	91	33%	103	37%	43	<b>16%</b>	39	<b>14%</b>	24
Father	191	65%	90	31%	10	3%	4	1%	5
Mother	198	67%	85	29%	9	3%	3	1%	5
Brother	178	82%	35	16%	0	0%	3	1%	84
Sister	180	88%	22	11%	0	0%	3	2%	95

Source: Euromosaic. 1998. *Corsican Language Use Survey*. Reached at: <http://www.uoc.edu/euromosaic/web/document/cors/an/e1/e1.html>

Table 5.2. Respondent's current language use with family

	Corsican		Corsican & French		French		Other		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
With father	65	<b>44</b>	43	26	39	29	1	1	152
With mother	75	<b>43</b>	44	32	56	25	1	1	124
With partner	31	15	120	28	59	<b>57</b>	1	1	89
With children	10	6	108	31	53	<b>63</b>	0	0	129
With in-laws	45	30	59	29	43	<b>40</b>	1	1	152

Note: N denotes number of observations, and % the percentage. Percentages calculated on valid cases (excluding dk/na).

Source: Euromosaic. 1998. *Corsican Language Use Survey*. Reached at: <http://www.uoc.edu/euromosaic/web/document/cors/an/e1/e1.html>

World War I was a massive patriotic time in Corsica, as many fellow Corsicans died in the trenches of Continental Europe.<sup>18</sup> The end of the War did not bring any large-scale change in local affairs, since Corsicans were “rewarded” with the inalterability of their political system. Some political mavericks trying to spread a new autonomist message faced extreme difficulties in confronting the notables’ electoral machines, on the one hand, and the growing fascist-led Italian claims to bring the island back to the Italian Empire, on the other one. After the French armistice in 1940 and the establishment of a puppet regime, the marginal but existent collaboration of the autonomists with the Vichy regime and later the German occupation in favour of an Irredentist solution cast a long shadow on nationalist claims (Andreani 2004: 134). Furthermore, when Corsica became the first French soil liberated from German occupation in 1943, nobody doubted that the island deserved to be recognised as the champion of Patriotism. It took regionalist movements more than 20 years to recover, and when that happened they framed all their demands in economic terms rather than in cultural ones.<sup>19</sup>

The ecological equilibrium based on notable power in the island and potential alternative elites going overseas did finally collapse together with the French empire. On the one hand, the end of the empire involved the arrival of thousands of colonial settlers who were reallocated in Corsica, bringing its social fabric under stress. On the other, the decay of the French empire

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<sup>18</sup> It is well-known the declaration that in 1989 former socialist French Prime Minister Michel Rocard made in Parliament about this issue: “La France a acheté les droits de suzeraineté sur la Corse à la République de Gênes, mais il a fallu une guerre pour les faire reconnaître! Et la France a perdu dans cette guerre plus d’hommes que pendant la guerre d’Algérie!” (quoted in Franceschi 2001: 70). However, the evidence to support his assertion is scratchy at least, as Giudici (1997) convincingly points out.

<sup>19</sup> Unlike the Brittany case, those Corsican leaders that collaborated with the Vichy regime did not play any role at all in the nationalist revival from the 1960s (Dottelonde 1987: 191).

jeopardized the job opportunities for newer generations of Corsicans. These two consequences set the ground for the emergence of nationalist mobilization.

The effects on the French public of the decay of the empire and, more concretely, of the independence of Algeria were outstanding and long-duration. Institutionally speaking, De Gaulle went back to the presidency again under pleas to resist the Algerian war of independence only for retreating afterwards and signing the defeat. Corsica remained divided between those defending permanence in Algeria by all means (including terrorism and indiscriminate repression) and those longing for a return to domestic issues. Despite these internal divisions, Corsica was picked by the government as the selected place to repatriate former French settlers. The arrival of around 15,000 to 17,000 settlers raised the secularly high rate of immigration in Corsica to the highest one in France (Luciani 1995). Even if some of them had Corsican roots (around one out of four), the massive arrival and the settlement in new fertile and extensive lands in the Eastern plains activated strong feelings of negative discrimination. For instance, the introduction of modern techniques of production jeopardized the market niches of local farmers, which triggered their mobilization against open competition (Ramsay 1983). If we bear in mind the accelerated decrease of active people working in the agriculture sector,<sup>20</sup> we can figure out the existence of a potential resented mass willing to make strong demands on the development of the island. Yet, they needed political entrepreneurs to trigger this issue politically.

The second consequence of the demise of the Empire was the reduction in public-service job opportunities for the increasing Corsican cohorts of educated youths, who benefited from the expansion of the French welfare state. The demise of the colonial

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<sup>20</sup> In absolute terms, the number of farmers goes down from 11,020 in 1962 to 5,276 in 1982. In relative terms, the decrease is much more impressive, since while 22 percent of active people were farmers in 1962, twenty years later only 6 percent remain (Briquet 1997).

administration brought to an end one of the most recurring job options for Corsican young elites. Thus, the concurrence of higher upper-education possibilities for everybody with minor job opportunities generated an inflation of titles and more labour competition (Briquet 1997). The mere fact that Corsicans were not able to find good (white-collar) jobs in the island opened the door to the politicization of economic grievances. In confronting such a backward society, potential new elites could come up with support from discontented farmers and the losers of the clan system of resource allocation.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, as long as ethnic capital was widely available in the island, would-be elites could launch an all-class program to political and economic transformation based on promotion and recognition of Corsican distinction.<sup>22</sup>

The growing realization of backwardness and negative discrimination was promoted by two factors:<sup>23</sup> First, the absence of good jobs for competitive young people as much in the island as elsewhere (drastic reduction of the colonial service); second, the arrival of newcomers to the island being privileged from the centre with huge economic support. Both factors could have taken another mobilizational aspect in any other region. However, in Corsica it took on regional overtones because of the existence of

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<sup>21</sup> I do not consider seriously the possibility of clan cooptation for so many potential members of white-collar jobs. Although some of the main leaders of the movement were tempted to abandon the movement and join the local structures of power – as Edmond Simeoni tells us in his autobiography (Simeoni 1995) – the ecological condition of the island (30 percent of farm jobs in 1962) made this solution impractical.

<sup>22</sup> Thus, the first regionalist movement was a combination of left-wing university students interested in identity issues (such as immigration) and right-wing professionals more oriented to economic issues (such as protectionism and fiscal exemptions). Until 1975 both groups ran together on environmental issues under the leadership of the moderate group (led by the Simeoni brothers) (Dottelonde 1987).

<sup>23</sup> Other factors, such as “windows of opportunity” (Tarrow 1998) also had an influence in the emergence of autonomist movements in Corsica.



ethnic resources which put more political pressure on the centre and by the absence of any industrial strongholds that could have seriously stood for left-wing ideologies. The incapacity of autonomists to make electoral inroads because of the electoral system radicalized the movement and leaned it towards methods based on direct action against settlers earning money out of illegal wine practices – just as *chaptalization* (see below on this). The violent overreaction of the state turned these actions onto a more sustained violent challenge led by a terrorist organization called the FLNC that was born in 1976.

### *5.2.2. Sardinia in Italy: The reign of clientelism*

Sharing with Corsica a significant geostrategic position in the Mediterranean Sea, Sardinia also attracted the attention of the major European powers.<sup>24</sup> After being under Pisan sovereignty, the Aragonese took gradual control of the island, which was already complete by the time the Spanish empire was founded. More than three centuries of Spanish rule were brought to an end with the War of Succession, since its peace treaty conceded the island to the Austrians. The ruling house governing most of the territories in current Northern Italy, the Savoy house, whose main seat was in Piedmont, exchanged Sicily (which had been granted to it by the Treaty of Utrecht) for Sardinia in 1720, with the intention of fulfilling the kingdom status that the latter bore.

Although Sardinia did not have its Bonaparte saga, it had its Paoli. Giovanni M. Angioy led a brief rebellion (1794-5) against the French revolutionary invaders as well as against the Savoy house. He stood for autonomy within the Savoy institutional frame, but also pushed for the end of feudalism. The peace treaty between France and Piedmont finished the experiment of quasi-

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<sup>24</sup> I follow Cardia (1999) and Del Piano (1984) in this short reconstruction of Sardinian modern history.

independence, and brought the island back to the previous loose Savoy rule.

The abolition of feudalism during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century did little to improve the economic conditions of the island. Thus, seeing themselves lying behind the continental territories of the kingdom, Sardinians started to press for full integration to the metropolis. Therefore, when in 1848 the so-called *Perfetta Fusione* was enacted, Sardinians lost their former powers of taxation and autonomous representation in exchange for some seats in Congress and for the Piedmont parliament taking full legislative responsibility over the island (Birocchi 1998). From 1848 until 1914, Sardinian politics were controlled by those standing for integration as the most efficient pathway to socioeconomic development. Yet, autonomists never completely disappeared (Del Piano 1975).

Sardinian politicians during this period were ideologically competitive abroad but clientelistic inside the island. They divided themselves following ideological lines between liberals and democrats in the parliament and voted consistently (Del Piano 1984; Ortu 1998b). However, they seemed to manoeuvre at home to become elected regardless of the ideological nuances. No doubt the socioeconomic structure of the island, with more than 50 of the productive land dedicated to extensive sheep breeding,<sup>25</sup> favoured the clan control, since shepherds were very dependent on land leases, and most of the land was publicly owned (Cardia 1999). As Pais Serra, one of the longest-serving Sardinian congressmen put it:

Che a Roma prevalga questo o quell programma politico poco importa; importa ancor meno che l'uno o l'altro dei partiti parlamentari predomini. Cio che importa è che il loro capo partito sia influente presso il Governo centrale, così che egli possa dominare in Sardegna; e quivi dominando, siccome conquistatore, benefici i

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<sup>25</sup> In 1913, this figure was still 61.2 percent. In Italy, less than 30 percent of the productive land was dedicated to sheep farming (Cardia 1999: 412).

vincitori, annienti i vinti. Sotto le grandi ali di questi piu vasti partiti personali, dei quali se non uno solo si estende su tutta l'isola, varii se ne ripartiscono il dominio in largue zone, pullulano i microscopici partiti personali nei diversi Comuni, tanto piu astiosi e violenti, quanto le ragioni di dissidio sono piu prossime, e il contatto necessario e quotidiano. Per se stessi importanti, senza influenza propria, si mettono alle dipendenze di uno dei maggiori partiti, da cui ricevono in cambio protezione ed aiuto efficace nelle piccole contestazioni locali, e soprattutto protezione personale per ottenere favori, e per sfuggire alle conseguenze delle violazioni di legge e talvolta di delitti. E una specie di graduale vasallaggio che con peggiori e piu tristi conseguenze si es sostituito all'antica soggezione feudale" (quoted in Del Piano 1984: 282-83).

No doubt this image was enforced by the fact that the proportion of Sardinians having the right to vote was extraordinarily tiny – less than 3 percent of the population before 1880 and around 5 percent from that year until 1913. Thus, many representatives were selected with a handful of votes and normally following local notable's connections (Del Piano 1984). Unlike France, Italy did not have an empire that worked as a buffer against demographic pressures at home. Furthermore, Sardinians showed a strong aversion about out-migrating. Therefore, Sardinian representatives had to look for solutions to alleviate local grievances. Their main mechanism was to press for a large plan of railroad construction to connect the main villages and cities within the island. Unfortunately, the plan failed, since no coherent measures were taken favouring more efficient practices in agriculture and farming and some tax decisions injured the local economy as well. Despite several reports commissioned by the Italian parliament, and some special laws earmarked directly for the island (Cinus 2003),<sup>26</sup> Sardinia still lay behind as the century changed: per capita income in Sardinia was almost half of the

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<sup>26</sup> Cocco Ortu, the most long-lived Sardinian MP before WW I, took up several offices in Italian cabinets during the 1890s. His main concern was to pass special laws for Sardinia that settle the problems of land redistribution and water channelling.

Italian average (in 1885-86) and 68 percent of its population was illiterate in 1901 (Cinus 2003: 199) and social banditism was rattling around the island. Even if the entire South was affected, a massive wave of out-migration that pushed one tenth of the Sardinians out of the island between 1900 and 1914 ravaged the countryside (Cardia 1999).

Italian participation in World War I generated large demonstrations of patriotism in the island. Its price generated large frustration. It is thought that the war effort mobilized around 14 percent of the Sardinian population – that is, 100,000 Sardinians. More than 10,000 soldiers were killed. This gigantic cost leaned the internal state of opinion towards the “pro-autonomy” side, since Sardinians became more conscious of their identity. On the one hand, Sardinian soldiers fought together within the Sassari Brigade, and that contributed to erase their internal differences as well as increased their growing awareness of being different to the rest of the country. On the other hand, the isolation of the island during the war severely punished the domestic economy. Inflation made Sardinians become aware of the large cost they were paying for the pro-Northern protectionist economic policies in place. After 70 years of Perfect Union, Sardinians started to ask for devolution.

The 1919 national elections certified the end of pre-war Italian politics with the emergence of new political actors – mainly, the catholic Popular Party (PPI) and the Socialist Party (PSI). The extension of suffrage and the adoption of a PR electoral rule had aimed at attaining this goal, and breaking up clientelist politics (Atzeni 2002: 37). In Sardinia, the electoral victory of liberal notables did not foreshadow the striking electoral record of the Party of the Demobilized Combatants (Ex-Combattenti). Catching one out of four votes, the Combattenti<sup>27</sup> pursued a program of land

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<sup>27</sup> The Ex-Combattenti Movement attracted in Sardinia a rural constituency of extensive shepherds, small-land farmers and low-level service workers under the leadership of intellectuals and the urban petty bourgeoisie (Atzeni 2002: 92-93).

reform and public work investments with autonomist overtones that successfully drained off the social basis of support for the Catholic party (Atzeni 2002). Officially organized as the Sardinian Party for Action (Partito Sardo d'Azione –PSd'Az) after 1921, its emphasis on decentralization as the pathway to foster socioeconomic development within the island forced the other major political groups – Catholics and Socialists – to also call for some sort of autonomy for Sardinia (Cardia 1999; Mazzette 1993). The PSd'Az repeated its good electoral results in 1921 and 1923, but to no avail. The fascist coup brought to an end the autonomist electoral experience. Given the fact that Fascists had almost no popular hold in Sardinia, Mussolini tried to attract the PSd'Az with the trick of administrative devolution in exchange for local support for the Fascist regime. No deal was reached, and the PSd'Az became illegal,<sup>28</sup> with a small number of Sardist followers switching towards Fascism (Cardia 1999: 367-68).

As in Corsica, sources of ethnic capital were rife in Sardinia. Although it is impossible to know how many Sardinians spoke their regional language in the aftermath of WW I, it is reasonable to assume that most of them did. For instance, a recent survey commissioned by the Regional Government showed that around 70 percent of Sardinians speak the regional language despite the fact that its learning is not compulsory in the educational curriculum (Oppo 2007). Additionally, Sardinian figures on education, economic activity and rural density in the turn of the century also lay very much behind country-average rates (Di Felice 1998). In disagreement with this state of affairs, Sardinian intellectuals, such as Lussu and Gramsci, started to think that

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<sup>28</sup> Why did the PSd'Az not rebel against the Fascist system? As I have argued throughout this dissertation, first-wave nationalists do not have incentives in challenging because they prefer keeping intact their networks rather than betting their destruction if the challenge goes wrong. In this case, the PSd'Az leadership discussed about the advisability of mounting an insurgency against the Fascist regime, but they thought it was more secure to wait for its own demise (Cubbedu 1993).

integration had not been such a good idea after all and that former regional institutions could be used to set up a more efficient program of socioeconomic development (Cardia 1999: Ch.8; Brigaglia 1995). The fresh memories of that recent past also contributed to this renaissance.

The collapse of Fascist Italy and the breakup of the country between occupying powers, Fascists and Partisans left Sardinia on its own once again. This time, the Allied Authorities designed a Sardinian-born Italian Army commander as Main Administrator of the island<sup>29</sup> with the objective of re-establishing order and the provision of basic foodstuff. As soon as political parties became public, the issue about regional autonomy resurfaced again. Strikingly, all fringes of the ideological spectrum seemed to stand for devolution: Catholics –now articulated around the new DC-, Communists (PCI)<sup>30</sup> and Sardists (PSd’Az) likewise had put their hopes against Fascism on the creation of some sort of regional power (Bellu 1996). As a leader of the PSd’Az recognised:

Assistiamo oggi a questo impressionante fenomeno: tutti i partiti politici, qualunque sia la loro tendenza o colore, si professano autonomisti. [...] non vi e ormai aspirazione a successo ne diritto di cittadinanza in Sardegna ad alcun partito se non professandosi autonomista (quoted in M. Cardia 1992: 196).

Yet, these parties did not share the same thoughts about what type of devolution they wanted. Catholics and Communists accepted the need for regional institutions, but they purported a

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<sup>29</sup> My account of this period basically relies on Mariarosa Cardia’s extremely well-documented book about the crafting of the Sardinian Statute of Autonomy (Cardia 1992). Other relevant sources are Accardo (1998), Ortu (1998a) and Sotgiu (1996).

<sup>30</sup> During the 1<sup>st</sup> Congress of the Sardinian PCI there were some opinions against decentralization. Thus, a splinter was created called the Sardinian Communist Party. In order to avoid this party becoming a real communist competitor, the PCI moved towards “regional autonomy” (Cardia 1992: 122).

body with administrative powers rather than a full legislative one. On the contrary, Sardists wanted the regional institutions to take over most of the powers related to the island, keeping currency, foreign affairs, judiciary matters and defence onto the state's hands. Besides, Sardists called for full federalization, but the PCI was particularly against this measure, since they feared that federalization would have put unacceptable limits on the state capacity to alter the then current socioeconomic conditions in the country.

On the other hand, all Sardinian political parties were surfing on the right wave. Fascist pro-assimilation policies had backfired with the result of creating serious demands for secession in Sicily and the non-Italian-speaking territories of the country. The case of Sicily is particularly interesting. After being liberated by the Allied Powers, there were wide rumours about the possibility of Sicily becoming either independent or annexed to a major power (the US) (Finkelstein 1998). The emergence of a separatist party with a considerable following gave some credit to the hypothesis, and forced the central government to quickly grant political autonomy in 1946 regardless of the fact that Italians had not even voted yet for the Constituent Assembly. Thanks to one of its most authoritative political leaders, the then Minister Emilio Lussu, Sardinia kept the right to accept a similar statute as to the one granted to Sicily, but with no chance to amend it. The Sardinian commission in charge of elaborating the draft refused the deal, as they thought the Sicilian project did not match well the needs of Sardinia.

This rejection came to be fatal for the autonomists, since the beginning of the discussions on the new Constitution meant that all other legislation would be subordinate to its final outcome. Electoral strategies did seem to play a role in this rejection too. Local elections held in 1945 were won by the Sardinian DC with a comfortable margin over the PCI and the PSD'Az. The left-wing parties (PCI and PSI) proposed an All-Sardinian unitary electoral platform for the constituent elections due by mid-1946 (one month after refusing to buy the Sicilian statute) with the intention of

showing pro-autonomy strength. However, the Sardinian DC moved quickly against the platform, and the PSD'Az had to follow suit if it did not want to lose ground in the competition for rural voters. As the DC won the largest plurality again in the island (41 percent against 15 percent for the PSD'Az), that signaled to the drafters that Sardinia was not really eager to get devolution (Cardia 1999). This signal was essential to understand the final outcome of the statute.<sup>31</sup>

In consequence, the exclusive powers that the Sicilian statute carried could not travel to the Sardinian one.<sup>32</sup> Symbolically, the new regional parliament in Sardinia could not even be named as such. Instead the parliament would be identified as the "Consiglio", and the regional government as the "Giunta". But in terms of power, the Sardinian drafters were able to include an article that no other statute had. Article 13 called the central government to fund a Plan for the Rebirth of the island (Piano di Rinascita) whose main lines of allocation would be basically decided by the regional institutions. This article will be, henceforth, the main instrument for Sardinian politicians to reduce the gigantic gap between the socioeconomic conditions in Northern Italy and those in the island (Soddu 1998). At the end, leaving perhaps the PSD'Az aside (and not all of its members), Sardinian parties promoted the Statute to quicken the process of

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<sup>31</sup> According to some politicians of the period (as Sanna Randaccio), the main reason why the Sicilian statute passed un-amended is because the Sicilian representatives in the Constituent Assembly remained united in the defence of their statute, whereas the Sardinian ones remained very much divided along party lines –regardless of the fact that all of them were in favour of autonomy (Carcia 1992: 419). An alternative argument would say that the cost of losing Sicily was bigger than losing Sardinia, since the former made up four times the population of the latter. Thus, the separatist threat would have prompted the government to concede quickly.

<sup>32</sup> I do not discuss here why these powers remained on paper rather than being implemented. See, for instance, D'Atena (1991: 361-380) and Chubb (1982).



modernization of the island. They pursued economic integration rather than cultural exceptionalism (Pintore 1996: 13).

In brief, devolution settled nationalist claims down until the 1970s. During the first two decades of regional government, a massive economic plan orchestrated by the DC was triggered with the goal of transforming Sardinia from a backward rural territory into a well-connected industrial area. However, the uneven spread of the development plan, the bet for industrial sectors that were heavily affected by the Oil crisis during the 1970s, the mistreatment of the extensive sheep farming sector – the main source of economic income for the rural countryside – were all motives for mobilization. As in Corsica, the emergence of a new young middle class interested in the quality of economic development as well as in identity issues shaped the second wave of nationalist mobilization. Unlike Corsica, nationalists were able to take over the old PSD'Az and make electoral inroads within the regional institutions. In spite of some talking about the usefulness of using violence to bring Rome under pressure, nationalists remained consistently within the constitutional pathway.

### *5.2.3. Summary*

The experience with dictatorship in France and Italy had different effects on Corsica and Sardinia in the aftermath of WW II. Pro-autonomy claims from different Italian territories forced the new Republican regime to pass a constitution that granted devolution for the islands as well as for the territories with alien languages. The arrival of political autonomy dramatically changed the look of Sardinia. The new polity normalized regional politics and set the rules for further pro-devolution change if a new electoral majority would have risen in favour of.

The story on the other side of the Strait of Bonifacio was fairly different. Corsica was hailed as the most Patriotic land in French soil, because it was the first liberated region. Therefore, no effort was made to shift the internal balance of power and the island

remained under notables' grip.<sup>33</sup> The collapse of Algeria worked as an exogenous shock, though. French settlers were repatriated and relocated in Corsica and a major economic program was passed to give them large lots of land and financial help. This jeopardized the fragile equilibrium within the island and created a coalition of aggrieved youngsters and farmers that raised the flag of devolution to bring to an end arbitrary action by the government. Local notables reacted siding with the government and signalling the weakness of potential nationalism. The government responded with heavy repression against autonomist claims, and that fed further nationalist violence.

### **5.3. Hypotheses for a puzzle: Why did violence break out in Corsica but not in Sardinia?**

In this section I describe how scholars have theoretically accounted for nationalist violence in Corsica and confront their hypotheses with the empirical record. As Corsica and Sardinia are cases that have lain at the margins of the English-language academic world, the number of researchers looking at these cases is meagre. Still, it is possible to identify here again two sets of hypotheses to explain political violence in Corsica. On the one hand, some scholars have emphasised the role cultural institutions play in the emergence of resilient nationalist violence. Thus, cultural arguments have singled out the relevance of local previous experiences of political violence in Corsica, compared to the lasting presence in Sardinia of practices of social violence that leave no room for politically-motivated violent *entrepreneurs*.

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<sup>33</sup> In the aftermath of the war, the Communist party tried to compete for the leadership of the island against the notables. However, the policy of National Unity pursued by all democratic parties in Paris was broken in Corsica with the intention of isolating and ultimately suffocating the Communist danger. The strategy succeeded and the Communist party retrenched to some rural enclaves, where they started to behave as notables as well (Rovere 1984).

On the other hand, nationalist violence has been seen as a consequence of the degree of internal competition within the regional polity. Thus, those nationalist movements controlled by working-class constituencies seem to have a larger propensity to jump into violence as long as they fear the ecological equilibrium within the region is in jeopardy. In Sardinia, moderate nationalists turned the old autonomist party into the political fold for radicals and secessionists and therefore continued leading the movement. In Corsica, quite the opposite, moderates were unable to keep within their ranks those with a larger preference for secession. Radicals used violence to get their own constituency and apparently succeeded in the effort.

In between these two hypotheses, some authors have identified the clan institution as the responsible of violence. By defending cultural practices that deter political competition, notables “forced” nationalists to use violence in order to reach political visibility and build their own constituency. Hence, Corsican “clan power” could account for nationalist violence in the island, whereas an open competitive regional polity in Sardinia would have made meaningless for nationalists the use of violence with mobilizational purposes.

To begin with the first hypothesis, the idea that prior violence determines further episodes of violence is well-established in the media. Serbs killed Croats during the ‘90s because Croats killed Serbs during World War II (Woodward 1995). It is not only a matter of revenge, but also the availability of techniques of violence as legitimate resources to settle differences. Curiously enough, Corsica and Sardinia have historically been crime-ridden regions. Still, thugs do rarely become *guerrilleros*. In a very influential account of the underdevelopment of Sardinia before the set-up of the industrialization plans, Cabitza (1968) set the ground for this hypothesis by saying that:

Il bandito sardo è, quando lo è, un vindicatore; il guerrigliero è un “riformatore sociale”. Il bandito sardo è legato con tutto se stesso al suo mondo arcaico e condannato, e non perche lo consideri giusto e migliore ma solo perche in esso puo ancora in qualche modo

sopravvivere (...) Il guerrigliero è tutto proiettato verso un mondo nuovo e migliore (...) Il bandito sardo cerca, e spesso trova, la solidarietà della sua gente, ma non è mai in grado di appoggiare le lotte popolari per la terra, per la giustizia sociale, la libertà e tantomeno è in grado di dirigerle: il suo è un programma di sopravvivenza individuale contro l'ordinamento dato" (p.11-12).<sup>34</sup>

If there is no way that rural bandits turn out to be political activists and if the economic conditions of the country make almost it impossible to foresee the emergence of a class-based insurgency, the existence of a sustained pool of social bandits would leave no room for alternative violent players and therefore, it would deter nationalist violence (Marongiu 1981; Pigliaru 1975). Crime in Corsica, on the contrary, seems to fit another pattern. Social violence in this island has been historically driven by patterns of retribution (Giudici 1997: 136; Gould 1999; 2000; Wilson 1988). The infamous vendetta is not perpetrated by professionals of violence, but by average villagers who suffer an offence against their kin and claim for retaliation. In the face of a remote and condescending state, this mechanism may travel beyond the symbolic boundaries of one-to-one conflicts and set the ground for politically-led attacks against local rivals. Thus, French nationalists infuriated by the secession of Algeria revenged against the state with a wave of bomb attacks. This episode was followed by local farmers enraged against the uneven allocation of land and credits between natives and recent settlers. And from there on, the FLNC pretty much took on the issue of responding against state repression. Indeed, many of their killings could reasonably be identified as "revenge" killings (Crettiez 1999c; Giudici 1997: 136).

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<sup>34</sup> Sardinian anthropologist Bachisio Bandinu makes the same point: "Il banditismo tradizionale, quello che ha il suo punto di riferimento nel codice della vendetta, e difficilmente convertibile all'ideologia politica terroristica, non in quanto terroristica, ma in quanto ideologia politica" (quoted in Bellu & Paracchini 1983: 66).

This hypothesis seems to cover well some of the dynamics of violence in Corsica, where the different terrorist groups have limited themselves to kill symbolic targets and consequently have been unable to escalate.<sup>35</sup> Unfortunately, it makes almost no contribution in accounting for violence. The past use of violence does not necessarily determine its further occurrence (Laitin 1995). In addition, the existence of a gun-friendly culture could have affected both regions similarly, regardless of the fact that bandits rarely turn into guerrilla fighters.

The existence of internal divisions within the nationalist movement has also been recognised as an important factor to account for violence in Corsica. As we showed in the previous chapter, this hypothesis comes from Waldmann (1997). According to him, middle-class control of the nationalist movement makes the switch towards violence costly. Working-class control of nationalist movements can trigger violence as long as they think that the survival of the ethnic group is strongly endangered by the state. Roux (2005) has implicitly followed a similar argument to explain why violence broke out in Corsica but not in Sardinia.<sup>36</sup> For him, moderate nationalists in Sardinia were able to right-track second-wave radicals by heading the party towards a pro-

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<sup>35</sup> Broadly speaking, terrorist organizations use violence with two strategies in mind. The first one is to raise consciousness and mobilize their potential constituency. In this case, the level of violence is limited and the available targets reduced (police officers with a significant record, members of rival groups, informers, drug-dealers). The second strategy aims at draining directly the state with a high level of violence that allows for higher discretion in targeting (Sanchez-Cuenca and De la Calle 2009).

<sup>36</sup> With an exception, though. Given the fact that the two regional economies were barely industrial, it is not strictly correct to say that working-class radicals were leading the nationalist movements. In both cases, those taking the lead were petty-bourgeoisie workers, public employees and professionals (Roux 2005: 481; Spiga 2006). Indeed, after the Piano di Rinascita, Sardinia actually had a relevant number of industrial workers. Nonetheless, they were much more attracted to the PCI.

secession stance. On the contrary, secular splitting within the autonomist ranks in Corsica together with the moderates' inability to get concessions through the electoral game contributed to let radicals build their own core group of support around the use of violence (Roux 2005: Ch. 6).

From a general standpoint, the empirical record seems to fit this hypothesis well. Radicalized Corsican nationalists split themselves from the moderate current and thoroughly endorsed the use of violence against the centre, as they saw their ethnic brethren as being irremediably damaged by state policies on the island. In Sardinia, even if hundreds of radicals flooded into the nationalist party, moderates were able to keep it running within the rules of the game. Besides, ethnicity was not a big issue in Sardinia, since immigration was almost inexistent there.

However, and like in the previous chapter, this hypothesis does not explain the most interesting part of the story: why radicals took over the nationalist movement in some places but not in others. Fears of ethnic extinction do contribute to violence but do not tell us why moderates show a better capacity to control their radicals in some places than in others. Roux adds other variables to explain why this takeover took place in Corsica but not in Sardinia. However, many of them are endogenous to the mere process. According to him, the moderate autonomist party in Corsica was right-wing, but the same could be said about the PSD'Az before 1979 (Petrosino 1992). Besides, Roux identifies the political elites in Sardinia as more willing to bargain with autonomists than in Corsica without realising that this fact is absolutely dependent to the existence of political autonomy in Sardinia, as I will argue below.

An intermediate account of violence comes from Crettiez (1999a, 1999b). For him, violence is a tool to trigger ethnic awareness, mobilize potential nationalists and build a constituency capable of draining resources out of local notables' hands:

La violence, qui motive le discours indépendantiste, semble donc peu destiné, dans les faits, à concrétiser la rupture avec l'Etat central.

Elle répond bien plus à un processus de différenciation par rapport au pouvoir décisionnel régional dénoncé comme corrompu et affairiste et d'affirmation politique sur la scène locale (Crettiez 1999a: 112-13).

According to Crettiez, clan power kept a well-built grip on social as well as political affairs in the island during decades. But the end of the Colonial Empire, the increase of tourism and the creation of a new professional middle class aimed at jeopardizing its sources of power. No matter how, clans still managed to ironclad the institutions against internal challenges of power. Paradoxically, violence would then have been an instrument to allow nationalists to get into the institutions and become a credible political partner. Instead of stopping violence, the combination of repression and concessions to nationalists – as the creation of the Regional Assembly in 1982 with a nationalist-friendly PR electoral system – set the path for further rounds of it. From then on nationalists will play the “ballot and armalite” strategy:<sup>37</sup> use the parliament to address your claims and show your strength, but use violence to multiply their weight and maintain the nationalist constituency united.

I think this hypothesis explains well how events evolved, and may also account for the absence of violence in Sardinia. The repeated electoral failures of Corsican autonomists signalled their incapacity to become legitimate contenders and made their claims seem ludicrous to the French government's eyes. Feeling themselves confident enough as to build a political constituency around the idea of devolution, they tried to pass local politicians over by setting off a violent challenge against the state. The latter's overreaction put a dynamic of action-reaction in motion that fed Corsican violence. In Sardinia, on the other hand, the existence of regional institutions made the nationalist revival in the late 1970s easier. All that Sardinian nationalists had to do was

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<sup>37</sup> Developed by the PIRA during the 1980s in Northern Ireland, this strategy was pursued to force the British state to negotiate directly with them by showing their electoral strength (English 2003).

to bring more nationalist votes into the regional parliament and push for more devolution. The nationalist failure here was motivated by its electoral weakness in the face of very competitive regional parties, rather than by institutional deadlock.

Unfortunately, Crettiez's account does not give any hint about why decision-makers at Paris should have not reacted in a different way against nationalist challenges. By assuming that state decision-makers are always opposed to concessions, the role of local politicians disappears from the picture. However, as several authors have contended (Loughlin 1989; Tarrow 1977), the role of local politicians as mediators between local demands and state policies is fundamental to understand how law makers take decisions. My model follows this insight and considers that state officers rely on local political elites to make up their minds when decisions must be taken on territorial issues. In the next section I move to describe this process and compare why violence broke out in Corsica but not in Sardinia.

#### **5.4. An alternative explanation: Prior autonomy and differential responsiveness**

In the previous section, I discussed several hypotheses that tried to explain why nationalist violence emerged in Corsica but not in Sardinia. Generally speaking, violence follows when moderates cannot control the radicals' recourse to more direct-action methods in their fight for a stronger nationalist constituency and a reverse to ethnic extinction. What is missing in this account is under what conditions radicals overtake moderates. I contend that the relationship between nationalists and local politicians is essential to understand this missing link. As my argument goes, violence should follow when local politicians that are for the most part dependent on the status quo face nationalist challenges with high chances of growth. If they think concessions are going to jeopardize their power, they will have incentives to negate nationalist strength and force the government not to concede at all.



By over-reacting with repression, the state gives radicals credit before the nationalist field, help them build a new constituency and set the path for further rounds of violence.

In this chapter's comparison, Corsican nationalists faced a well-entrenched caste of local politicians whose platforms did not depend on ideological politics or the balance of power in Paris. Interested in deterring nationalist competition, they repeatedly sent the message to Paris that there was no real demand for devolution.<sup>38</sup> Their inability to make electoral inroads pushed nationalists towards direct-action activities, which were harshly repressed by the state. Repression induced the rupture of the nationalist movement, with one side setting up a terrorist organization (the FLNC) and the other one still standing for constitutional means of action (the UPC). Either way, these two political forces captured votes from the fringes of notables' constituencies with little capacity to make inroads until the early '90s.

In Sardinia, the regional institutions granted in 1948 produced a very competitive party system, with the two main regional parties in the island being also the two main parties in the country – namely, the DC and the PCI. Thus, the re-emergence of nationalism from the 1970s forced these parties to be responsive to the regionalist electorate if they wanted to keep (the DC) or achieve (the PCI) regional offices. As working-class areas were safe PCI strongholds, the DC always kept an eye on the potential autonomist electorate to avoid defections towards the PSd'Az. The fact that nationalists could directly signal their strength in regional elections carried two implications: firstly, that local politicians would have more difficulty in cheating the central government; and secondly, that nationalists would have more difficulty in

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<sup>38</sup> Interestingly, some local notables had called in the 1950s (during the IV Republic) for economic concessions to redress the poor economic shape of the island. The implementation of economic plans for the recovery of the island addressed this claim. However, after De Gaulle's comeback and the emergence of regionalist agitation, notables became staunchly anti-devolutionist (Loughlin 1989: Ch. 7).

rejecting the constitutional path and betting on violence. The state's soft reaction with mild concessions was quite successful, indeed, and violence did not emerge at all in Sardinia.

In what follows, I develop these themes more in-detail. Overall, I assess whether local politicians in Sardinia were effectively more dependent from their central headquarters and more responsive to nationalist claims than politicians in Corsica.

#### *5.4.1. The triggering event*

Nationalism in Corsica and Sardinia rose from the 1970s onwards. In both regions, new political entrepreneurs took advantage of identity-based concerns to build up new nationalist constituencies that pursued giving a larger say on regional issues to islanders. Even though these groups drew on similar themes – such as the promotion of regional languages, the redefinition of more-sustainable schemes of development or the defence of the physical environment of the islands – the ultimate triggering event was different in Corsica and Sardinia. Whereas fears of ethnic extinction because of large-scale immigration worried deeply most of Corsican nationalists, it was the uneven outcomes of economic development that Sardinians cared about most.

Historically speaking, Corsica has been a territory of immigration and out-migration at the same time. Due to its closeness to the Italian peninsula, thousands of Italians settled in Corsica during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Culturally similar, they thrived economically in the artisan and commercial sectors and became assimilated up to a certain point. On the other hand, thousands of Corsicans had to leave the island in order to find sufficient resources to survive elsewhere. Going mainly to the macro-region Côte d'Azur and Paris-region inside the country, and to the French colonies outside, they alleviated the demographic pressures within the island. However, the independence of Algeria cut the flows coming out of the island without putting an end to those coming in. Additionally, the increasing attractiveness of the island as a

major touristic resort for French continentals put more pressure on the natives.<sup>39</sup>

The turning point came with the leak of a confidential report commissioned by the French government in 1970 about the economic possibilities for the future of Corsica.<sup>40</sup> The so-called Hudson report envisioned two future scenarios for the island: the first one foresaw a touristic enclave where natives would be decimated and overtaken by foreigners coming to the island to work or spend long-time vacation periods; on the other hand, the second scenario foresaw an island whose economy would balance farm-based and agricultural local sources of income – such as high-quality wine making – with top tourist resorts (Andreani 2004: 140-141). The fact that decisions taken by the French government pointed to the first scenario contributed to the inflammation of nationalist demands.

One of the most apparent examples of fear of ethnic extinction was the swift collapse of the Corsican language (see section 2 above). Its declining pace was somewhat halted by a revival of middle-class teachers and committed youngsters trying voluntarily to teach and learn the language beyond official school time (Lefevre and Martinetti 2007: 38). Despite these efforts, the linguistic strongholds of the island – that is, the rural hinterland – did not show any concern about language and regularly voted for notable candidates. This failure to mobilize potential supporters prompted nationalists to blame local politicians for letting the

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<sup>39</sup> The tertiary sector went up from 40 percent in 1957 to 52 percent in 1973. The secondary sector increased around 10 points during the same years (from 16 percent to 25). Finally, the primary sector was halved during this period, from 44 percent to 22 percent. The last figure was still very high by French standards (Roux 2005: 380).

<sup>40</sup> The first issue raising the passions of the regionalists was the campaign against the installation of nuclear plants in the island in the early '60s. One decade later, another environmental issue – the dump of industrial residuals close to the Corsican coast by the Italian conglomerate Montedison – also mobilized hundreds of Corsicans against the inaction of the French government.

island go adrift. Rather than attacking Paris, autonomists made very clear that notables were the main rival (Crettiez 1999a; Simeoni 1995).

In Sardinia, immigration was not a big issue. Even though thousands of locals abandoned it, the island did not attract large numbers of migrants.<sup>41</sup> Instead, identity issues were articulated here around the uneven distribution of the outcomes of the “Piano di Rinascita”. Set up in 1962 in accordance with Article 13 of the regional Statute, the plan was the brainchild of DC politicians. On paper a huge effort to quickly industrialize the island, the plan also helped DC politicians spread their local networks of support across the country. Consequently, the plan paid off: the Sardinian DC won landslides in the 1961, 1965 and 1969 regional elections, very much at the expense of the autonomist PSD’Az that almost disappeared electorally (Corrias 1991, Fadda 2008: 104).

The plan had some success in reducing the income gap between the region and the mainland – the Sardinian per capita GDP in 1974 reached the 82.4 percent of the Italian average, from the 75 percent in 1960 (data from the Italian Statistical Institute - ISTAT). But it failed in modernizing the farming sector – the so-called *pastorizia*.<sup>42</sup> The authorities’ attempt to gather the livestock inside large farms was painted by nationalist writers as a plan to uproot the Sardinian core identity identified with extensive sheep farming and strong kinship networks (Cabitza 1968, Pintore 1974).<sup>43</sup> According to these authors, this attack signalled the

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<sup>41</sup> Between 1951 and 1971, the population of Sardinia increases endogenously in 200,000 inhabitants. According to Pintore (1974), other 200,000 Sardinians left the island during these two decades.

<sup>42</sup> The primary sector went down from employing around 51 percent of the population in 1951 to 24 percent two decades later. Active population employed in the secondary sector went up from 23 percent to 35 percent in 1971 (Roux 2005: 381).

<sup>43</sup> In Sardinia, there were also other events that contributed to radicalize the youth constituency. For instance, the existence in Sardinian soil of a NATO-sponsored military base produced some episodes of

failure of political autonomy, as regional institutions had been more interested in promoting economic development at any cost than in defending customary Sardinian practices and identity. This criticism opened the door for the re-emergence of nationalist demands, with language and rural issues ranking highest. As regional institutions had some actual power with respect to them, nationalists concentrated all their efforts in bringing enough support before the Sardinian parliament and government as to change the course of regional policies. In the end, although identity issues were also at stake in Sardinia, nationalists did not consider that they were worth triggering violence.

#### *5.4.2. Local political elites and state responsiveness*

##### *5.4.2.1. Local political elites and state responsiveness in Corsica*

It has been repeatedly said in this chapter that the loss of Algeria was very dramatic for the Corsican people, but not only because of their consequences. As in 1958 the French government showed its determination to reach an agreement with Algerian rebels (the FLN), the coup d'état led by General Salan in Alger was enthusiastically followed in Corsica (Silvani 1976). Thus, when General De Gaulle stepped in again to take the presidency one of the first places he visited was the island. Things changed very quickly, though. Two major pro-development programs approved by the De Gaulle government had to be redirected towards the settlement in Corsica of thousands of former pied-noirs fleeing from the Maghreb.<sup>44</sup> This sparked the flame of

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social mobilization in opposition to military misbehaviour against locals (Pintore 1974).

<sup>44</sup> Leaving purely pragmatic political considerations aside, there were three reasons to select Corsica. A large number of pied-noirs had Corsican ascendancy. Second, the postwar eradication of malaria from the Eastern plains of the island "discovered" new fertile lands that apparently did not present problems of property rights. Finally, the

regional contestation and also local politicians decided to take distance from De Gaulle. Still, on the occasion of the 1968 referendum,<sup>45</sup> most of the regional French representatives (MPs) endorsed the project (Silvani 1976). Consequently, Corsica was one of the few regions where the “yes” vote won (54 percent against 46 percent). De Gaulle’s resignation and the abandonment of the project made it impossible to find out whether Corsicans had voted either for De Gaulle or for devolution (or both reasons at the same time). However, the fact that Corsicans endorsed all the referenda De Gaulle proposed regardless of the topic at play points to the first answer (Loughlin 1988: appendix).

Political life in Corsica has been overwhelmingly dominated by two families since the end of the war. The French tradition of accumulating offices (Grémion 1976) allowed the Giacobbi family to control the Northern side of the island whereas the Rocca-Serra family did the same in the Southern side.<sup>46</sup> Associated with the left-wing Radical party, in the case of the first family, and with the right-wing Gaullists in the case of the second, both families did

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extremely low population density could be increased with the addition of highly-skilled active workers.

<sup>45</sup> The actual question asked was about reforming the senate and encouraging administrative devolution by giving more powers to the regions. In practical terms, the referendum was the trick De Gaulle devised to enforce his power after the May 1968 events. The move went wrong, since a coalition of anti De Gaulle groups campaigned against the measures and won (with a low margin: 53 percent against 47). In the aftermath of his defeat, De Gaulle decided to resign and move out of politics.

<sup>46</sup> Corsica has seen three generations of Giacobbi politicians holding offices in the island. The old Paul Giacobbi (1896-1951) was major of Venaco (the Giacobbi stronghold, a rural area in the mountainous interior of the island), senator in Paris and minister in several cabinets. All these offices except the ministerial positions flew to his son, Francois (1919-1997), who also took care of the administrative body of the Northern department. Again, all his regional offices were inherited by Giacobbi’s son, Paul. A similar story could be told about the Rocca-Serra (Andreani 2004: 93).

not have any problems in reaching agreements across the ideological divide any time that their interests were in trouble. By building strong coalitions of lower-level notables, these two groups were able to take advantage of the run-off majority-rule electoral system that put a premium on alliances against minor competitors – such as the regionalists. Extremely powerful at home, these political families enjoyed a very limited standing in Paris. Thus, the continuous presence of Corsican ministers in cabinet almost ended with the war and was not recovered until 1994, when a long-time neo-clan leader, Jose Rossi, became minister of industry (Rossi 2001).

The combination of unaccountable state policies with clan electoral victories left little room for regionalists. As one of their main leaders put it:

S'il y avait en deux millions d'habitants en Corse, elle n'aurait pas été traitée come elle l'a été dans l'ensemble français parce qu'il y aurait en un poids électoral et politique. Et puis la France aurait en sur les bras une guerre de libération, ça c'est évident (quoted in Bernabeu-Casanova 1997: 227).

Early autonomists' fight for devolution<sup>47</sup> and a PR electoral system aimed basically at creating regional institutions that accommodate what it was already normal in street politics.<sup>48</sup> However, regionalist incapacity to run electorally led notables to assume that autonomist's strength could be downgraded before the state. Some of the most conspicuous Corsican notables said to

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<sup>47</sup> As mentioned in footnote 38, clan bosses had pressed during the early 1960s to get some type of administrative powers like Sardinia and Sicily, a call somehow contained in De Gaulle's project to decentralize the country. However, as soon as the first regionalist movements started to raise the flag for decentralization, clans retracted and backed state disinterest on the issue (Silvani 1976: 144).

<sup>48</sup> Regionalists started to run a summer congress in Corte (Central Corsica) from 1971 with increasing activities, participation and public diffusion.

government officials that nationalists were not a real threat so that their demands should not be taken seriously (Kyrn 67: 35).<sup>49</sup> And when the government finally decided to send in 1974 a high-ranking French bureaucrat (Liber Bou) to Corsica to write a report about Corsican grievances, notables asked for the re-districting of parliamentary seats and the creation of two different departments within the island – not surprisingly, one in the Northern side, and the second in the Southern side.

Initially, the Bou mission was sympathetic to the autonomists, since he met them several times and accepted some of their main claims. Thus, he took on the need of redressing farmers' criticisms about malpractices carried out by recent settlers that jeopardized the reputation of the whole sector. He endorsed the need for a university in the region.<sup>50</sup> And he was also close to the idea of setting up an elected regional body with powers on issues just as tourism, agriculture and culture. Notables reacted very negatively to this news. They accused regionalists of promoting secession by breaking the unitary cadre of the Republic. Bou contemporized and declared that: "Meme 200,000 Corses partisans de

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<sup>49</sup> A reporter of Kyrn told the following story: "Pendant le procès d'Aléria, Michel Pierucci, maire de Corte, a révélé qu'an cours de l'entretien avec Pierre Messmer [former prime minister], lors de la visite de ce dernier en Corse, en mars 1974, il avait entendu les des deux chefs politiques insulaires assurer au Premier Ministre que les mouvements autonomistes n'avaient, en Corse, ni base ni racines dans la population. Eux aussi depuis, ont peut-être changé d'avis, mais (...) ils se sont toujours arrangés pour ne pas le reconnaître" (Kyrn 67: 35).

<sup>50</sup> The Corsican University had a very complicated birth. A long-time claim of the first regionalists, local notables also endorsed the idea, but trying to take economic advantage by influencing on the place of location. In the contest between Ajaccio (the main southern city) and Bastia (the main northern city), Corte became selected. Corte was a small-size town just located in the middle of the road connecting the two largest cities. Its fame came from being the capital as well as the site of the university that Paoli created during the small period of independence in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.



l'autonomie n'infléchiront pas l'Etat" (quoted in Poggioli 2006: 44).

Finally, the report was killed in the Regional Council,<sup>51</sup> where a preamble calling for a regional assembly elected with a proportional electoral rule was cut off, whereas notables' claims passed untouched.<sup>52</sup> Thus, the short-life Regional Council was divided into two French departments. Even if there was some rationale for this decision, nobody doubted that the concession had been a success for local political elites.<sup>53</sup> Broad disappointment with the final outcome of the report pushed nationalists towards more risky activist pathways.

We are thus brought to Aléria. In the 1975 summer conference organized by the main autonomist party, the ARC, Corsican university students spending the year in mainland France but going back to the island on vacation made famous a slogan: "Edmond [Simeoni, the main leader of the organization], le canne à pêche ou le fusil".<sup>54</sup> A survey that had been circulated some months ago by the autonomist leadership among their rank-and-

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<sup>51</sup> The Regional Council was a clan-controlled all-island body whose members were democratically elected since 1973 until 1975, the year in which the limited council's powers were transferred to the two new Corsican departments. Corse had not even been a single region until 1971, when the island was separated from Côte d'Azur (Silvani 1976).

<sup>52</sup> Minor concessions in favour of the nationalists were the change of the absent ballot system and the creation of a public society for the rural development of the island (Simeoni 1995: 92-93).

<sup>53</sup> Regarding the re-districting of parliamentary seats, it was also broadly considered a strategy fostered by Rocca-Serra to assure himself of having a seat in Paris. It is well-known that when Rocca-Serra lost the presidency of the General Council of the Corse-du-Sud new department in 1976, the then Prime Minister Chirac asked to Rocca-Serra: "Alors, Monsieur le député, fut-il couper la Corse en quatre maintenant?" (quoted in Kyrn 64: 7).

<sup>54</sup> Apparently, Edmond Simeoni used to visit Corsican students in French universities to attract them to the movement and to instruct them about the need to take up arms in defense of the motherland if necessary (Poggioli 2006: 47).

file asking about the possibility of using violence to force the government to reconsider its attitude towards devolution gave a fair amount of support to violence, as long as there were no loss of innocent lives (Dottelonde 1987: 6-7). Simeoni finished his closing speech with these warning words:

Offrir sans ostension, sans recherché d'honneur, avec uniquement l'esprit de sacrifice au service d'une cause sacrée, la liberté et le sang de ses militants (quoted in Silvani 1976: 227).

Simeoni had already made explicit his call for self-sacrifice on behalf of the Corsican people in an article published in the August issue of the monthly magazine *Kyrn*. In that article Simeoni blamed Corsicans for the actual state of affairs:

Le Peuple Corse, s'il commence à se dessiller, reste trop souvent empêtré dans ses contradictions, ses intérêts mesquins, et les jeux stériles du clan: il n'a pas suffisamment pris conscience de son identité collective en péril et n'a surtout pas adapté son comportement à l'urgente nécessité de la lutte salvatrice (quoted in *Kyrn* 56:125).

The call for direct action materialized some days later, with the occupation of the Depeille wine cellar at the end of August 1975. Located in the well-communicated road going across the Eastern plain between Bastia and Porto Vecchio, Aléria combined high visibility and fairness in the claim. The autonomists had already denounced some months before the existence of a number of wine-making settlers that recur to illegal practices to increase their sales. These practices were brought to the knowledge of the administration, but to no avail, since the government took no action at all. Consequently, with the occupation of the cellar autonomists wanted to attract popular support for their cause by raising a highly popular concern about the unfair advantages of settlers. A dozen young nationalists led by Simeoni occupied the cellar carrying hunting weapons, but with the intention of

following a public schedule that would call the occupation off in two days time.<sup>55</sup>

Things quickly deviated from their expected course. As major authorities were on vacation, the minister of the Interior, Michel Poniatowski, took up the issue and decided to send several battalions of policemen to the area to surround the cellar to avoid escape. They called on the occupants to surrender immediately. Simeoni rejected this and asked local politicians to intermediate between Paris and the cellar. However, the most relevant regional representatives were absent and took no action in favour of the autonomists (Dottelonde1987: 16).<sup>56</sup> The minister gave the order to assault the cellar and a very confusing exchange of fire followed, with two policemen being killed from shots of unidentified origin. The next day Simeoni gave himself up to the police in exchange for some sort of immunity for the rest of occupiers. In the immediate aftermath of the occupation, local politicians reacted strongly in favour of police intervention and against nationalists (Bernabeu-Casanova 1997: 109; Dottelonde1987: 48). But the violent follow-up in Bastia, where demonstrators and policemen were caught in gun battles with the result of 2 dead raised an outcry against police methods. Only days later, when demonstrations were organized to support Simeoni's action and police misbehaviour, most local politicians switched sides and endorsed petitions to liberate him from jail (Poggioli 2006; Santini 2000: 210-211; Simeoni 1975).<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> It is interesting to note that similar occupations had already taken place in other parts of France, but they ended as planned without police intervention (Simeoni 1975: 162-63).

<sup>56</sup> The mayor of Calvi, X. Colonna, did come over the cellar to talk with Simeoni. He told him the government was not willing to allow the event, since it would report a political victory for the nationalists. Another politician (representative N. Alfonsi) reassured him about the inevitability of the armed intervention if they did not lay down their arms and finish the occupation (Dottelonde1987: 17).

<sup>57</sup> In the aftermath of the event, a survey showed that 62 percent of Corsicans saw the occupation as legitimate. Additionally, 71 percent

Following the events, the first meeting of the government outlawed the main regional party ARC under charges of involvement in the occupation<sup>58</sup> and with the agreement of the main regional political leaders. Poniowski's main argument was quite strategic: "l'influence jugée restreinte dont bénéficie le mouvement des frères Simeoni au sein de la population insulaire permet de penser qu'aucune réaction violente n'est à craindre" (quoted in Dottelonde 1987: 59). Electoral and survey data seemed to confirm what the government had long been thinking about Corsica: there is no need to concede if nationalists are so electorally weak (Ottavi 1979: 19). His judgment could not have been more erroneous.

The government's over-reaction radicalized nationalist youngsters further, who started to advocate violence against the state more forcefully (Lefevre and Martinetti 2007). Simeoni released a letter from jail in which he did not back this step ahead and explicitly recommended to follow constitutional means to achieve devolution. The disappointment of the young with Simeoni's standpoint led to the first politically relevant split of the autonomist movement, with the youth moving out towards violence. In May 1976 several small groups carrying out symbolic attacks coalesced together into a new organization called the

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declared to be in favour of some degree of regional government. According to Silvani (1976: 237-38), the French government did not concede because it feared its potential consequences in the rest of the country. Still, another survey showed just the opposite picture: 35 percent of Corsicans standing for political autonomy against a solid 55 percent in favour of the status quo (Dottelonde 1987: 64).

<sup>58</sup> 20 years later the then home minister, Charles Pasqua, offered the key to understand government's behaviour. According to two nationalist leaders involved in peace talks with the minister, "il [Pasqua] nous donne les raisons de son revirement en nous disant qu'à cette époque nous représentions 5 % de la population, mais que désormais il est obligé de tenir compte du fait que les nationalistes pèsent 25 % des voix aux élections" (Santoni and Rossi 2000: 78).

National Front for the Liberation of Corsica (FLNC).<sup>59</sup> Although radicals had been throwing bombs since the late 1960s, political violence became another common trait of the Corsican political landscape after Aléria and the creation of the FLNC (Poggioli 2006). In reaction to FLNC terrorist attacks an anti-autonomist undercover group named FRANCIA was set up with the intention of threatening nationalists.<sup>60</sup> The dynamics of action-reaction-action fed further rounds of violence and increased the number of prisoners and people targeted by terrorists (Poggioli 2006: 125).

As for the moderate side of the movement, Simeoni was released after spending only 16 months in jail, since social pressure had weighed strongly on judges' decision about dropping high treason charges (Dottelonde 1987). By then, it was plainly clear that neither the incumbent nor local politicians were willing to make and endorse concessions. On the other hand, the socialist candidate for the 1981 Presidential elections, F. Mitterrand, strategically endorsed a plan to grant a regional parliament for Corsica elected with PR electoral rule.<sup>61</sup> As socialists had no electoral ground in the island, they tried to attract the autonomist constituency by playing the pro-devolution card. Corsicans voted largely against Mitterrand and none of his candidates got a seat in the island districts (the Giacobbi's group got three seats and Rocca-Serra kept his).

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<sup>59</sup> According to Lefevre and Martinetti (2007: 150) and Giudici (1997: 22) some of these groups had their roots in the fight against Algerian independence. Thus, right-wing groups opposed to the end of French rule in Algeria accused De Gaulle's government of betrayal and henceforth switched sides, becoming staunchly Corsican nationalists.

<sup>60</sup> In the face of the first FLNC direct attacks against police forces, some of the main clan leaders threatened the nationalists with using the "customary law" (vendetta) to avenge their actions (Poggioli 2006: 67).

<sup>61</sup> The Socialist Party had defended a law proposal in the French Parliament to grant powers to the regions. The Mitterrand's proposal was less ambitious, though. For instance, it did not give unique jurisdiction to the regions on any issues. On the contrary, all legislation passed by the regional chambers should be ratified in Paris.

However, Mitterrand won the election. Distrustful of clan electoral bosses, the new socialist administration tried to marginalize them by fostering its plan of special devolution for Corsica within the framework of a general administrative decentralization of power for regions. He also decreed a general amnesty for Corsican prisoners without blood crimes and shut down the Court for Special Crimes. To the despair of the local bosses, the PSF leaned towards the nationalists – moderates and radicals alike – when it came to shaping the new autonomy (Giudici 1997: 154). It did so because the Defferre statute manufactured new regional institutions whose main goal pointed to appease nationalists by giving them electoral visibility.<sup>62</sup> Thus, a 61-member regional chamber was created with a nationalist-friendly PR electoral rule to fill its seats.<sup>63</sup> In addition to defining the whole region as a single electoral district – instead of maintaining the North/South division –, the minimum threshold was extraordinarily low – around 2 percent of the votes.<sup>64</sup> Besides, the statute granted the creation of several agencies and offices to

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<sup>62</sup> As the journalist Dominique Antoni wrote in *Kyrn*: “La base sociale qui défend le statut stricto sensu est mince. En Corse elle est nettement minoritaire. Elle représente, au maximum 10 % du corps électoral. Le pouvoir sait cela” (*Kyrn* 126: 16).

<sup>63</sup> Briquet (1997: 172) includes data on the kinship lineage of the main regional politicians during the first half of the 1980s. Whereas 62 percent of politicians from clan forces had any close relative who had already hold an office before them, the proportion was zero for nationalist politicians. Socialists remained in the middle, with a proportion of 25 percent. In other words, nationalists seemed to recruit from the outskirts of the clan system, by attracting those losing with the spoils system.

<sup>64</sup> Corsica was selected by the Socialist administration as the experimental region to test its project of devolution. Thus, the idea was to spread Corsican institutions to the rest of the country later, as it happened in 1986. However, the Corsican statute kept some minor special powers – such as some competences on the cultural domain- and some symbolic characteristics –the Corsican assembly was called “parliament” – not owned by the other regions (Acquaviva 1989).

oversee the application of laws in the region. Its main executive powers remained in the economic and cultural domains (Bernabeu-Casanova 1997: 147). On paper, this set of rules allowed nationalists to avoid the run-off trap and add up their votes to get political representation. The electoral formula aimed at accommodating nationalists within an institutional body with the intention of deterring their bet for the pathway of violence.<sup>65</sup> However, the bet failed for several reasons.

Firstly, local political elites loudly complained about an institutional innovation that, according to them, involved in practice the breakup of the common Republican framework – for instance, they argued that, at that time, there was no other French chamber whose members were selected with PR.<sup>66</sup> Under the messy soup of candidatures for the first regional elections held in 1982, notables had some trouble in coordinating among each other and selling their mostly non-ideological messages, but they quickly managed to reorganize their power and impose limitations on regional institutions (Olivesi 1987).<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Obviously, nationalists also manifested their disappointment with a project that fell short of recognising the existence of the Corsican People. However, the general understanding was that the project came closer to nationalists' preferences than to notables' ones.

<sup>66</sup> It must be said that once devolution was implemented, not all clans behaved in the same way. The Giacobbi clan, entrenched in the rural, ethnic-ridden areas of the northern part of the island, had much more to suffer from nationalist electoral consolidation and consequently it did not stop attacking nationalist practices. On the other hand, Rocca-Serra remained less aggressive against the nationalists and also embraced some of their claims (in 1983 the amendment calling for the application of the Corsican language in the place names and its use in the educational system; or the recognition of the Corsican people in 1988). This attitude proved very beneficial for him, since he was able to capture some offices thanks to nationalist votes (Lefevre and Martinetti 2007: 208; Santoni and Rossi 2000:132).

<sup>67</sup> Rocca-Serra said to the Home minister in Parliament: "Le statut que vous nous octroyez et que nous avons combattu, c'est à nous qu'il va

A fresh cabinet made up of a left-wing-oriented combination of notables and new-comers (as the PSF) failed and the high fragmentation of the chamber hampered the creation of a new majority. The institutional deadlock was overcome with new regional elections in 1984. This time, the right-wing parties were able to give the presidency to Rocca-Serra. Two years later, in 1986, the whole country held the first regional election, and Corsicans voted again for their regional parliament. This time the electoral system had dramatically changed in favour of the notables: first, the unit to allocate seats was no longer the region but the department (from 1986);<sup>68</sup> and second, from then on there would be a run-off for those lists having more than 5 percent of the votes in the 1<sup>st</sup> round. Both measures reassured clan strength since they no longer needed to field inter-provincial lists with some coherent regional program. On the contrary, clans could put forward department-based lists made up of lower-rank power holders (for instance, mayors and/or general councillors) who would attract hundreds of their town voters (Arrighi 1987).<sup>69</sup> The change paid off, and Northern and Southern notables came together to endorse Rocca-Serra again.

Secondly, nationalists mismanaged their successes. Even if moderate and radical nationalists likewise claimed credit for the Defferre statute, the former reaped the electoral benefits, since the FLNC decided to boycott the race. Regarding the moderate branch

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revenir, à nous qu'il va profiter car nous aurons la majorité dans l'assemblée de Corse et donc le pouvoir" (quoted in Kyrn 128: 21).

<sup>68</sup> Notables had protested against the fact that departments were not recognised as the electoral unit in regional elections. The application to Corsica of the rule used for the rest of regions finished this anomaly.

<sup>69</sup> The strength of clan politics at the local level is really impressive. For instance, a study of nationalist electoral behaviour from 1992 to 2004 shows that in towns where a party list gathers more than 50 percent of the votes nationalist candidates get half of the votes than in towns where there is no such a dominant party (De la Calle and Fazi 2009). Obviously, those electoral landslides take place in small towns where the mayor is usually a member of the winning party list.



(the UPC), they received 11 percent of the vote and 7 seats in the first assembly, enough to become the arbiter of the process of designating the president. Although they were open to bargaining with the other parties, they imposed such restrictive conditions on endorsing a coalitional government that they killed any possibility of its survival.<sup>70</sup> Once the government collapsed some months after taking office, the UPC bore a large share of the responsibility, since they were accused of behaving irresponsibly. The charge of collusion with the terrorists also hit hard. Despite Simeoni's many declarations against terrorism,<sup>71</sup> the escalation of violence between the police forces and the FLNC did not help either. In the end, when elections were repeated in 1984, the UPC

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<sup>70</sup> The UPC called for an explicit condemnation of clan bosses and practices. As the left-wing government on the brink was going to be also supported by clan inmates, the no-bargain nationalist demand was outrageously rejected (Kyrn 134: 18). Some months later, feeling that the radicals were making significant advances among its electorate, the UPC decided to retreat its representatives from the regional parliament. That also hurt its reputation as a serious political party (Bernabeu-Casanova 1997).

<sup>71</sup> Simeoni's public statements used to include some degree of ambiguity. Thus, after leaving prison in 1977, he said that he would always stand out against repression, but that did not guarantee automatic support for the FLNC prisoners (Bernabeu-Casanova 1997). On the other hand, UPC members were also involved from time to time in violent events –as the Lorenzoni affair in 1980. Lorenzoni was a prominent UPC member, who was supposed to be set up by para-legal police forces involved in the dirty war against the FLNC. As Lorenzoni received a tip-off beforehand, some nationalists waited for the arrival of the mercenaries and ambushed them. Then, they were transported to Ajaccio, where a public press conference was organized to denounce the trap. The event finished when police forces raided the hotel where hostages and guards were staying. The affair contributed to the dynamic of polarization, since nationalists largely complained about police methods, while clan followers shouted against the scarce respect for the law that nationalists showed (Lefevre and Martinetti 2007: 156-57; Poggioli 2006).

viewed how its votes fell dramatically – from 10.6 percent to 5.2 percent (and from 7 to 3 seats).

Although autonomists and nationalists seemed to appeal to different constituencies,<sup>72</sup> the UPC fall in 1984 correlates well with the increase of the political branch of the FLNC (then called the MCA). The FLNC had also taken some credit for the Defferre statute,<sup>73</sup> even though they considered in the end that too little had been given to the region and consequently rejected it.<sup>74</sup> After observing a truce that had lasted for 2 years (from the Presidential Campaign to the pass of the Defferre statute), the FLNC resumed violence with a higher intensity. Long discussions within the organization ended with the bet for more “armed propaganda” and the broadening of potential targets.<sup>75</sup> The first intentional killings took place in 1982, quickly followed by dirty-war episodes<sup>76</sup> that

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<sup>72</sup> According to Roux, moderate autonomists attracted votes from middle-classes and professionals, whereas radical nationalists fared better between farmers, artisans and students (Roux 2005: 481).

<sup>73</sup> Before the opening of talks, the FLNC tried to escalate its level of attacks. According to Poggioli (2006): “Avant les élections présidentielles, nous insistons sur la nécessité de ne pas baisser la garde et de continuer à occuper le terrain de l’action armée. Nous pensons qu’il faut toujours montrer que notre organisation est opérationnelle et intacte notre capacité à multiplier les actions: nous serons ainsi d’autant plus en position de force pour peser sur la situation” (p.203).

<sup>74</sup> FLNC’s main claims were: recognition of the Corsican people, corsicization of the jobs, the right to self-determination and all-region institutions with exclusive jurisdiction on several issues (Poggioli 2006: 170).

<sup>75</sup> However, as Poggioli (2004: 78), then front speaker of the FLNC recognises, the organization opposed to carry out indiscriminate attacks. There were some discussions about the convenience of targeting clan bosses, but the idea was rejected, because FLNC members feared that those attacks would bring the island close to a civil war.

<sup>76</sup> On June 17 1983, a leading FLNC member, Guy Orsoni, disappeared. Nationalists blamed the government and its para-legal forces for his disappearance and killing. The FLNC killed later 5 people in response to Orsoni’s death.

engulfed the island with violence (Poggioli 2004).<sup>77</sup> Realizing that not running for the regional parliament had been a mistake, the FLNC created a political front organization (the MCA, which replaced the illegalised CCN) that absorbed in 1984 half of the nationalist constituency (5.2 percent and 3 seats). Calling for nonparticipation on Parliamentary daily proceedings, the FLNC very much collaborated to discredit the potential success of the Defferre statute.

Finally, the erratic behaviour of the socialist French government contributed to the failure as well. The electoral gains the PSF made in the regional elections came to nothing very quickly, as soon as the party had to share the electoral platform with other notables to overcome the electoral threshold (Nicolai 1987). Besides, the collapse of the left-wing experiment in regional office favoured the notables' capture of power and its freezing. Finally, the use of dirty-war techniques against the nationalists also brought pressure on the socialists, as noted above. The combination of "stick and carrot" policies sent confusing signals to the nationalist constituency, since neither enforced the moderates, nor weakened the radicals. The start of cohabitation in 1986 made matters worse, since the divided government was unable to find a solution that meet nationalist claims without jeopardizing notables' concerns. Successive rounds of negotiations with the fragmented terrorist groups<sup>78</sup> would prove successful in

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<sup>77</sup> The number of bomb attacks escalated during those years (Crettez 1999b).

<sup>78</sup> By the end of the 1980s, Corsican nationalism had become a credible rival in the clan market. With one of the largest unions (the STC), presence in the schools, the university and the regional media, and around 15 percent of the votes at regional elections, its only crux was its secular trend to fragmentation. The FLNC split into two groups in 1990. Rather than strategic or ideological issues triggering the split, territorial rivalries about the distribution of the FLNC funds seemed to be in the origin of the process (Giudici 1997). Some years later a fierce internecine nationalist war took place between these two and other new-born groups

reducing the levels of violence, but at the expense of strengthening the radicals' capacity to compete against the moderate nationalists and the emerging group of notables whose power is based on the new sources of the economy rather than on the control of the budget.<sup>79</sup> The abrupt end of violence,<sup>80</sup> together with the failure of the last peace process<sup>81</sup> has left a political standoff between the secular clans, who are trying to adapt themselves to the new tourism-based foundations of the economy (with the Southern leaders in a better position to politically survive than their Northern partners), the neo-clans, who practice a more pro-

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leaving more than 20 nationalists dead. Again, business rather than ideology was to be blamed (Rossi and Santoni 2000).

<sup>79</sup> Pierre Joxe, the Home Minister, pursued a reform that settles nationalist grievances for good. Co-sponsored by Jose Rossi, one of the most powerful neo-clan leaders, the new project gave the island the condition of "collectivité territoriale", a legal figure only used thus far for New Caledonia. The new 1991 statute recognised the existence of the "Corsican people". Institutionally, it promoted the division of powers by creating an executive responsive to a regional assembly with larger powers. However, the Constitutional Court overturned the recognition of the Corsican people some months later. The regional elections held in 1992 saw the best nationalist electoral performance ever. Divided in two lists, they collected almost 1 out of 4 votes in the island.

<sup>80</sup> Leaving aside the isolated assassination of the Prefect Erignac in 1998 and the nationalist internal killings, terrorism had almost disappeared by the beginning of the new century. Instead, the number of killings carried out by mafia-like organizations has escalated.

<sup>81</sup> The Matignon Plan sponsored by Prime Minister Jospin tried to settle nationalist grievances forever by smashing the last fortresses of clan power. Thus the plan envisioned the disappearance of the two Corsican departments and the approval of a restrictive law on office accumulation. However, his defeat in the first round of the 2002 presidential election brought to an end the project. Home minister Sarkozy took up the plan, but with a less ambitious project of devolution. As the new statute needed popular ratification, the 2003 referendum became a vote of confidence on the right-wing government. By a very tiny margin (51 percent against 49 percent), the new statute was defeated and nothing changed (Lefevre and Martinetti 2007).

devolution discourse and economically pro-business, and the fragmented nationalists, who remain open to the new sources of income as long as they give preference to locals. Once they have fulfilled the goal of creating a nationalist constituency, nationalists only need to leave away their never-ending internal quarrels to become a serious political partner within the regional institutions. The slow but inexorable decay of the traditional clans may no doubt encourage this transformation.

#### 5.4.2.2. Local political elites and state responsiveness in Sardinia

The nationalist fight in Sardinia followed a very different path from the 1970s onwards. After the implementation of the Sardinian statute, the successive electoral victories of the DC in the island as well as in the whole country<sup>82</sup> favoured the promotion of the first Program for the Renaissance of the island (Piano di Rinascita), which aimed at putting the region onto the path of economic development.<sup>83</sup> The Efisios Corrias regional presidency between 1958 and 1966 was based on an industrialist program backed by the autonomists of the PSD'Az. By giving the PSD'Az several positions in government (with the much influential department of Economic development), Corrias was assuming high stakes. Despite the fact that their seats were not strictly

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<sup>82</sup> Unlike Corsica, Sardinian politicians had much influence in Rome after the war. Two DC politicians from Sardinia achieved the highest honor in Italy, the presidency of the Republic (Segni in 1962 and Cossiga in 1985). From the other side of the ideological spectrum, Berlinguer, the long-serving leader of the PCI, was also of Sardinian origin.

<sup>83</sup> The first ten years of regional autonomy were dominated by clientelist politics, with the Sardinian DC replacing former Liberals in allocating the state largesse. However, the conservatives were ousted from power by a new generation of DC politicians self-called the Young Turks, led by Cossiga, Dettori and Soddu. For them, autonomy would be meaningless without economic development, regardless of the cost it could bear with respect to the previous equilibrium of forces within the island (Fadda 2008: 62-72).

necessary to govern, he thought that giving key positions in cabinet to the autonomists would decrease social contestation against economic change and enforce his autonomist stance (Corrias 1991). Corrias' bet succeeded because he was able to keep the PSd'Az's electoral constituency marginal and eventually capture it in 1974 (the PSd'Az got 3.1 percent of the votes in that election).

Still, the fruits of the uneven development started to emerge very quickly. In 1966 the DC group in the Sardinian rural province of Nuoro revolted against the unequal allocation of funds and pressed for a change of course. The departure of Corrias opened a long period of acute political instability in the regional government, with 9 different governments in 13 years (Fadda 2008).<sup>84</sup> The DC moved towards the left by replacing the electorally exhausted PSd'Az by the PSI and other minor parties as partners in government. But the economic crisis dried off the funds coming from Rome that were to subsidize the second plan of development. The by-product of the development plans was the emergence of a group of middle-class youngsters disappointed with the incapacity of the statute to combine the defence of economic development with the defence of Sardinian identity (Soddu 2006: 53). Unlike Corsican notables, the Sardinian DC leading figures never concealed the internal state of affairs to the state decision-makers. For instance, the then regional president, Del Rio, made clear as early as in 1967 that the new situation called for new strategies:

Si va facendo strada in alcuni ambienti e con motivazioni che non possono essere sottovalutate, un sentimento nuovo dei diritti del popolo sardo. Si stanno manifestando (...) tendenze politiche nelle quali il termine 'separatismo' e il bisogno di svincolarsi dalla soggezione a decisioni paternalistiche (...) ricorrono con sempre maggiore frequenza, situazione che ho sentito il dovere di

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<sup>84</sup> Not causally, Nuoro was the province where the PSd'Az got its best electoral performance (Lallai 2001: 191-208).

prospettare (...) al presidente del consiglio e a tutti i ministri che ho incontrato in questo periodo (quoted in Salvi 1973: 595).

Two issues were mostly discussed. In the first place, the generalization of universal education had brought the regional language under pressure, since all teaching was conducted in Italian. The fact that the regional administration had not manifested any prior concern about the fate of the language irritated this new constituency. On the other hand, the second issue was the defence of local sources of agriculture and sheep farming against the encroachment of politically-assisted market forces. The realization that the *pastorizia* was consciously being led to extinction by regional inaction increased the tide against the government (Ortu 1987; Spiga 2006).

Articulated around four bilingual monthly newspapers, *Su Populu Sardu*, *Nazione Sarda*, *Sardegna Europa* and *Sa Sardigna*, the new nationalist groups tried to raise public consciousness with the promotion of non-partisan campaigns in defence of Sardinian identity. Thus, in 1977, the campaign for Bilingual Recognition attracted thousands of citizens' signatures in favour of passing a law that would recognise the possibility of studying Sardinian in the elementary schools. As the statute offered citizens the opportunity to propose legislation providing they collect more than 10,000 signatures, these groups took advantage of the institutional path to set up the campaign. With more than 14,000 signatures collected and party support from almost all of the ideological spectrum, the initiative was an astonishing success for its promoters. Once the initiative arrived in parliament, a commission was established to overview the proposed scheme and consider potential amendments (Pintore 1996).<sup>85</sup> This

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<sup>85</sup> According to Pintore (1996), the communist group in parliament was very much against the initiative, whereas the DC symbolically backed it. Thus, the DC proposed three years later a new decree that tried to save the original initiative by cutting some of its less appealing measures for the rest of groups – just as the mandatory compulsory learning of Sardinian in the schools. The next government, made up of a

accommodating reaction somehow cooled down the expectations, but the mobilizational effort had already done its job.

When the next campaign - the reform of the statute - was proposed, different viewpoints emerged among the groups that had sustained the campaigning effort for bilingualism. On the one hand, the majority advocated that the best way of having the reform done was across electoral politics. Therefore, they put their eyes on the then inactive PSD'Az, which offered a consolidated party name to run for reform within the institutions. The turning point in this story came with the XIX Congress of the PSD'Az held in 1979. In this congress, the young leadership took over the organizational offices and put forward a clear-cut program calling for independence.<sup>86</sup> In practical terms, the party platform stood for granting the condition of tax-free area to the island and the approval of the bilingual law. Capable of stopping the party's electoral decay in 1979, the time of these new nationalist cohorts would arrive five years later.

On the other hand, the minority refused to endorse the electoral path and kept working on the fringes of the system. Even though not explicitly backing the use of violence, they played with the idea for a while. This idea was not new to the island, indeed. Simon Mossa, a leading theorist of the separatist branch of the PSD'Az<sup>87</sup> had already written in the late '60s about this:

Se noi non chiariamo una volte per tutte, di fronte al popolo sardo, la nostra posizione rivoluzionaria, le nostre istanze sociali (in termini

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coalition between the PCI and the PSD'Az, had bilingualism as one of its main programmatic points. Yet, when the law proposal came to the floor, communist representatives voted against it and consequently did not pass.

<sup>86</sup> Until that congress, the party's official policy had advocated political autonomy within the cadre of the Italian Republic (Cubbedu 1993).

<sup>87</sup> Before dying, Mossa was very influential in pulling the PSD'Az out of the regional government and forcing the party to think about separatism rather than mere autonomy (Ortu 1998a).



concreti e precisi), la nostra volontà di lottare con tutti i mezzi per la liberazione della Sardegna dal giogo coloniale, e non in termini genericamente classisti, ma in termini più ampi di azione popolare, con una decisa tendenza verso l'ecumenismo, e con la scelta della via più consona e rispondente al momento storico, che può essere quella della resistenza passiva e della non-ubbedienza civile (cioè non-violenza), come quella della lotta armata (insurrezione); se noi dunque non rendiamo chiare e lampanti le nostre posizioni, ciò significa che noi siamo stanchi, che la missione di rigenerazione e riscatto del popolo sardo proposta dai reduci del 1919 non avrebbe più ragione di essere, e saremmo noi stessi – che vogliamo essere nucleo di azione rivoluzionaria – condannati insieme con tutto il popolo sardo, all'eterna sciavitù politica ed economica (Simon-Mossa 1984: 67-68).

Mossa was unable to develop these thoughts in detail, since he died in 1971, before the emergence of the second-wave of Sardinian nationalists. Yet, the theme of violence received straightforward condemnation during the years of the Bilingual campaign. The killings carried out by the *Brigate Rosse* (Red Brigades) in mainland Italy were harshly criticized.<sup>88</sup> According to a 1978 *Nazione Sarda's* op-editorial, the only way the island could suffer terrorist violence would come across left-wing Italian exportation.<sup>89</sup> The difference between left-wing radicals and nationalists is that the former want to destroy democracy, whereas the latter would rather take advantage of it:

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<sup>88</sup> Some small extreme left-wing groups emerged in the island, but with no capacity to make an impact. This prompted the major of these groups, *Barbaglia Rossa*, to collaborate with the *Brigate Rosse*, since the latter was interested in setting up cells within the island to plan escapes from Sardinian prisons. The balance was poor: two people killed and no successful escapes (Bellu & Paracchini 1983).

<sup>89</sup> As another *Nazione Sarda's* op-ed put it in 1981: "E si terrorismu in Sardinna podet naschire est solu pro mores de sa cultura italiana, zibile e urbana, e supra de custa cultura, pro disgrassia nostra, podet crescere" (*Nazione Sarda March* 1981: p.8).

Totu custu qheret narrere chi in Sardinna non podet naschire su terrorismu? Diemus cherer cuntestare chi nono, chi su terrorismu in terra nostra non podet naschire, chi sos brigatistas rubios si los diat mandicare su populu. *Ma no lu podimus narrer a sa sicura [we can not take that for granted]* (Nazione Sarda April-May 1978: 8. Emphasis added).<sup>90</sup>

Per noi sardi la democrazia borghese è stato il campo di battaglia dove stiamo prendendo coscienza dei nostri diritti nazionali: l'autonomia sarda, elemento della democrazia borghese, col suo fallimento ci ha permesso di prendere coscienza dell'indispensabilità di una repubblica socialista sarda (...) Si può rallentare questa avanzata distruggendo i più elementari diritti democratici. A ciò sta arrivando e si può arrivare con l'aberrante azione delle BR (SPS May 1978).

The split of the group brought a different light to the treatment of political violence: there was implicit veneration of it. For instance, the journal this group launched after the disappearance of SPS was called "Sardinia e Libertade", which was a direct translation of the Basque acronym ETA (Basque Country and Freedom). Su Populu Sardu had been the paper spending more pages about the experiences of armed fight in other European regions – with the Basque Country, Northern Ireland and Corsica

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<sup>90</sup> It goes without saying that the PSd'Az was explicitly against any type of nationalist violence. For instance, an official party publication included the following statement in 1981: "Il PSd'Az è ben consapevole del ruolo importantissimo che è chiamato a svolgere per il riscatto dei sardi e se ne assume in pieno la responsabilità ma chiarendo subito e affermando con forza, anche per sgombrare il campo da qualsiasi equivoco, che ha creduto nella lotta democratica, ha creduto e crede fermamente nella democrazia, e condanna, come strumento aberrante di lotta, ogni forma di violenza, di terrorismo, di guerra e considera debole, ottuso, provocatore e traditore chiunque dei suoi aderenti sostenga l'impiego delle armi in difesa della aspirazione nazionalitaria del popolo sardo" (Forza Paris December 1981: 2).

as top sources of information.<sup>91</sup> All this fascination for nationalist violence remained on paper, since they still wanted to measure their possibilities through the electoral path (Spiga 2006).<sup>92</sup> Talking about the mid-1970s, one of the student leaders at the time later said:

Nessuno de noi leggeva la situazione della Sardegna come quella di una colonia relegata nel terzo mondo. Certo le tematiche terzomondiste vennero studiate attentamente ma solo come mediazione teorica, non pratica. E il tema della violenza aveva un senso difensivo, non insurrezionale (quoted in Bellu & Paracchini 1983: 66).<sup>93</sup>

The smartest politicians within the Sardinian DC very soon recognized that the nationalist tide was going to make an influence on the polity. Thus, Pietro Soddu, in charge of forming a new

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<sup>91</sup> In its June issue, *Su Populu Sardu* included a vignette in which the reader is asked about the existing solutions to fix the problems: the first solution is the electoral pathway (the typical clan-based politician was portrayed in the picture); the second one is simply to wait (and you could see an elder waiting without any hope); finally, the third one is “just say ‘enough is enough’” (and the picture included a typical Sardinian with headscarf and armallite on his shoulder). Clearly enough, the writer’s preference was for the latter option (SPS June 1975).

<sup>92</sup> Two radical lists were presented in the 1984 regional election: on the one side, the extreme left-wing *Democrazia Proletaria Sarda*; on the other side, the left-wing secessionist *PARIS (Partidu Sardu Indipendentista)*.

<sup>93</sup> Actually, there was a very confusing experience of nationalist violence. An organization called the *Movimento Armato Sardo (MAS)* apparently set off some attacks in the rural milieu against mayors and public servants in the early ‘80s. But as the organization did not claim the attacks, did not produce any ideological statement and its few members were quickly arrested, it is not really clear that this was a case of nationalist violence at all (Esu 1992). In any event, the fact that Sardinia championed the country in the rate of bombings during the 1980s shows that there was a potential to channel “social” violence towards political ends.

regional government in 1980, proposed a government program that aimed at containing the tide by making some concessions. The first pillar of the program consisted in creating a common regional front led by the PCI and the DC. The second pillar consisted in giving an autonomist taste to that front with the intention of renewing the institutional foundations of the region (Soddu 2006). For Soddu, the plan pointed explicitly to trying to pull towards the state-wide parties those voters more willing to join the now separatist PSD'Az by launching a more pro-autonomist discourse. As Soddu wrote:

Non è detto che la linea della DC sarda sulla rivendicazione autonomistica sia una linea condivisa totalmente dalla nostra direzione nazionale; anzi può darsi che emerga una questione di fattibilità, ma prima ancora di compatibilità, tra gli orientamenti autonomi nostri e gli orientamenti che vengono dall'interno dei partiti e dal quadro istituzionale nazionale.

Io credo che tutti noi, quando pensiamo a questa battaglia (se saremo d'accordo per farla), abbiamo presente questo impedimento (...) Ci diranno [the Italian decision-makers]: non è necessario, avete fallito la vostra esperienza, che cosa volete? Avete ampie deleghe. Tutte obiezioni che scontiamo in partenza.

Certo, quando noi avessimo di fronte una tale resistenza da parte degli organi dello Stato, da parte delle forze politiche nazionali, di tutto quello che è il quadro istituzionale nazionale, se avessimo di fronte un muro totale, noi probabilmente dovremmo scegliere una linea più duttile, meno suicida, se così si può dire, per non trasformarla in un *boomerang* ulteriormente dannoso per la Sardegna. Ma noi non abbiamo neppure iniziato; noi non abbiamo neppure provato a porre il problema nei suoi termini essenziali; noi dobbiamo fare almeno questo sforzo, questo tentativo; dobbiamo avere la coscienza che questo è il nostro inderrogabile dovere (Soddu 2006: 26-27).

The plan did not go very far, though. The DC at Rome vetoed it.<sup>94</sup> As far as Rome-based DC politicians were concerned, the time for the “historic compromise” between the two major forces in the country had already passed.<sup>95</sup> This mismatch between party preferences at the regional and state-wide levels had huge costs for the DC. The DC lost 5.5 percentage points and 5 seats between 1979 and 1984 (falling from 37.7 percent to 32.2 percent and from 32 to 27 seats). In its turn, the PCI kept its positions, with a two-point increase and 2 more seats (from 26.3 percent to 28.7 percent and from 22 seats to 24). Needless to say, the PSD’Az was the real winner of the elections. With around 30,000 votes (3.3 percent) and 3 seats in parliament, the party was dead in 1979. However, five years later the PSD’Az was able to attract almost 140,000 votes (13.8 percent), gaining 12 seats. Many votes seemed to come from the new groups mobilized around the issues aforementioned, but many others came from DC voters disappointed with its performance (Sotgiu 1996). As a first consequence of this electoral shift, the DC left the government in Sardinia after 36 years of uninterrupted rule. As a second consequence, autonomist ideas would be taken more seriously after the 1984 election (Soddu 2006).

The nationalist ability to capture new voters is well reflected by Pintore in an article published by *Il Solco*, the PSD’Az official journal:

Ebbene questi movimenti [Nazione Sarda, Su Populu Sardu, Città e Campagna, Sa Sardigna] hanno creato una piattaforma di tono piuttosto elevato che ha premiato (...) dell’organizzazione politica che per storia, intelligenza e duttilità politiche, aveva il massimo di

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<sup>94</sup> The PC leadership was not very convinced about the interest of the plan either. They thought the decay of the DC in Sardinia could strongly benefit its own regional branch.

<sup>95</sup> Some sources also say that several relevant regional leaders were against the Soddu’s plan. They plotted against Soddu to force the central headquarters to take responsibility for the rejection of the autonomist turn (Fadda 2008; Soddu 2006).

credibilità nel popolo sardo. Il fatto che nessuno dei movimenti avesse in mente questa sua funzione di preparazione di un tale quadro significa semplicemente questo: che il Partito sardo era oggettivamente ed è oggi anche soggettivamente l'organizzazione più credibile della coscienza di sé del popolo sardo, della identità nazionale e culturale (Il Solco, May 1984: 15).

The electoral success of the PSD'Az is even more apparent if we consider the meagre results obtained by the radical splinters. Neither the PARIS nor the DPS received more than 1 percent of the votes and consequently remained out of the parliament. The capture of the regional presidency was fabulous publicity for the party.<sup>96</sup> A left-wing autonomist cabinet was formed between the PCI, the PSI and the PSD'Az with the presidency going to the PSD'Az leader Mario Melis. To cast some doubts on nationalist respect for legal methods, police forces had started to raid radical nationalists before the 1984 elections. In one of those raids, some weapons were found in the home of a well-known nationalist militant.<sup>97</sup> As he was associated with the PSD'Az, some of its leaders pleaded him to drop membership just to not hurt party's electoral prospects in the forthcoming regional elections. He and other defendants did so, and founded the new pro-secession party called PARIS. Its main leaders repudiated the use of violence against the state (SRS, June 1984: 4-5). Meloni himself, in a press interview, declared that:

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<sup>96</sup> One of the leaders of the extra-parliamentary nationalist branch, Eliseo Spiga, decided to join the PSD'Az in 1984 after being contacted by former mates already enrolled in the party. He thought that it was time to turn the PSD'Az into a true ethnic Sardinian party (Spiga 2006: 75).

<sup>97</sup> The case remains very obscure. Apparently, the militant was in legal possession of hunting weapons, and there was no any evidence showing that he was going to use them for illegal purposes. All the information about this case comes from several numbers of the journal *Sa Repubblica Sarda*.

Personalmente, non credo nella violenza. Se un independentista sardo decidesse di fare la lotta armata significa che non ha capito nulla della Sardegna (SRS, June 1984: 6-7).

In the end, the nationalist experience in government failed because the PCI was not interested in passing a bilingual law that could have infuriated its working-class strongholds in the large cities of the island. The initial steps of the collapse of the 1<sup>st</sup> Italian Republic with all the corruption scandals did not help either. The return to regional power of the DC in 1989 contributed to a deflation of the nationalist tide. Gerrymandered by the new majority-prone electoral rule, most former PSD'Az members found accommodation within the two large electoral lists created by the former-communist PDS on the left and the FI on the right. Even if running out of parliament, the nationalists had learnt by then that the electoral race was worth running.

### **5.5. Concluding remarks**

In this chapter, I have compared two regions that have several things in common: Corsica and Sardinia. Despite the backwardness of both regions at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, regionalism spread more quickly in Sardinia than in Corsica in the aftermath of World War I. Thus, the PSD'Az was able to mobilize around a quarter of the Sardinian electorate, whereas Corsican autonomists remained unable to achieve a good electoral result. The dictatorship experiences also impacted differently upon the two regions, with Corsica going out of the war with a higher French patriotic sentiment, while Sardinian parties called for (and achieved) political devolution to fence the island against new fascist experiments. Henceforth, Sardinian autonomists benefited from a certain degree of political autonomy, which proved successful in deterring second-wave nationalist competitors to trigger violence. On the other hand, it took much longer for Corsican autonomists to reach something similar, and they got it

after mounting a campaign of violence, which escalated because of the inefficient state's repressive techniques.

The previous level of nationalist mobilization played a minor role in this comparison, because the Italian state was eager to concede in the late 1940s. Corsican nationalists had to build their whole constituency from scratch, so that some of their most radical elements took advantage of violence to break up local notables' rule and force natives to side with (or against) the demand for self-governed regional institutions. How can we account for this different outcome? I have contended in this chapter that the triggering event and the nature of the local political elites may offer a satisfactory answer to the question. As a relevant factor, large-scale immigration had more possibilities of quickening nationalist awareness than uneven economic development. Besides, the absence of regional institutions strengthened the process of radicalization.

Regarding the triggering event, the discourse about the near-to-extinction state of the Corsican ethnic group came close to reality during the successive waves of immigration that the island underwent in the late '50s and '60s. The decreasing numbers of natives (and consequently of Corsican speakers) as well as the growing internal migrations from the countryside to the two main cities in the island stressed acutely the socioeconomic equilibrium in Corsica. The risk of ethnic collapse mobilized a coalition of university students, aggrieved farmers and artisans and petty-bourgeoisie workers under the leadership of ideologically moderate professionals that were mostly interested in destroying local clan power by bringing to the island some level of autonomy.

Like in Corsica, second-wave Sardinian nationalists were also prompted by concerns about the future of their culture, and more concretely, about the Sardinian language and its customary practices of sheep farming. However, neither the language (spoken roughly by the 70 percent of the population in 1970), nor the *pastorizia* (which still managed 60 percent of the productive land of the island), nor the balance between natives and immigrants were so critical as to raise the alarm about the disappearance of the



Sardinian culture. In the end, second-wave Sardinian nationalists seemed to be more interested in a better internal distribution of the economic resources than in a full-fledged program of ethnic renaissance, as it was seen during the PSdA's years in government.

Regarding the nature of the local political elites, Corsican notables showed a larger degree of discretion in their behaviour than their Sardinian counterparts. On one side, Corsican local political elites had autonomous sources of power, since their offices did not depend on what parties in Paris would decide about the composition of the electoral lists. However, they were very dependent on the status quo, since any alteration of the rules towards a more comprehensive electoral system would have jeopardized the foundations of their power. On the other side, Sardinian local politicians were dependent on their central headquarters to take decisions, but that gave them a higher capacity to react against potential local challenges as long as the state-wide leadership remained committed to being competitive in the region.

This essential difference produced long-lasting effects on nationalist mobilization. Corsican clan bosses tried as much as they could to send to the government the message that nationalists were tiny and powerless. By suffering a mismatch between institutional presence and social representation, nationalists moved more and more towards direct-action attacks, which gave the state the possibility of repressing and outlawing them. The beheading of the movement facilitated the radicals' takeover and the set up of an organization (the FLNC) ready to carry out terrorist attacks to achieve devolution and stop assimilation. Further rounds of action-reaction-action and inefficient concessions fed this constituency articulated around violence, which by the late 1980s had become as strong as the moderate nationalist movement.

In Sardinia, on the contrary, violence played no role at all. After a decade of electoral successes, the realization that the fast-track program of economic modernization was not producing the expected outcomes forced the Sardinian DC to change course and

put more emphasis on the cultural dimensions of the autonomy. The new young cohorts of autonomists disaffected with the malfunctioning of the autonomy took advantage of the regional institutions to foster some initiatives, but unconvinced with the outcomes they colonized the defunct PSD'Az to play the electoral road. The failure of the DC and the PCI to put forward a more pro-autonomy strategy gave the new PSD'Az a huge increase of votes and a relevant role in the new regional government. This success dried off the support for unconstitutional means as a way to rally nationalists. The time for nationalist violence had passed.

## **CHAPTER 6. NORTHERN IRELAND VS. WALES: THE POWER OF INSTITUTIONS**

### **6.1. Introduction**

In this chapter, I move the comparison from the Mediterranean Sea to the British Isles. Looking at both sides of the Irish Sea, I compare Northern Ireland and Wales, two regions that have experienced long-lasting episodes of nationalist contestation. Even if the bond between Wales and England goes back as far as the 13<sup>th</sup> century, with the formal union of the two crowns taking place in 1536; the link between the heavily-Protestant county of Ulster within Ireland and the British crown also dates to well before the defeat of the United Irishmen rebellion at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In addition to having comparable demographic and physical characteristics,<sup>1</sup> the economic make-up of these two regions shows considerable similarities. Highly industrialized (with less than 10 per cent of active population working in the primary sector since the 1960s), both Wales and Northern Ireland

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<sup>1</sup> Wales is bigger in area (20,779 km<sup>2</sup>) and population (3 million in 2008) than Northern Ireland (13,843 km<sup>2</sup> and 1.8 million in 2008). However, their density figures are much closer (144/km<sup>2</sup> in Wales compared to 130/km<sup>2</sup> in Northern Ireland). Finally, the small gap in terms of per capita income that there was between the two regions in the 1960s has become negligible. With data from the Office for National Statistics, the gross disposable household income per head in 2003 is £10,809 in Northern Ireland and £11,137 in Wales.

experienced uneven processes of economic development that concentrated most of their industrial output and population in one large spot: the historic county of Glamorgan (which includes Cardiff and Swansea) and Greater Belfast – respectively. With around half of the population of their regions living in densely industrialized small areas, class politics should have been very relevant to account for electoral outcomes. And so was it in Wales, but not in Northern Ireland, where several attempts to bring together working-class groups from different religious backgrounds failed to deal with the sectarian nature of the political establishment.

All these similarities notwithstanding, there might be good reasons to argue the comparison is unfair, because of the well-established tradition of Irish revolt against British rule. Thus, unlike the four regions I have discussed so far, the dependent variable for this comparison could be over-determined by a path-dependency argument: wherever there was violence in the past, there will be violence in the future if conditions leading to violence in the first place did not change. In this case, the large-scale nationalist violence Ulster suffered since 1969 was simply the harvest of prior waves of unrest in the face of an alien British government unfit to gain legitimacy from the Catholic minority in the North.

However, as I will defend in more depth later, there is room to reject this explanation. It is not only that the correlation between former and current episodes of nationalist violence is not always automatic – as we have seen in the previous chapters – but also that the IRA of the mid '60s seemed unable to attract new supporters after its last planned occupation of Northern Ireland (the infamous Operation Harvest) failed and, consequently, were called off. The new IRA leadership opted for inter-religious socialism in the North instead of Catholic-led unification, and that strategic choice forced the IRA to drop the primacy of violence and become involved in the grass-roots movements that stood for equal citizenship regardless of the religious creed. As several authors (Callaghan 1973; Kelly 1972) recognised at the time, in

the late 1960s the Stormont regime was on the verge of developing into a legitimate regional government for the majority of the two communities, but in the end sectarian violence broke out again, and radical nationalists (so-called republicans) were quick to take advantage of the opportunity to mount a new violent campaign against Stormont and Westminster with the aim of Irish unification. The incapacity of moderate Unionists to win over die-hard Loyalists and the reluctance of the successive UK governments to decisively intervene in favour of the former left the moderate Catholic constituency without institutional responsiveness. Repressive over-reaction added heavily to the building of the new violence-based Republican constituency.

At the same time, on the mainland, the Welsh nationalist movement was primarily concerned about turning itself into a credible political partner. The Welsh Nationalist Party, *Plaid Cymru*, had campaigned since the '20s for some sort of institutional recognition for Wales that protect its territory and language, but its platform rarely attracted voters outside the decreasing close-knit Welsh-speaking community. Based on a combined strategy of electoral and protest politics, the party looked for institutional respectability without losing control over the young wing of the movement, more willing to commit acts of civil disobedience. But this strategy seemed doomed to fail, as the *Tryweryn* campaign (the drowning of a Welsh valley by the Liverpool Water Corporation) showed. The failure of the constitutional path facilitated that the use of violence became an issue on nationalist circles, and some symbolic attacks were carried out.

Under the patronising control of the party, nationalist youngsters came up with a middle-of-the-road technique of protest that would allow them to go beyond constitutional means without jeopardizing nationalist electoral inroads. The setup of the Welsh Language Society in 1962/1963 pursued to bring equal treatment for the two languages of Wales – Welsh and English – by carrying out campaigns of civil disobedience against several branches of the administration (the post office, courts, police, TV public

broadcasting, etc.). To avoid being mocked as juvenile vandals, WLS members assumed full responsibility for their actions, as they walked to police stations after committing them and recognized their participation in courts. This practice of breaking the law for moral reasons and assuming full responsibility for the offence, which was well connected with the Welsh tradition of non-conformism, contributed effectively to defuse the risk of wide nationalist violence, because the UK government was eager to avoid escalation and consequently, tried to be soft on repression and manage quick concessions. Finally, Plaid Cymru's electoral successes from the mid-'60s (its first MP was elected in 1966) also contributed to legitimize retrospectively the correctness of the nationalist strategy.

Northern Ireland could have remained peaceful if some combination of local political elites and state-wide decision makers would have reacted in a more responsive way to Catholic demands; and, on the other hand, the Welsh nationalist movement could have gone all the way down to violence if Labour and Conservative decision makers would have straightforwardly rejected nationalist demands for linguistic equal treatment and devolution. No doubt the different traditions of violence could have contained the levels of deaths in Wales to Corsican figures, for instance, whereas a peaceful Northern Ireland could have also experienced some killings. The point is that tradition cannot fully account for the differences between Northern Ireland and Wales in the 1960s. But if it is not tradition, what then?

In this chapter, I contend that my model has something to say here as well. On the one hand, Welsh votes were very relevant for the British state-wide parties in Westminster, and overall for the Labour party. This meant that these parties kept Welsh nationalists on a close rein, and quickly reacted to their victories –in the public debate as well as in the election booth. This swift strategy limited the potential set of grievances that radicals had at hand to trigger violence and gave nationalist moderates strong incentives to stay within the constitutional path. In Northern Ireland, Unionists foresaw that any Catholic institutional improvement would be at

their expense. Besides, the UK parties did not have anything to win on the conflict (leaving apart reputational costs in the international arena), so they decided to avoid being intermingled on it. Their reliance on Stormont's reports of the ongoing troubles helped little to force Unionists to change the course and take Catholic grievances into consideration. Blind repression based on poor intelligence broke up the Catholic constituency on two new groups: the Londonderry-based moderate SDLP, heir of the former Old Nationalist Party, and the new Republican PIRA, built from former pockets of IRA/Republican supporters and new working-class constituencies around Belfast. Fed with repression, this new constituency proved long-lasting.

## **6.2. The origins of Northern Irish and Welsh nationalism: An overview**

In this section, I briefly lay out the foundations of the two nationalist movements. As the literature on Northern Irish and Welsh nationalists is prolific, I will not spend much time in making the case that Irish nationalism has deeper roots in history than the Welsh version. Rather, I will emphasize here that Irish nationalism in Ulster was consistently more moderate than the one practiced in the South. In turn, Welsh nationalism, even if disorganized until the interwar period, was always voiced by the main Welsh party of the pre-war period, the Liberal party. The strong ascendancy of Protestants in Ulster and Liberals in Wales forced nationalists to moderate their platforms to become electorally competitive.

6.2.1. *Wales in Britain: Radical politics on religion and language*

Modern Welsh history in many senses begins in the 1880s, when two phenomena had devastating effects on Welsh society.<sup>2</sup> On the one hand, that decade experienced the enlargement of the franchise, which turned the British Liberal Party into the overwhelming force in regional politics and swept away the old Anglican notables. On the other hand, the process of industrialization based on the coal-rich valleys of South Wales forced thousands of Welsh northerners to move south in their quest for jobs and better life chances. Even if the influx of Welsh speakers into the southern region contributed momentarily to revitalize the Welsh-speaking culture, the arrival of English migrants and the increasing influence of English as language of business and administration began the erosion of Welsh and the growing divide between the solid Welsh-speaking Northwest and the heavily industrialized South.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, the so-called Liberal Ascendancy<sup>4</sup> took advantage of these two phenomena. Religious distinctiveness had become the main identity trait of the Welsh people. With less than 20 per cent of worshippers of the official Anglican Church, the vast majority of Welshmen identified themselves as non-conformists and called for the disestablishment of the Anglican Church in Wales. It was not a minor issue. Until World War I, life was articulated around the Welsh-speaking chapel, since they worked as centres of worship, but also as places to meet, discuss and learn, given the broad program of activities these centres ran. The Liberals were able to connect with the religious make-up of Wales, and used the

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<sup>2</sup> I follow Morgan 1981 and Williams 1985 for this short overview of Welsh history.

<sup>3</sup> In 1901, 49.9 percent of the population still spoke Welsh. However, some of the main Southern cities, such as Cardiff, and Newport had already less than 10 percent of speakers. Swansea, on the contrary, fared better, with around a third of Welsh speakers.

<sup>4</sup> Between 1885 and 1910 (the next election would be in 1918), Liberals controlled, on average, 27 seats out of 34.



chapels as buffers against the dangers of industrialization and as breeding ground for the party. Its strategy remained unchallenged until the inter-war period, when the Labour party would replace it as the Party of Wales.

The well-known saying “For Wales, see England” came under attack from the end of the century by Welsh-speaking Liberal MPs that took advantage of the linguistic and religious revival to build a campaign for devolution. Trying to imitate the successes of the Parnell’s Irish Party, Liberals such as Tom Ellis and the young Lloyd George, articulated around the Northwest-based Cymru Fydd movement, pressed for home rule. The Tory reluctance to pass the disestablishment of the Anglican Church in Wales moved this group to call for home rule as a shield against British unresponsiveness. The return of Gladstone to power did not bring disestablishment, but he agreed to pass several measures to satisfy Welsh grievances. Thus, land reforms, the setup of the University of Wales and the creation of the symbolic Welsh Parliamentary Party made up of all Welsh MPs aimed at recognising the new role of Wales within the Union. More importantly, the Cymru Fydd campaign collapsed because of the lack of South enthusiasm about joining a platform that was basically concerned with “rural” topics –such as religion, land and language. The increasing relevance of class issues in the South was going to be a major barrier for nationalists to create an all-Wales unitary movement.

The first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a huge transformation of the Welsh social fabric. With regards to religion, the Disestablishment Act was finally passed in 1920. This settled the sectarian conflict in a time when the economy had already overtaken religion as the main concern for the Welsh people. From now on, non-conformism would be a relevant defining feature of the rural Welsh-speaking communities. With regards to language, the South became overwhelmingly English-speaking, whereas the Welsh language retreated more and more to the rural Northwest pockets of Welsh-speaking communities. The population census of 1921 showed that the absolute numbers of Welsh speakers were decreasing for the first time (Morgan 1981: 197). If almost fifty

percent of the population could speak Welsh at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (with still 15 percent of Welsh monoglots), two decades later the figure had declined to 37.1 percent (and only 6 percent of monoglots) (UK Census data).

With regards to the economy, the boost the Welsh industries experienced after 1918 had dried up by the middle of the following decade. The restriction of international demand together with the increasing tariffs to import brought much stress on the Welsh economy, because of its heavy reliance on extractive industries, rather than on manufactures. Unemployment went up from 13.4 percent in 1925 to a high of 32.3 percent in 1933. Out-migration rose as well – with 430,000 Welshmen leaving the region between 1921 and 1940. The largely industrialized counties of Glamorgan and Monmouth, which by 1921 accounted for almost two thirds of the regional population (Williams 1937), demanded more responsiveness to workers' economic claims. But the Liberals did not seem to be ready to deliver. As a Liberal candidate for a coal-mining district complained about the failure of the classic Liberal themes to attract working-class voters:

The mind of the miner was impervious to any national question. The only subject that interested him was More pay, Shorter Hours of Work, no Income Tax for Wage Earners; more facilities for drinking (quoted in Morgan 1981: 193).

Quite the opposite, the Labour party had much more success in mobilizing these new constituencies. Under the leadership of chapel-educated union leaders that no longer had to fight for disestablishment, the Labour Ascendancy was built around working-class issues. Although the Labour initially touched on nationalist themes in order to refute Liberals' claims about Labourites being alien to the Welsh, very quickly they moved toward (UK) central planning as the best recipe to tackle the dramatic consequences of the 1929 great depression.

The nationalist issue was picked up by the National Party of Wales, Plaid Cymru. Created in 1925 by non-conformist radicals with a utopian view of Welsh medieval independence, the party

led all its efforts to save the language. Instead of attempting to bridge the increasing North-South divide, Plaid Cymru was not even formally committed to home rule: for PC members, the granting of official status for the Welsh language should be the focus of their fight. With a conservative message based on Welsh ancient values and economic practices, the party remained still anchored in 500 members by 1930, unable to compete with the Liberals for the rural Welsh-speaking constituency (Davies 1983: 237-241; Morgan 1981: 207). The mere fact of publishing a party journal in English was cause for infighting, since the purists stood against any tactic to capture non-Welsh-speaking voters. Only the emergence of Saunders Lewis, a towering figure of the Welsh intelligentsia during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, to the leadership managed to move the party out of the stagnation that was paralysing it. Lewis kept the party's emphasis on the language, but enforced the demand for home-rule: without the latter, the language would perish. However, his figure, highly controversial,<sup>5</sup> did little to improve the electoral appeal of the party. It was Gwynfor Evans, appointed party leader in 1945, who put the party on the electoral trail with a home-rule platform appealing to all segments of Welsh society.

Still, the new Plaid Cymru had to cope with the Labour Ascendancy. With 27 out of 36 seats, the Labour could claim it had a mandate to push forward its program of nationalizations and economic central planning led from London. Very influential Welsh Labourites, such as the minister of Health and father of the Public Health system, Aneurin Bevan, took the lead in burying the national debate to create a strongly internally united party capable to deliver economic results to its constituencies. The 1952 Parliament for Wales campaign was crashed in Westminster by the majority of Welsh Labour MPs. However, this campaign gave

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<sup>5</sup> Lewis' late conversion to Catholicism was at odds with the core of the movement, strongly non-conformist. His defence and use of direct action methods against some polemic measures of the UK government granted media coverage for the party, but at the expense of gaining public repudiation as well (Davies 1983: 154-166).

Plaid Cymru an electoral boost, with the party seeing an increase in votes from 0.7 percent in 1951 to 5.2 percent in 1959. In reaction to this upsurge, the Labour adopted with its 1964 electoral platform the creation of a Secretaryship of State for Wales. Enacted during the first Wilson cabinet, the anticipated general election of 1966 saw the height of Labour's fame: the Welsh Labour party got 32 out of 36 seats in Wales, whereas Plaid Cymru's growth came to a halt. In the face of such a crushing majority, the nationalists had to focus more and more on the endangered Welsh-speaking constituencies, where they competed against out-of-dated Liberal candidates. The inability to attract non-Welsh-speaking voters had consequences for the nationalist movement during the 1960s, as we will see later in the chapter.

### *6.2.2. Northern Ireland in Britain: Between violence and elections*

The history of the province of Ulster is well-known. The last bastion of Irish-native Gaelic rebellion against British rule, since the 17<sup>th</sup> century the province was punished with several waves of Protestant immigrants from Britain endowed with easy access to the lands that had been confiscated from the defeated Irish landlords.<sup>6</sup> In an island where natives were predominantly Catholic, religion became the most important asset for gaining access to the land. Under the inspiration of the French revolution, in 1798 there was an inter-sectarian uprising against the crown with the aim of achieving independence for the island, which failed. In the aftermath of the rebellion the crown promoted the full integration of Ireland within Great Britain by abolishing the Irish parliament. With the emergence of the first land clashes, Protestants started to behave as a differentiated group within the island. The Protestant community took root in the Northern province of Ulster. There it thrived economically by tightening the

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<sup>6</sup> I follow Boyce 1992, Cronin 1981 and Ranelagh 1983 for this short overview of Irish history.

trade networks with the metropolis. The result was the heavy industrialization of the Belfast area that became the largest town in terms of size and wealth on the island.

The attempt to pass several bills in Westminster with the aim of appeasing Irish nationalists by conceding home-rule for the whole island put Protestants on guard against any alteration of the status quo. Scattered all over the island, but having a slim majority in the North, Protestants joined en masse a paramilitary force called the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF),<sup>7</sup> in prevision of British military intervention to impose Home Rule for the whole island. When the Irish war broke out in 1919, the secular tradition of sectarian riots in Belfast forced the Catholic IRA leaders to keep a low-level profile in the city (Elliot 2000: 374-400).<sup>8</sup> Instead of fighting in the North, they concentrated all their force in the Southern provinces, in the expectation that Ulster would follow the road to independence once the British Army had been defeated in the other three provinces (Munster, Leinster and Connacht).

However, the IRA was unable to achieve a smashing victory on the battle-field. Consequently, the UK government's call for negotiations was welcomed by IRA leaders. Instead of standing for an all-or-nothing deal, the republican leaders accepted

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<sup>7</sup> The creation of this paramilitary force was fundamental in forcing the UK government to grant an independent parliament for the North. Anything sort of concession would have led Protestants to openly fight against the IRA and this may have caused large bloodletting.

<sup>8</sup> In the 1918 election, the main Southern IRA leader De Valera ran against the then sitting MP and main nationalist leader in the North, Joe Devlin, for the Falls seat in Belfast. With a practical full turnout of the Catholic population of the district, Devlin more than doubled De Valera's result (8,500 votes against 3,300 votes) (Hepburn 2008: 202-03). In the 1920 council elections, nationalist candidates got 12.1 percent of the votes in Belfast, compared to 8 percent for Sinn Fein and 20.8 percent for the NILP (ibid: 211). In the 1921 Ulster election, the Nationalist party outnumbered again Sinn Fein in Belfast. With these results, it is not surprise that the Northern IRA was pro-treaty (McDermott 2001: 134).

independence within the Commonwealth for all Ireland save a two-year-old six-county Ulster entity, which would remain within the UK as long as their largely Protestant population would wish.<sup>9</sup> Republican leaders at home saw the deal as treason,<sup>10</sup> and started the Irish Civil War, which lasted for a year and took around 3,500 deaths, more than in the three years of fighting for independence (Hart 2005: 66-67). By not suffering armed operations, the new British province could become stable and strengthen its position. Shamelessly manufactured to guarantee that Protestants would outnumber Catholics two to one, the new province of Ulster included only 6 of the 9 counties that made up the old province. Obviously, the inclusion of the other three counties would have altered the demographics of the province and would have given a larger say to the Catholic community in the North.

Faced with a weakened Irish state by the recent civil war, the new Ulster government quickly created a working relationship with London, under which the Stormont parliament would take care of its business without Westminster's interference, and the UK government would not get trapped in the Irish labyrinth again.<sup>11</sup> In a well-known phrase, Ulster was "a Protestant State for

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<sup>9</sup> The Government of Ireland Act (1920) granted home-rule to Protestants in the newly-crafted Ulster province and to Catholics in the rest of the country. Whereas the second parliament did not work properly because of the war of independence, the Protestant one took off so quickly that it jeopardized any further effort to bring the two Irish regions together.

<sup>10</sup> Although partition was a relevant issue on the ideological side, the war was ultimately fought about the obligation for Irish MPs of swearing an "oath of allegiance" to the British crown (Hepburn 2008: 231; Thowson 1983: 382).

<sup>11</sup> After the creation of the Unionist Party out of the Conservative Party in Westminster in 1905, neither Labour nor Conservatives put forward candidates in Northern Ireland for any election. This neutrality was not observed by the Unionists, since the Unionist party used to caucus with the Tories in Westminster. This convergence of interests notwithstanding, when Conservative Prime Ministers had to take

a Protestant People". But not only from a negative viewpoint: sectarian violence against Southern Protestants during the war of independence had openly warned Northerners against the impossibility of religious collaboration and the need for autonomous institutions for Protestants (Bew *et al.* 1996: 10). Thus, whereas Catholics denounced discrimination in any branch of society, Protestants simply recognised that their strategy would guarantee the survival of their brethren.

The efforts of the architect of the regime, James Craig, to build a Protestant state seem to lie in two factors: the existence of an internal minority that did not recognise the legitimacy of the institutions and called for the unity of the island and the indifference that Britain showed towards the Protestants during the chaos after the Irish independence. Regarding the treatment of the internal minority, there is no doubt that the Protestant rule discriminated against Catholics. As we will see later, charges of gerrymandering, unfair allocation of houses and public jobs are beyond discussion. So does the existence of special legislation to deter potential Catholic uprisings that conflicted with the international doctrine on civil rights. The threatening presence of the "Pope-led" Free State of Ireland at the other side of the border imposed no constraints on Protestant rule. For instance, membership of the infamous Orange Order – a religious organization that defended Protestant supremacy – was almost compulsory for Unionist politicians interested in making a political career (Elliot 2000: 384; Rumpf and Hepburn 1977: 178). Besides, even if Protestants outnumbered Catholics in the province, Stormont decided to repeal in 1929 the proportional electoral system to impose a winner-take-all system that gave additional seats to the Unionists, given the extended practice of

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decisions on the province about the modern troubles, they tended to agree more with Labour rivals than with Unionist friends.

gerrymandering the districts to manufacture Protestant majorities.<sup>12</sup>

This move was related to the second risk Craig foresaw: a UK betrayal. He realized that Protestant internal divisions could be used by Westminster to move out of the island and leave Protestants abandoned to their luck. For him, only a solid Unionist machine could govern the region, since any fissure within its ranks would be used by the Catholic minority to end partition (Bew *et al.* 1996: 63). During the interwar period, Craig built this machine by bringing together within the cabinet those interested in serving the interests of local farming and small businesses as well as those liberals more interested in siding Ulster's policies with UK practice. Thus, while the populist group pursued a strategy based on breaking the potential ties between the Protestant and Catholic working classes by granting privileges to Protestants, the liberal group tried to "save the populist position from its excesses" (Bew *et al.* 1996: 68).

The combination worked reasonably well until World War II, when the Unionist leaders, fearful of Labour's plans to nationalise the industries, proposed their own welfare plan for the province. Given the brave Ulster's contribution to the war effort, the Labour cabinet not only granted advantageous financial conditions to fund the development of the welfare system in Ulster but it did also pass a fundamental change to the constitutional status of the province. The 1949 Ireland Act stated that any change in the status of the province should have the consent of the Northern Irish parliament, as well as of the population. Under the leadership of

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<sup>12</sup> Unionists pressed Westminster to abolish PR for the election of local councils with the goal of smashing the Catholic control of some districts. It was approved in 1922. The 1929 reform, even if with open consequences on the Catholic minority, was targeted against the labour Unionist party, whose platform catered well between working-class Protestants. The strategy worked nicely: the official Unionist party obtained at least 33 out of 52 seats at Stormont and 9 out of 12 Westminster seats between 1922 and 1972 (Rumpf and Hepburn 197: 175-183).



the Orange Order, the Unionist victory was complete until the mid-60s, since the welfare regime could keep the Protestant working-class happy with the system at the same time that reunification became constitutionally costly (Bew *et al.* 1996: 107)

The political behaviour of the Catholic minority all over this period was mixed. Even though Ulster Catholics strongly abhorred the foundations of the regime, they tried to adapt themselves to the status quo and offered little support for the IRA military campaigns.<sup>13</sup> In the places where they had most to fear from Protestant domination, they adopted a pragmatic stance. Thus, in Belfast Catholics repeatedly voted for moderate candidates – such as Northern Irish Labour members – against IRA-backed runners and Nationalist rural notables (Rumpf and Hepburn 1977: 188-192). As Bew and his colleagues put it, “the Belfast Catholic attitude to the Northern Ireland state was a product of a specific conjuncture of events rather than simply the expression of a deep-seated ideological attitude” (Bew *et al.* 1996: 47). In areas with Catholic majorities, such as Londonderry and the Catholic countryside, the Nationalist Party remained the main political interlocutor of the minority. It did run candidates and tried to serve its constituencies without renouncing to keep a nationalist discourse based on the end of partition.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Nationalists and republicans agreed on an anti-partition pro-abstention platform for the first Northern Ireland election held in 1921. However, four years later the Nationalist party decided to put forward its own candidates who would take seats if elected. The strategy was successful, since nationalists got 24 percent of the vote and 10 seats (4 more than in 1921). Anti-partition republicans only got two seats (Hepburn 2008: 224-26; 257).

<sup>14</sup> Thanks to a sort of implicit agreement within the nationalist side, the Nationalist Party decided not to field candidates for Westminster elections since 1955, leaving thus the field open for the republican movement. Its pro-abstention candidates got its best performance in that general election, with two seats: Fermanagh & South Tyrone and Mid-Ulster. However, the seats were lost in 1959 and the republican electoral record faded relentlessly after the end of the Border Campaign.

The decade of the '60s showed significant changes in the social fabric of Ulster. On the one hand, the surge of unemployment broke the alliance between the different Protestant economic classes.<sup>15</sup> The electoral boom of the Northern Irish Labour Party in the 1958 and 1962 Stormont general elections paid tribute to the diminishing success that the Unionist strategy was collecting. Appointed in 1963, the new Prime Minister, Terence O'Neill, tried to stop the electoral leak with a plan based on the heavy spending of public money in the Protestant heartlands of the east. His strategy was very successful, since it reversed the NILP trend in 1965, when the next General Election was called (Bew *et al.* 1996: 139). Even if the strategy pursued to settle an intra-unionist dispute, the Catholic minority also benefited from the growing public largesse. The fact that O'Neill showed no intention to change the rules of the game for the minority forced a new Catholic middle-class to circumvent constitutional politics and trigger "civil disobedience" campaigns oriented to granting full UK citizenship rights to all people living within the country. The failure and suspension of the last IRA's campaign in 1962, together with the second-order role that middle-class Catholics assigned to the end of partition, forced Stormont to react to the civil rights movement. The Unionist reaction and the consequences it brought will be extensively analyzed in the rest of this chapter.

### 6.2.3. *Summary*

The comparison between Northern Ireland and Wales conveys a very interesting paradox. Both the Protestant and the Labour ascendancies began more or less in the same period – the second

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<sup>15</sup> Although the province was quickly converging with the rest of the UK in terms of per capita income (it rose from 55 percent of the UK average in 1938 to 80 percent in 1978), the rate of unemployment moved more slowly: in 1965 Northern Ireland rate was 3.7 percent, compared to 1.6 percent in Wales (Simpson 1983: 82).

decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century –, but with different social foundations: the sectarian cleavage in Northern Ireland, and the class cleavage in Wales. Thus, as new nationalist groups came into sight in the two regions during the '60s, it is small wonder that they used similar techniques of protest but with different ideological platforms: whereas the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland cared about bread-and-butter issues, moderate nationalists in Wales concerned about cultural issues – identity and language. In the two cases, responsive politicians could have delivered some concessions to accommodate the demands and avoid nationalist escalation. In the end, the capacity of liberal unionists to give moderate nationalists access to power proved weaker than the strength of Welsh-friendly Labourites to appease nationalist demands with quick concessions.

### **6.3. Why violence in Northern Ireland: Militancy vs. responsiveness**

In this section I review some of the most common explanations for nationalist violence in Northern Ireland. There are three main sets of hypotheses to explain violence there. Firstly, path-dependency arguments have emphasised the relevance of local previous experiences of political violence in Northern Ireland. Militancy matters, since past experiences of the struggle should leave an indelible memory in current generations. Secondly, it has been argued that the structural incapacity of the Ulster institutions to integrate the Catholic minority together with Westminster's reluctance to intervene led to the troubles. The institutional unresponsiveness to Catholics' fair demands led nationalists to upgrade their techniques of civil disobedience. The Protestant backlash radicalised the protest, with the birth of the new IRA. Finally, the "internal competition" argument has been suggested by Waldmann. For this author, the reluctance of the institutions to address the Catholic middle-class's claims transferred the leadership of the movement to the working-class

segments of the community, besieged by loyalists and security forces in Belfast and Londonderry.

Although all of these accounts assume full mobilization of the nationalist constituency in Northern Ireland, and the existence of a full-fledge republican group of support for violence, perhaps is the “path-dependency” argument the most deterministic one in this regard. Unlike Wales, Ireland no doubt had a long tradition of violence. The several waves of nationalist strife the island experienced until becoming independent gave the Irish a reputation of toughness.<sup>16</sup> However, it is also true that violence was always unevenly geographically distributed and sudden peaks of violence were succeeded by long periods of calm (Fitzpatrick 1998; Hart 2005: p.36). Thus, the Irish War of Independence and the Civil War almost did not touch the North, despite the fact that large-scale riots were a recurrent phenomena in Belfast (Boyd 1969; Hart 2005: p.46). The feeling that bringing the war to the North would make Catholics there more vulnerable to loyalist reprisals deterred nationalists from openly contesting the Northern state (Hart 2005: 247-251; Hepburn 2008: 216-18; Townshend 1983: 340-43). Hence, the IRA ran few campaigns in the North, with meagre results. Rose (1971) showed that the use of violence to unite the island was mostly rejected within the Catholic community by the late ‘60s: only 13 percent of Catholics endorsed “any measure” to end partition, whereas almost one third approved the NI Constitution.

The incapacity of the Unionist institutions to accommodate Catholic demands is probably the mainstream academic explanation for Northern-Irish violence. Scholars (Alonso 2001; White 1993) as well as politicians (Callaghan 1973; Thatcher 1993: 386) have repeated that the Unionist rejection to adequately

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<sup>16</sup> Quite the opposite, Wales has a reputation of pacifism, related to the deep influence of religious non-conformism. Thus, those radicals willing to take up arms during the 1960s faced a larger challenge, in terms of social understanding, than those in Northern Ireland. Yet, there is no reason to assume that social preferences could not have swung if the government would have reacted fully repressively.

redress the complaints of the Catholic community helped the IRA to go back to life and mobilize recruits and support for a long-term war of attrition.<sup>17</sup> This grievance-based explanation is sound, and fits well the Welsh case, since in this region the main state-wide parties showed at different times a more open attitude to grant concessions to moderate nationalists. Still, the explanation relies on two assumptions that should be qualified: firstly, that the UK government could not impose a different course on events to stop violence; and secondly, that Republicans were already organized to step up against the British rule. Regarding the first assumption, it is usually said that Westminster pursued a policy of “minimal involvement” in Ulster issues and that this favoured the procrastination strategy that Unionists followed to avoid sharing power with Catholics. However, tradition aside, it is not clear why Tories and Labourites alike behaved in that way.

Regarding the second assumption, Unionist leaders tried to play the IRA card to deter concessions, but doubts remain about the real capabilities of this organization on the eve of the troubles. For one, there are tens of accounts of the influence of repression on the emergence of a new IRA (I discuss this in detail in the next section). Moreover, the construction of this new organization had an exceptional background – the so-called “no-go areas” – to quicken the process of nationalist mobilization (Kocher 2005). Thus, the unhurriedly reaction of the UK government to the first episodes of barricading in the largest cities of the province – mainly, Belfast and Londonderry – favoured the creation of those areas within the Catholic strongholds between 1969 and 1972. This allowed the PIRA to control some territory and build a small army efficiently trained to carry out terrorist attacks.

Finally, Waldmann (1997) has suggested the incapacity of the moderate leadership to keep the nationalist movement under

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<sup>17</sup> In English’s account, it is not only that the UK institutions remained barely interested in addressing Catholics’ grievances but also that the IRA took advantage of the civil rights movement to polarize the situation and gain renewed legitimacy in its fight for reversing partition (English 2003: 145-47).

control as an explanation for the escalation of violence. By combining previous arguments, he considers that Unionist unresponsiveness forced Catholics to go back to radical nationalism, the IRA being the historic representative of this branch. The fact that working-class Catholics were under real attack in cities such as Belfast and Londonderry prompted them to join the IRA and therefore strengthened the fight. This argument is sensible, since it combines responsiveness and internal competition. Still, it misses again how these two processes work: why UK institutions remained locked to change and how working-class radicals took over the nationalist movement.

There is no doubt that the tradition of sectarian fighting could contribute to the large scale of violence in Northern Ireland, whereas radicals in Wales were much more careful about targeting people if they foresaw that their support groups were going to condemn the attack. More relevantly, Unionist reluctance to grant equal rights and power sharing increased the demand for violence within the Nationalist side, whereas Labour and Conservative concessions to Welsh moderate nationalists kept the movement within the electoral path. Furthermore, the reliance of Northern Irish republicanism on working-class constituencies is part of the story of nationalist violence in Ulster, whereas these constituencies remained staunchly Labour-oriented in Wales. Thus, Welsh radical nationalists were recruited between fringed groups normally located beyond the traditional nationalist circles. But all these accounts do not tie up the loose ends: why similar state-wide parties behaved differently and why and how militant nationalism came back in Northern Ireland, whereas it remained tiny in Wales. Why did the UK government react slowly to Catholic grievances but quickly to Scottish and Welsh home-rule claims?

#### **6.4. An alternative explanation: Mobilization and differential responsiveness**

In the previous section, I have discussed several hypotheses that tried to explain why nationalist violence emerged in Northern Ireland but not in Wales. Here I combine the two mechanisms – unresponsiveness and mobilization – in order to offer a more convincing account of the spread of resilient nationalist violence in Northern Ireland. As the argument goes, we should expect violence when local political elites that are change-adverse face nationalist competitors with sufficient strength to challenge the status quo. Faced with this, local political elites would have incentives to reject concessions by downgrading the real support for change. If the state consequently reacts with repression, this gives radicals credence in the nationalist field, helps them build a new constituency and sets the path for further rounds of violence.

In what follows, I translate this stylized story into the Welsh-Irish comparison. The Stormont regional regime was an unaccountable political system for the main state-wide British parties, Labour and Tories alike, until the outbreak of the troubles. They did not put forward candidates, so they did not care very much about politics in the province. On the contrary, Wales was always an electoral stronghold of one of the two main parties in Westminster. Liberals until 1918 and Labour afterwards, there was always at least one main state-wide party interested in serving regional interests. In other words, Northern-Irish Catholics did not have any connection with London, whereas the Welsh did. Moreover, Ulster rulers had very good reasons to be fearful of losing power. Concessions to the Catholic minority could end with the province annexed to Ireland and status reversal in terms of power and life opportunities. In Wales, quite the opposite, successful regional politicians could expect promotions and sinecures in London and Cardiff.

This different expectation about concessions led Unionist politicians to entrench themselves in the institutions and pushed for repression of the Catholic-backed Civil Rights movement.

Unionists discredited the movement by claiming it was an IRA front, and used this argument to get security back-up from Westminster without relinquishing any power. Westminster reluctance to intervene and absence of good intelligence about the potential of the challenge gave Unionists a free hand to behead the movement in exchange for some cosmetic concessions. Inefficient repression infuriated Catholics, and pushed working-class groups previously away from republican politics to support the new IRA, the so-called Provisionals, in those areas most affected by sectarian reprisals, such as Belfast. Nothing of this sort happened in Wales. Minor episodes of violence were swiftly responded with targeted repression and concessions to the moderates.

#### *6.4.1. The triggering event*

##### 6.4.1.1. The triggering event in Wales

Although the Parliament for Wales' campaign failed, Plaid Cymru came out of it with a much stronger political platform under the undisputed leadership of Gwynfor Evans. The next opportunity for the nationalist party came in 1955 with Tryweryn, the drowning of a Welsh valley whose water supply was planned to be marketed by the Liverpool Water Corporation. The goal of the company was to increase its reserves at the expense of a sparsely-populated Welsh valley. Plaid Cymru took on the issue as a good example of London passivity in the face of Welsh claims. As the original project foresaw the construction of the dam in the native valley of one of the most relevant Welsh-speaking poets, Ann Griffiths, the Plaid campaign gathered support from several branches of Welsh society. In reaction, the Corporation kept the project, but changed the location. This tactic disarmed Plaid's arguments, because the new enclave would not damage any national heritage. Tryweryn, on the contrary, hosted a small village of 800 inhabitants with no cultural treasures.



Yet, the nationalist party moved forward with the campaign. Instead of emphasising London's hatred of Welsh heritage, the new theme was the shameless commercial trade of Welsh resources. The campaign also gathered political momentum, with several demonstrations in Liverpool and North Wales, and the support of almost all Welsh MPs (only one voted in favour) against the passage of the private bill (Evans 2008: 178). Nevertheless, the Macmillan government did not stop it, and the works to drown the valley began. The huge disappointment London's passivity brought into Wales can be tracked in the internal debates that the Labour and Plaid Cymru had on the issue. The Labour Party, caught between Wales and Liverpool, both of them party strongholds, decided not to oppose the bill in Westminster, but quickly reacted to include the creation of a Secretaryship of State for Wales within its electoral platform for the forthcoming 1964 general election.

Plaid Cymru, in turn, had larger problems. In the Annual Party's Conference of 1961 a vociferous minority called for the use of direct-action techniques to bring pressure on London. Faced with a non-responsive government, they claimed, the use of illegal methods were morally justified to stop the works and forced the government to take Welsh preferences into consideration. This opinion was defeated in the Conference but showed that the springs of violence were in the air. Indeed, some bombs were planted against the facilities by nationalist militants, who walked to the police station afterwards. Forced to renege on its commitment to constitutional means, Plaid Cymru was between two evils. Thus, it repudiated violence but endorsed the "brave" behaviour of the Welsh patriots and gave public and economic support for their families.

The 1964 general election meant the return of Labour to power. In Wales, the party increased its majority and it was not apparently punished by its ambiguity with regards to Tryweryn. On the other hand, Plaid Cymru's half-hearted repudiation of violence cost it dearly in electoral terms. Its rivals masterfully attacked that weakness by portraying it as an insincere protest

party unwilling to respect the institutional game. Therefore, its share went down from 5.2 percent to 4.8 percent. The debates about direct action wreaked havoc within the party, but in the next two sections we will see how it was able to keep the nationalist movement peaceful without leaving the constitutional path.

#### 6.4.1.2. The triggering event in Northern Ireland

The triggering event in Northern Ireland took place somewhat later than in Wales. After the defeat of the IRA border campaign in 1962,<sup>18</sup> Republicans had their last chance to lead the nationalist movement during the so-called Tricolour riots in Belfast in 1964. During the electoral campaign for the seat of West Belfast at Westminster, Loyalists marched around some of the streets of the catholic enclave. In response to this provocation, republicans flew the Irish flag from the top of a building in the intersection of the Catholic and Protestant areas. Led by Ian Paisley, the Protestant mob claimed the removal of the flag with a legal argument, since its showing broke the Flag Act that forbade the public exhibition of symbols that could create disturbances. When the police forces tried to remove it, clashes followed. However, the Republican visibility this gained was not as large as to win the seat. Faced with a Catholic split ticket, the Unionist candidate won the race (Boyd 1969: 179 and ff.).

1967 saw the creation of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association – NICRA. From this point until the implementation of internment without trial in 1971, this movement, together with the political party closer to its claims, the SDLP, led the Catholic fight against discrimination. With a very attractive strategy taken from the Black civil rights movement in the US, the NICRA demanded that as British citizens, Catholics in Northern Ireland should also have British rights. As these rights were openly and defiantly unfulfilled by the Unionist institutions, the only way out for

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<sup>18</sup> According to some sources, in the aftermath of this defeat, IRA weapons were sold to the Free Wales Army (Clews 1980).

Catholics was to demonstrate in the streets to show their disagreement with the current state of affairs and send the message to London and the world that some British citizens were miserably treated within the UK borders. The NICRA program included five basic complaints: the end of voting rights for municipal elections based on property,<sup>19</sup> the end of the manufacture of electoral districts to create artificial Unionist council majorities in towns where Catholics were the majority of the population (gerrymandering), the end of discrimination in public jobs, the end of housing allocation based on religion instead of necessity<sup>20</sup> and finally and more controversially, the abolition of the Special Powers Act that allowed Stormont to introduce internment without trial at its own discretion (Alonso 2001: 140).

Thus, Catholics saw the opportunity of framing their grievances by using a more universal approach with positive connotations. The emergence of a new Catholic middle class contributed to this strategic shift.<sup>21</sup> The new leaders of the Catholic community shared a background of grassroots activism that equipped them very effectively to deal with a political regime

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<sup>19</sup> Businessmen were granted additional votes depending on the size of their firm. As there were more Protestant businessmen than Catholic ones, this rule gave an advantage to Protestants in local elections.

<sup>20</sup> There has been a productive academic discussion about the actual extension of the discrimination Catholics suffered (see Whyte 1990 for an extensive review). In brief, the existence of gerrymandering, and an unfair allocation of public houses and distribution of jobs cannot be denied, regardless of the fact that Catholic-control local councils also followed similar practices.

<sup>21</sup> There is also some discussion about the size of the new middle class within the Catholic community. Whereas some authors do not see any big change (Hewitt 1981), others claim that the O'Neill pro-welfare reforms contributed to build a Catholic middle class more integrated in the system and opposed to old Nationalist politics (Elliot 2000: 409; Patterson 2002: 182-83). Either way, there is no doubt that the NICRA was led by a new generation of Catholic leaders more interested in fighting within the institutions than against them (Hume 1996; Murray 1998).

whose capacity to respond to non-Protestant grievances was missing. This new leadership was viewed with suspicion not only by hard-line Unionists, but also from the old Nationalist Party. Rather than collaborate with them, Nationalist MPs at Stormont conjectured rightly that the success of the new grassroots movements would be at the expense of their own electoral support. The preference for bread-and-butter complaints instead of the classic claim of reunification left the old MPs unfit to lead. Moreover, the preference for “protest” techniques – such as demonstrations, petitions and marches – was at odds with politicians used to small meetings and hierarchical decision-making.

The season of large demonstrations started in October 1968, when the mostly unknown NICRA planned what was supposed to be a small march to the centre of Londonderry. Under allegations of being an IRA front,<sup>22</sup> the then hard-line Unionist minister of Home Affairs, W. Craig, decided to ban the march, taking advantage of the fact that one of the annual Apprentice Boys’ parades had been counter-scheduled to the same day and with a similar route. As violence was likely, the minister banned all marches in Londonderry. The local Civil Rights committee voted to go ahead with the march, which was attended by a large number of people. In the aftermath of the pacific march, violence broke out, when some radical elements threw stones against the police, who in turn over-reacted with apparently planned brutality. The images of violence went over the world, thanks to the existence of

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<sup>22</sup> It seems that the old IRA had a role in organizing the NICRA, but it did not lead the organization. According to one source, “the leaders of the new-look IRA seemed to have an each-way bet in the Civil Rights movement. If the reforms were granted, so much to the good; they would share in the credit. And the reforms would, presumably, result in greater freedom for the political expression of Republicanism. If, on the contrary, reforms were savagely refused by the Unionist Right, then there was a Machiavellian consideration: the ruling party of Ulster would be split, and through the resultant chaos the IRA would lead the people towards Socialism” (The Sunday Times 1972: 48).

cameramen who recorded all the savagery. The next day, radical students from Queens University organized another march at Belfast in reaction to police misbehaviour in Londonderry. Despite facing another Protestant counter-demonstration led by Ian Paisley, they kept violence at bay. That was the origin of People's Democracy, a student organization that had a very relevant role in the emergence of violence in the next months.

In order to avoid new disturbances, Craig imposed a ban on all marches during the month of November. The NICRA took Craig's ban as a unilateral measure against Catholic legitimate claims and decided to back more marches. The next march was well attended, with around 16,000 people, but finished with violent clashes between the police, loyalist mobs and Catholic demonstrators. In the aftermath of this march, Prime Minister Terence O'Neill announced his five-point plan to calm Catholics by addressing some of the fairest Catholic grievances. He also dismissed Craig from Home Affairs. But more marches followed with recurrent violence.

When the province was coming close to open conflict, the PD organized a march between Belfast and Londonderry that was going to go across heavily-Protestant areas. The students rebuffed NICRA's suggestions to back down on the march, and walked anyway. Starting with a few tens of ideologically-heterogeneous university students that departed from Belfast in a joyful mood, the march became bigger when trouble was coming. Scores of radical Protestants planned to ambush the marchers in some of the hot spots the march was supposed to cross. Inevitably, although the new minister of Home affairs tried to avoid confrontation, violence followed just as the march was reaching Londonderry. Given the peaceful stance the PD marchers kept, the disturbances showed the Protestant commitment to avoid change and the reluctance of policemen to intervene against their brethren (Sunday Times 1972: 67). Trouble was quickly sparked in Londonderry, with wide police misbehaviour against the Catholic community. As a reaction, the first barricades were mounted to

defend the Catholic area, the Bogside, from police and Protestant access. The myth of "Free Derry" had been built.

Forced to calm down the spirits, O'Neill commissioned Lord Cameron to write a report "to examine the causes and nature of the violence and civil disturbances in Northern Ireland." That was his final blow. Brian Faulkner, the rising politician within the Unionist ranks and heavyweight within the cabinet, resigned in rejection of the report and from then on O'Neill's government's days were numbered. After a dramatic discourse in which he asserted that Ulster was at a crossroads, he called regional elections in the expectation that the people would strongly endorse his program for reform. The electoral outcome did not return the numbers would have enforced O'Neill's stance and pushed him to resign two months after the election. By then, the Provisionals were still out of existence and moderates within the NICRA kept pulling the strings of the Catholic community. As we will see in the next subsections, by cheating the UK government about the real nature of the challenge, the Protestant backlash avoided power-sharing with the Catholics, but only at the expense of bringing the IRA to life again.

#### *6.4.2. Mobilizing through violence*

In this subsection I look at the internal dynamics of the nationalist movements and I leave the last part of the section to analyze the interaction between nationalists, local political elites and state-wide parties. In Northern Ireland, the old Nationalist Party was overtaken by the coalition of Civil Rights leaders, articulated around the new SDLP. The IRA was fragmented between the Officials, loyal to a non-sectarian discourse that emphasised politics on top of violence, and the Provisionals, closer to the classic hard-core Republican discourse based on violence as the only way to get unification. Sectarian riots gave the lead to the second group, but it became ultimately very strong because it was able to attract working-class groups that have

remained either politically absentee or Labour-oriented until then. In Wales, as Plaid Cymru mainly catered for the Welsh-speaking community's needs, the Liberal party was the enemy to beat. As in the Basque Country, nationalists' rivals were a declining party, so it would have been possible for radical nationalists to mobilize the constituency in the face of state over-reaction. However, and this should remind us of Catalonia, those triggering violence within the nationalist movement came from its fringes. They were English-speaking youngsters with working-class backgrounds and were late arrivals to nationalism. This was the case because the majority of Welsh-speaking radicals were channelled into the Welsh Language Society, whose unique concern was achieving official status for Welsh. Quick state concessions on the issue contributed to the appeasement of radicals and the defusing of potential escalation. The symbolic cost of the operation fell on the nationalist moderates, unable to electorally cross the linguistic divide. Until the inauguration of the Assembly of Wales in 1997, its electoral record in general elections never reached the 12 percent threshold.

#### 6.4.2.1. Mobilization in Northern Ireland

As mentioned in section 2, Republicans were never very strong in Northern Ireland. Fearful of sectarian riots, the Six Counties experienced lower levels of insurgent violence than the rest of the island during the civil war. After the Ulster's fundamental contribution to the war effort, Unification seemed to be a dead-end. The group of Catholic notables interested in politics tried to give some visibility to its scattered and downhearted constituency without renouncing its ultimate goal – reunification. Absent a strong party organization that could press for larger goals, Catholic MPs sat at Stormont with little more ambition than keeping the nationalist discourse alive. To that end, they did not recognise Stormont on principle and rejected taking up the role of Official Opposition. Their electoral fortunes

restricted to the Catholic strongholds west of the Bann,<sup>23</sup> they limited themselves to serving their rurally-based, farming constituencies (Lynn 1997: 79).

The Nationalist incapacity to win over the working-class vote from Belfast is remarkable. Having their electoral fortress in Londonderry, old nationalists never came close to winning a Belfast seat from 1945 onwards. This renunciation left working-class Catholic constituencies in Belfast up for grabs. Among the main contenders, Northern-Irish Labour Party (NILP) candidates fought against Republicans and Unionists to get Belfast's competitive seats. For instance, the 1958 Regional Election returned four Northern-Irish Labour candidates from Belfast seats to Stormont. The two of them coming from Catholic strongholds, Central and Falls, stood for a socialist republicanism that was compatible with playing within the institutions to denounce economic discrimination. In that election, the four NILP MPs encouraged Nationalist candidates to accept the role of Official Opposition and work together against the Unionist regime. However, the Nationalist MPs turned down the offer so as to not betray their main commitment of non-recognition of Stormont – regardless of the fact they used to take their seats and turn up to the sessions (Lynn 1997: 139-40).<sup>24</sup> This could be the last chance nationalist MPs had to overcome their structural weaknesses. From then on, several new groups pressed for an alternative strategy consisting of claiming the spread of British rights to all British citizens living in Ulster, regardless of their creed.

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<sup>23</sup> Leaving gerrymandering aside, Nationalist MPs never accounted for more than a fifth of the 52 members of Stormont, despite the fact the Catholics accounted for a third of the voting population.

<sup>24</sup> After the unexpected meeting between Ulster Prime Minister, Terence O'Neill and his Irish counterpart, Sean Lemass, in 1965, the Nationalist Party in the North was under strong pressure to take some conciliatory measures, such as taking up the role of Official Opposition. They did it half-heartedly only to go back to non-recognition three years later.



Thus, the Catholic constituency started to evolve in three different ways during the '60s. Firstly, the old nationalist party remained ideologically committed to non-recognition, and structurally unwilling to build an all-Ulster organization capable of fighting all seats and be responsive to Belfast-based working-class groups as well as moderately-nationalist new middle-class groups (Hume 1996: 3). Secondly, the IRA maintained a strict policy of absenteeism, and this policy was dominant within the Catholic field with regards to Westminster elections. Thus, despite the military fiasco of the IRA Border Campaign, its political wing, Sinn Fein, remained the only contender for Westminster elections, since nationalists did not put forward candidates either in 1959 or in 1964. In both elections, Sinn Fein failed to win the strongly-Catholic seat of Mid-Ulster, and it failed again in 1966 in the face of Catholic division. The inability to win West Belfast together with the IRA renunciation to spread the Border Campaign to the main provincial city left the organization waning there (English 2003: 75; Moloney 2003: 50-51).<sup>25</sup> The strong emergence of the NILP<sup>26</sup> in Belfast's Catholic strongholds convinced the Dublin-

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<sup>25</sup> According to Sinn Fein president, Gerry Adams, "Following the failure of the IRA's 1950s campaign on the border, the republican movement was in a considerable state of demoralization, and in 1961 the total strength of the Belfast IRA was 24. It wasn't that republicanism had died, but it had suffered a substantial defeat" (Adams 1996: 77).

<sup>26</sup> The NILP played some time with the idea of becoming the local branch of the UK Labour party, but the latter refused to intervene in Stormont's politics once in power. The NILP never took off because of its reluctance to assume a clear-cut course with regards to the "partition" issue. Thus, the party received Catholic votes as long as it gave freedom to its candidates to choose a stance on the issue. After the adoption of a pro-partition policy in the late '40s, pro-labour candidates running in Catholic constituencies stood as independent candidates to attract anti-partition votes (Rumpf and Hepburn 1977 203). However, this change did not carry dramatic electoral swings. As Budge and O'Leary showed with 1966 survey data, many Catholics preferred to identify themselves with the NILP rather than with a nationalist label before the start of the troubles (Budge and O'Leary 1973: 208).

based leadership about the convenience of moving the republican movement towards a non-sectarian left-wing platform that endorsed the NICRA campaign. That move was not viewed positively by hard-line Republicans, and this was the origin of the IRA split, which I will develop in-depth below.

Finally, the old Nationalist Party found a tough competitor in the Civil Rights movement. This loose movement had three main reproaches against the nationalist leadership. Firstly, there were criticisms against nationalist indulgence with respect to the IRA during the elections to Westminster. By leaving the field open to absentee republican candidates in 1955, 1959 and 1964, the Nationalist Party offered a weak stance and allowed them to recover – even if minimally – from the IRA military defeat (Lynn 1997: 233).<sup>27</sup> Secondly, critics denounced the reluctance of the old notables to build an all-Ulster political organization that went beyond casting votes in Catholic strongholds during Election Day. They foresaw the creation of a card-carrying political party with a common ideological platform and willing to participate in Stormont sessions as the only available strategy to show Catholic strength, give publicity to their complaints and force the regime to react. Otherwise, the repudiation of Stormont delegitimized Catholic claims, they argued, since Loyalists could always say that the main nationalist aim was to destroy the institutions and achieve the end of partition through violence. As two of the first critics put it:

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<sup>27</sup> For nationalists, the fact that Sinn Fein dropped its electoral support from 152,310 votes in 1955 to 73,415 votes in 1959 seemed to legitimize their decision on not fielding candidates. But this argument did not convince everybody. There were also those thinking that the return of 12 Unionists out of 12 Ulster seats did not help nationalism at all. For them, if the Nationalist Party did not want to confront SF, then there was room for a new approach. That was the origin of a new group called National Unity (NU), whose main goal aimed at creating a party structure that covered the whole province (Lynn 1997: 146-47).

The new Nationalism must be prepared to accept the idea of the de facto Government and to cooperate with it in everything that was for the good of the community. But such co-operation must be from strength and not weakness. There must be a party in Northern Ireland willing to work with their Protestant fellow country-men, a party believing in their national traditions, and with faith in their national future; a party openly committed to the cause of a united Ireland.

It seems to me obvious that the first step in such a programme is for the Nationalist Party to accept fully and honestly the present constitutional position... and to make the basis of its policy the establishment of a constitutional opposition with a well thought out programme regarding matters such as employment, agriculture, social services and the removal of sectarian mistrust (quoted in Lynn 1997: 144/145).

Despite this criticism, NICRA leaders did not openly contest the leadership of the movement until the late '60s. Before that, they reached a deal with the Nationalist Party to avoid electoral competition between the two organizations.<sup>28</sup> As the agreement clearly favoured the incumbents, they did little to improve their organization and become more competitive electorally. This deeply disappointed the most pro-change elements within the movement, overall in the nationalist bastion of Londonderry, where party members were mostly outspokenly critical with the leadership. The more open-minded Nationalist MPs were very aware of the need of attracting the new generation of middle-class Catholics, but the Nationalist Party had become a gerontocracy: in 1963, the party leader was 74 years old; two fellow MPs were older still (Lynn 1997: 163).

The final criticism was related to the strategy. Leaders of the Civil Rights movement thought that street politics, in the way

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<sup>28</sup> There was a self-defeating attempt to build a joint organization between the old Nationalist Party and the new groups (CSJ, NU) called the National Political Front, but the nationalist attempt to keep full control of their constituencies jeopardized the whole enterprise (Lynn 1997: 174 and ss.).

blacks were using it in the US, could be a valid instrument of pressure on Stormont and Westminster.<sup>29</sup> If the movement would recognise the legitimacy of the system, why not go to the streets to show that the rules of the system are systematically being neglected in a portion of the state? Old Nationalist MPs distrusted the method because of their fear of losing control of their constituencies. Only a relatively late-comer, Austin Currie, elected MP for East Tyrone in 1964 at the age of 25, opted strongly for direct action. In early 1968, he had declared: "We will have justice or we will make a government system based on injustice unworkable." To achieve justice, he called for "all weapons in the arsenal of non-violence and civil disobedience" (quoted in Lynn 1997: 207).

Instead of defending the full monopoly of representation for Nationalist politicians in Stormont, Currie appealed to the NICRA to step in and fight politically for Catholic rights. Furthermore, he led demonstrations against Protestant discrimination in housing. By doing so, he alienated himself from his former Nationalist fellow MPs, who, under McAteer's leadership, still thought that conventional politics could serve best their constituencies than protest in the streets. When the list of non-Nationalist MPs calling for direct action to "bring justice to the North" grew, McAteer became too aware that immediate action was necessary. In his final attempt to convince London to force the Unionists to change the path, he warned that trouble would come if nothing was done. It did not work either.<sup>30</sup> The breakout of disturbances in

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<sup>29</sup> The germ of the NICRA came from the Campaign for Social Justice (CSJ), set up in 1964 and led by the McCluskeys. Their motto was: "we lived in a part of the UK where the British remit ran, we should seek the ordinary rights of British citizens which were so obviously denied us" (quoted in Lynn, 1997: 171).

<sup>30</sup> According to Currie, the Nationalist Party lost its last opportunity to keep leading the movement when it rejected his call for civil disobedience against Stormont's discrimination practices (Lynn 1997: 211). In the face of increasing anger against those practices, Nationalist inactivity was broadly misunderstood within the Catholic community.

Londonderry in October 1968 swept away the old Nationalist Party. Under allegations of having failed to provide the Catholic community with leadership in a time of change (Lynn 1997: 217), the broad hegemony that old Nationalists had kept on rural Catholic constituencies since World War II came to an end.

The Stormont Parliamentary election of 1969 was proof of this, since it viewed the irremediable collapse of the Nationalist Party and the emergence of NICRA-backed independent candidates, such as John Hume, Ivan Cooper – a Protestant himself – and Paddy Devlin.<sup>31</sup> Representatives of the new Catholic middle-class, those new MPs remained less concerned about the end of partition and more about achieving full British citizen rights for their communities. Faced with the electoral collapse of the Nationalist Party, the new MPs, together with Labour-republican MPs from Belfast (such as Gerry Fitt) and some remnants of the Nationalist Party (such as Currie), founded the Social and Democratic Labour Party – the SDLP – in August 1970 (Murray 1998). In three years this heterogeneous collection of rising politicians took over most of the seats the Nationalist Party held, and became the dominant force in Londonderry, the bastion of the old party. Built as the moderate consciousness of the Catholic community, the SDLP pursued collaborate with liberal Unionists to achieve full citizenship for all inhabitants of Northern Ireland. To that end, they planned to participate within the Stormont institutions and give a minor role to the issue of unification. As a novelty in the Northern Irish political scenario, the SDLP called for unification based on the consent of the two communities of the North instead of forcing Irish Unity onto the Protestants. However, these good intentions became impracticable

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<sup>31</sup> The collapse of the Nationalist Party was absolute. In the first elections for the newly established 26 district council areas in May 1973, the party only won representation in its former stronghold of Londonderry, where it got 9 percent of the votes. In the 1973 election for the new Northern Ireland Assembly, the party fielded two candidates who obtained 1.2 percent of the votes, compared to 22.1 percent for the SDLP (Lynn 1973: 229).

once violence broke out and the new IRA, the Provisionals, started to outflank moderates by demanding the end of Stormont (more on this in the next subsection). From then on, the SDLP replaced the old Nationalist Party as main representative of the Catholic community, but it faced the same problems in trying to mobilize the whole Catholic constituency. If the Nationalist Party was unable to grow in Belfast, the SDLP had to fight in the city against the re-born republican movement, whose control of the Catholic constituency there became clear when Sinn Fein started to compete elections in the early 1980s.

With regard to the IRA, it has already been said that its military capacity to harm the Unionist state effectively ended with the Border campaign.<sup>32</sup> In addition to renouncing attacks on Belfast in order to avoid sectarian reactive violence, the campaign also saw little collaboration for continued violence within the Catholic community in the North. The Dublin-based leadership of the IRA decided that it was time to bury the weapons and start building grassroots support for a new strongly left-wing ideological platform that emphasised direct action and inter-sectarian cooperation as the most efficient recipe to end partition. According to the Southern leaders (led by Cathal Goulding), the ultimate solution to the Irish conflict was to bring the working-class segments of the Northern population together irrespective of their religion and former political loyalties (Bishop and Mallie 1987: 70; English 2003: 84). Protestant working classes had been as economically exploited by the Protestant capitalist class as the

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<sup>32</sup> Politically, it was not in a better shape either. After two decades without major riots in Belfast and Londonderry, the role of the IRA as defender of the Catholic community against sectarian attacks had become dispensable (Darby 1976: 93). According to Coogan, although the republican movement was still numerically strong in Belfast (compared to the rest of the province), “the fire and passion which once animated the Republicans were missing” by the ‘60s (Coogan 1993: 262). Thus, it is worth noting that in his 800-long monograph on the IRA, Coogan only dedicates three pages to the period between the end of the Harvest Campaign and the start of the troubles (*ibid*: 330-332).

Catholic ones. The only difference is that Protestants got some perquisites from the system in exchange for their loyalty, such as a system of “ethnic closure” to gain advantages in the job market.

Obviously, this interpretation of Ulster society was not endorsed by diehard Republicans in the Northern areas that had experienced sectarian violence most. Doubtful about the real interests of Southern Republicans, these hard-liners silently walked out of the organization in the expectation that, sooner or later sectarian violence would bring them back to the road (Anderson 2002: 158).<sup>33</sup> Although the leadership had to face this internal contestation, the chances were good. By taking advantage of the NICRA mobilizations, the proposed infiltration of Northern trade unions could be put forward, since several Protestant union leaders took part in the first steps of the movement. Apparently, all won with the relationship: the NICRA got muscle to steward its marches from the IRA rank-and-file, and the IRA circumvented the ban on its political wing (Sinn Fein was outlawed in 1964 and the follow-up Republican clubs in 1967) and obtained an excellent container to spread its new strategy.<sup>34</sup> However, when sectarian disturbances broke out in late 1968, the cross-religious IRA’s gamble started to collapse. In Bishop and Mallie’s words:

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<sup>33</sup> According to Bishop and Mallie (1987: 70), only one out of eleven Belfast IRA commanders endorsed the new political strategy. English confirms that this new strategy was broadly rejected in the city (English 2003). Patterson recalls that the modest increase in membership in Belfast (from 24 members in 1962 to 120 in 1969) was not prompted by the new IRA policy. On the contrary, most of the new recruits were attracted by the republican tradition of physical force and sectarianism. This is one of the reasons why the southern leadership did not authorise IRA attacks in the city (Patterson 1997: 108-09).

<sup>34</sup> The bad reputation of the IRA for the Protestant community forced the organization to assume a minor role within the NICRA to avoid that the Unionist regime used IRA involvement to discredit it. Thus, republicans never made up the majority of the NICRA steering committee despite of being one of the largest organizations backing the movement (Bishop and Mallie 1987: 72).

By the start of 1969 the dynamic of the civil rights movement was slipping out of the control of conventional Nationalist politicians and into the hands of the young working-class Catholic demonstrators, the radicals of Derry and the People's Democracy. None had any allegiance to the IRA, and little interest in its political programme (Bishop and Mallie 1987: 80).<sup>35</sup>

The reaction of the Southerners was to enforce the political route: all the street work done was pointless in the absence of a political organization capable to collect the fruits. Thus, they called for the repeal of the party policy of absenteeism. Republican candidates should sit in Westminster and Dublin to better serve their constituencies (Bishop and Mallie 1987: 87). Unable to get the policy switch passed in its Annual General Conference, they decided to endorse candidates that explicitly spoke about taking their seats.<sup>36</sup> That was too much for the Northerners. But the main dispute between North and South was related to self-defence. Whereas Londonderry had taken the lead in sparking the marches, Belfast had remained strangely quiet. After the first clashes in Londonderry, IRA militants asked the Southern leadership for help to set up vigilante groups in Belfast, but the latter opposed with the argument that it was the RUC and the Army's job to keep the peace in the city. According to one of

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<sup>35</sup> According to Hull, "even though the IRA had infiltrated the CRA and had benefited politically from the successes that movement enjoyed, it was not really an organization in 1969. When the Protestants went on the rampage during the week of August 12, therefore, the IRA was unable to back its grandiose promises of support with anything but verbal action and an occasional bullet" (Hull 1976: 87).

<sup>36</sup> In the Mid-Ulster by-election of April 1969, Civil Rights nationalists and Republicans fielded candidates. As the split of the Catholic vote was going to help the Unionist contender, the IRA pressed to come up with a consensus candidate that please the two sides. Bernadette Devlin, the PD's young leader, was selected, even if she signalled clearly her intention of taking the seat. She won, but many within the republican movement saw the IRA backing as a betrayal of principle (The Sunday Times 1972: 89).



the Southern leaders, Tomas MacGiolla, “what we were trying to do was to avoid getting involved in any [military] campaign. That’s why MacStiofain [one of the IRA leaders that fostered the split and posterior creation of the Provisionals] was such an embarrassment. The objective was to avoid military confrontation and to avoid any appearance of sectarianism” (quoted in Bishop and Mallie 1987: 94).

Unfortunately for them, sectarian riots finally broke out in August 1969 in Belfast, and the organization was not ready to help with weapons. The IRA became “I Ran Away,” as written in walls all over the city (Bell 1991: 176). By then, the Northern branch of the IRA was in disarray. According to the description Bishop and Mallie offer of the period, “in 1969 there were fewer than sixty men in Belfast who would regard themselves as members of the IRA. At least half of these were lapsed: drop-outs after the border campaign for whom republicanism was now mainly a social event” (Bishop and Mallie 1987: 90). The reluctance of the Dublin-based IRA to help the Northerners made almost impossible any compromise between the two factions. When in November 1969 an IRA Army Convention was called with the intention of winding up internal disputes, the Northerners did not show up. Nevertheless, the convention passed a motion recognising de facto the two Irish governments and Westminster. By claiming this motion reneged on the IRA main policy, those voting against it walked out of the conference and set up the new Provisional IRA, whose first chief of staff in the North would be a Belfast Republican. Out of 80 IRA members in the city, only around 30 changed sides. Still, thanks to its role of defender of the Catholic neighbourhoods in Belfast, the Provisionals came to control the IRA there within a couple of months (the Sunday Times 1972: 195-96).<sup>37</sup> The strategy was very straightforward: to defend the

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<sup>37</sup> According the Inquiry team of this newspaper: “[The PIRA] remained a small group: they could do nothing, even if they wanted to, without community support. In reality, therefore, a Provisional “campaign” was never possible until certain pre-conditions had been met. The most important of these was that the British Army had to

Catholic community until having enough resources (recruits, support and money) to go on the offensive. In the words of the then PIRA chief of staff, Sean MacStiofáin:

It was agreed upon that the most urgent priority would be area defence. All our energies would be devoted to providing material, financial and training assistance for the Northern Units. The objective was to ensure that if any area where such a unit existed came under attack, whether from Loyalist extremists or British forces, that unit would be capable of adequate defensive action. The army council also decided that as soon as it became feasible and practical the IRA would move from a purely defensive position into a phase of combined defence and retaliation. Should British troops ill-treat or kill civilians, counter operations would be undertaken when the Republican troops had the capability. After a sufficient period of preparation... it would go into the third phase, launching all-out offensive action against the British occupation system (quoted in Bishop and Mallie 1987: 140-41).

Quite remarkably, the Provisional IRA was able to build a new military organization with broad civilian support within the Belfast Catholic areas coming from the fusion between the emerging consciousness on civil rights and the secular issue of partition (Burton 1978: 120-21). The moderation that the city had shown during the first stages of the troubles quickly disappeared as soon as large-scale riots broke out.<sup>38</sup> Three factors may explain this outcome. Firstly, the particular geography of Belfast, where

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become cemented in Catholic eyes into the structure of Unionist supremacy" (The Sunday Times 1972: 197).

<sup>38</sup> Still, the PIRA always had to adapt its levels of violence to the constraints imposed by the supporting community. In Burton's words: "the IRA appreciated that there were boundaries of tolerance which it could not overstep. If the movement persistently violated community norms, doors would stop opening, billets would be harder to get, informing would rise and their isolation would increase. Volunteers understood this because they were themselves part of the community" (Burton 1978: 109).

Catholic strongholds have Protestant neighbourhoods next-door and there are also Catholic enclaves within large Protestant estates (Doherty and Poole 1997; Rumpf and Hepburn 1977: 165). This territorial pattern of settlement facilitated the sudden spread of sectarian rioting and contributed to the enforcement of the IRA's role of Catholic defenders (Elliot 2000: 419; O'Brien 1972: 195).<sup>39</sup> Secondly, the large working-class segment of the Catholic community in Belfast was a fertile ground for the Provisionals, since the political representation of this group had lain on the hands of Northern Irish Labour politicians without links to Dublin and London. The capacity of this scattered number of MPs to offer solutions to the sectarian attacks was negligible, basically because their appeal became powerless once sectarianism came to the fore of the political debate. For instance, the defence committees created in the Catholic areas of Belfast became under the influence of the PIRA once sectarian violence broke out under the indifference or actively biased participation of the UK security forces (Adams 1996: 118; Coogan 1993: 377; De Baroid 1989). Finally, the creation and maintenance of the "no-go" areas were crucial to empower the PIRA within the Catholic neighbourhoods of Belfast<sup>40</sup> (Kocher 2005). The punitive raids run by Protestants

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<sup>39</sup> Indeed, outside Belfast most of the IRA militants sided with the Officials – as the Dublin-based IRA branch started to be labelled. In Londonderry the tradition of socialist republicanism remained strong and this stopped the initial success of the Provisionals. For instance, a young Martin McGuinness joined the Officials in 1971 apparently unaware of the split (Clarke and Johnston 2001). In the countryside, a less dramatic situation due to the absence of sectarian riots did not push unhappy IRA activists to break with Dublin. But this temporary advantage went nowhere, since Belfast was the real field of competition, and there the Provisionals were overtaking the Officials unrelentingly (Bishop and Mallie 1987: 144).

<sup>40</sup> Apparently, it did not have such a big effect in Londonderry, where the tradition of moderate control (firstly with the Nationalist Party, succeeded by the SDLP) had a long reputation and was successful in deterring the PIRA takeover. Damaged by interment, Bloody Sunday helped the Provisionals to become a powerful actor in the area (Murray

and security forces alike into the Catholic ghettos were halted by barricading the main entrances to the areas. Unexpectedly, the PIRA was able to use its military presence within the ghettos to build a new organization with hundreds of extremely young recruits<sup>41</sup> from working-class backgrounds not necessarily related to the republican tradition but willing to retaliate against the indiscriminate repression practiced by the security forces (Adams 1996: 118; Alonso 2003: 29-37; Arthur and Jeffery 1988: 37; Burton 1978: 80-81; De Baroid 1989: 31-40; English 2003: 122-23; Irvin 1999: 188; Moloney 2003: 204-05; Ó Broin 2009: 222; O Connor 1993: 126-27; Toolis 1995: Ch. 3; Waldmann 1997: 99; White 1993: 85-88). Thus, during almost three years between mid-1969 and Operation Motorman in 1972, solid Catholic areas in the city were patrolled by IRA-led vigilance committees with the implicit collusion of the Army, which did little to stop it.<sup>42</sup> The Provisionals legitimised their practices as purely defensive violence against external aggression and prepared the organization

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1998; Clarke and Johnston 2001: 67). Nonetheless, the electoral irruption of Sinn Féin after 1982 limited marginally SDLP's strength in Londonderry.

<sup>41</sup> Between the start of the troubles and the end of 1975, 187 Northern Irish republican terrorists died –either they were killed by the actions they were carrying out or they were killed by rival armed agencies. Their average age at the time of death was 18.2 years old (my own calculation from McKittrick *et al.* 2004). According to White's calculations, the average age of dead Republicans from Belfast between 1969 and 1972 was 21 years old, largely coming from working-class backgrounds (White 1993: 85-86). Alonso's data show that 70 percent of IRA activists imprisoned in 1975 were 21 years old or younger, with a 63 percent between 17 and 21 years (Alonso 2003: 28).

<sup>42</sup> After the first cases of RUC misbehaviour, the police force was forbidden to get into Catholic areas. Charged with this task, the Army tried to set a deal with the IRA that decreased the level of violence and monitored the streets (The Sunday Times 1972: 242). Very soon, the good welcome it received in those areas disappeared when the Unionist regime started to force the Army to bring barricades down and enforce the rule of law in the city.

for the offensive against British rule in the island. When the no-go areas came to an end, internment based on bad-grained information<sup>43</sup> and episodes of indiscriminate repression such as Bloody Sunday strongly contributed to enforcing the discourse of the PIRA and gave it the lead in carrying out terrorist attacks against police and military forces (De Baroid 2000: 91-98; White 1989).<sup>44</sup>

Thus, despite the assumption that the IRA was made up of an uninterrupted succession of republican cohorts, the provisional movement was built anew. Most of the incoming recruits, the so-called “Sixty-niners”, “were not propelled into the IRA’s arms by any great belief in republicanism; usually it was an experience or series of experiences at the hands of the Army, the police or the Protestants that left them with a desire to protect themselves in the future and also to get back at the state” (Bishop and Mallie 1987: 151-52).<sup>45</sup> This well-documented experience of repression made

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<sup>43</sup> According to Kocher (2005: 293), the fact that during three years the security forces had no free access to the Catholic areas strongly harmed the recollection of intelligence about the new trouble-makers. That would explain the low rate of successful detentions during internment. Bishop and Mallie also make the point that the Army lists of suspects to be lifted were written by the RUC with outdated information based on the pre-split IRA. Thus, the PIRA leadership pretty much avoided the initial Army raid (Bishop and Mallie 1987: 187).

<sup>44</sup> According to the then PIRA chief of staff, Séan MacStiofáin, “the result of the interment round-up and the interrogation excesses was that the British succeeded in bringing into combat not a diminished, but a vastly reinforced Republican guerrilla army” (MacStiofáin 1975: 203).

<sup>45</sup> In White’s words: “For the Nationalist working class in Northern Ireland, the primary politicising agent in the early ‘70s was violence – from the loyalists, the police and the British Army. That the violence drove people into the IRA is unquestioned” (White 1993: 88). According to Coogan: “The growth of the Civil Rights movement, the Falls Road curfew of July 1970, the unilateral introduction of internment in August 1971, when no Protestants were interned, stimulated the Catholic population to extend a far greater degree of support to the IRA than had

an impression especially on the large working-class Catholic youth.<sup>46</sup> If the existence of broad “youth bulges” is always a factor that favours the spread of violence (Urdal 2006), the combination of politically-untrained youngsters with working-class backgrounds contributed to satisfy IRA needs on recruitment (Waldmann 1997). The fact that Catholic working-class Belfast would have not been consistently mobilized by a well-gearred political organization left a whole constituency up for grabs. When sectarian violence broke out, and the Army started to launch its searches mostly against Catholics, “a significant section of the working-class Catholic population of West Belfast began looking to the IRA for protection” (Bishop and Mallie 1987: 174).

It was a matter of time and internment that the same community had no problem with backing offensive IRA attacks against security forces. By the end of 1971 PIRA strategy was so successful in attracting recruits that the OIRA was forced to also carry out terrorist attacks.<sup>47</sup> Figure 6.1 shows the overrepresentation of the number of killings in Belfast and, to a lesser degree, Londonderry until 1975. Although Belfast comprised 20 percent of the population, it suffered more than 60 percent of the killings carried out by security forces and loyalist paramilitaries. After this year, the IRA moved the war to the border counties. Thus, republican violence in Newry and Mourne escalated from 4 percent to 17.2 percent after 1975; in Armagh, it

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existed at any time since the end of the Anglo-Irish war of 1916-1921 and arguably even during it” (Coogan 1993: 343).

<sup>46</sup> There are tens of testimonies about the pernicious effect of non-selective violence on the odds of joining the IRA. See, for instance, Alonso (2003), Irvin (1999) and White (1993).

<sup>47</sup> As mentioned above, Londonderry and the border’s countryside were slower in joining to the offensive. In Londonderry, moderate nationalists had always kept in control of the Catholic committees. In the border, the large current of republican loyalty had remained dormant, since the area spared sectarian attacks. Episodes of unqualified repression pushed moderates in both areas to support the campaign of killings (MacStiofáin 1975: 157).

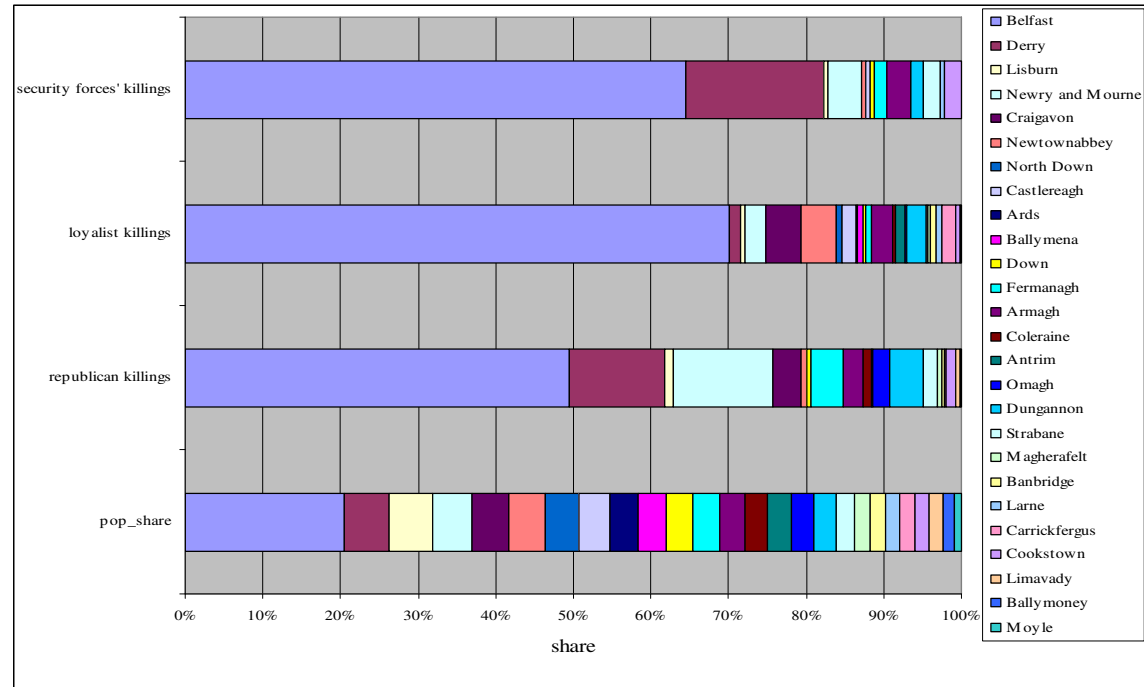
went up from 2.45 percent to 7.1 percent (data not included). However, most of the loyalist killings were still carried out in Belfast (58.35 percent).

The implementation of direct rule, that is, the suspension of the regional institutions and the centralization of Ulster powers in London under a Secretaryship of State for Northern Ireland, was a major boost for the political legitimacy of the Republican movement. However, the continuation of the terrorist campaign showed that the PIRA was ready to escalate its demands. Whereas the moderate nationalist leaders within the SDLP called for a halt to violence and proposed a positive response from their community to the end of Stormont, the IRA labelled them defeatists and sold-out (Bishop and Mallie 1987: 222-223).<sup>48</sup> It was clear that the two groups were competing for the same Catholic constituency, but the PIRA seemed to have no intention to get into the electoral fight against moderate nationalist politicians. Republican leaders, such as Gerry Adams (1996) and Joe Cahill (Anderson 2002) regretted at the time the short-sightedness of the movement. Particularly, Adams was very aware about the strategic importance of having a political branch to gain legitimacy and public support for the military campaign.

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<sup>48</sup> Faced with increasing criticism of violence, the reaction of the PIRA was, according to these authors, “to listen representations by their working-class supporters and to dismiss those of the middle classes or the more unsympathetic clergy as unrepresentative, cowardly or self-seeking.” (p. 224).

Figure 6.1. Overrepresentation of violence in Belfast and Londonderry before 1976 (source: DTV dataset)





Although it took almost 10 years for the IRA to reverse its policy of not competing elections<sup>49</sup>, the 1975 truce gave the Republicans the possibility of gaining political legitimacy under the Catholic community with the “incident centres” (Frampton 2009: 28-32). After the quick failure of the previous 1972 truce due to republican violent responses to loyalist attacks in Belfast, the 1975 truce established, within the initial deal between the UK government and the PIRA, the creation of several offices equipped with direct phone connection with police headquarters to report on any potential violations of the truce – the “incident centres”. The republicans took advantage of this quasi-official status to build a civilian structure in charge of addressing Catholics’ claims. As the military council remained committed against political participation, this short-term “political” advantage was not enough to balance all the problems the truce brought into the PIRA. Republican in-feuding and the continuous spiral of sectarian killings between Loyalist and Republican paramilitaries increased the number of deaths in 1975 compared to the previous year even if a cease-fire technically reined for most of the year. Finally, the end of the truce involved the definitive transfer of PIRA’s power from Dublin to the North, because the incapacity of the Southern leaders to reach a positive deal broke the nerves of the Northern command. From then on most of the strategy would be decided by the Northerners especially in Belfast (Gerry Adams) and Londonderry (Martin McGuinness) (Moloney 2003).

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<sup>49</sup> Recall that the principle of absenteeism from Westminster, Stormont and Dublin was in the origin of the split. For Provisional hard-liners, there was no point about fielding candidates for illegitimate institutions. For instance, in the face of the 1973 Northern Ireland Assembly initiative, PIRA’s political leader, R. O’Bradaigh, tried to convince the military council about the potential gains from contesting the election on a pro-abstention ticket. This would be useful to show the staunching support the PIRA had within the community. But the military leaders opposed, since they thought it would distract resources from the offensive in Britain (Bishop and Mallie 1987: 265).

The occasion for the pragmatic leaders of the North to show their command within the Republican movement came over with the hunger strikes. The policy of *Ulsterization* fostered from the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland since 1975 pursued to normalize the troubles. On the one hand, it purported to replace Army intervention with local security forces (RUC and UDR). On the other, it gave terrorists in jail an ordinary-criminal treatment, with no exceptions about their behaviour inside the prison. Several IRA prisoners had revolted against this measure, but it was Bobby Sands that took the protest forward in 1981, and other inmates followed suit. By committing themselves to fast to death if the government did not give them back political status, the prisoners offered the Republican movement a precious occasion to capture again the attention of the Catholic community in the streets, fed-up with the endless terrorist violence (Ó Broin 2009: 236-239).

The opportunity came with the opening of a Westminster seat in a district (Fermanagh and South Tyrone) with a winning Catholic majority. Local republican committees decided that Sands should run, but also that he should stand as an Anti-H-Block/Political Prisoner<sup>50</sup> candidate in order to collect as many pro-hunger-strike votes as possible and avoid the trouble of people voting against Bobby Sands in rejection of PIRA's armed strategy (Bishop and Mallie 1987: 366). Although the tradition of voting for prisoners was not new in the district, the victory was far from being safe. It very much relied on the SDLP's behaviour: if they put forward a candidate, this would split the Catholic vote and concede the seat to the Unionist candidate. On the one hand, the party was sincerely against the PIRA and its tactics for gaining support, so that it had good reasons to be in the race; on the other hand, to run could alienate the party from the community at a time of intense emotion and polarization. Ultimately, the party did not field any candidate and Bobby Sands won the seat with an almost 100 percent mobilization of the Catholic voters of the district

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<sup>50</sup> The H-Block was the name of the prison building where most political prisoners stayed.

(Sands' margin was only of 1,500 votes). That was a bitter victory: Sands died less than one month later without any concession from the government. The following ten deaths of prisoners appeared to be useless too, but the Sands' campaign marked the pathway for the Republican leadership: the strategy of the armalite and the ballot-box.

After the 1981 Sands' electoral victory, the Northern leadership proposed a resolution in the Annual Conference of Sinn Fein with which the party would have the power to participate in any election as long as they do not take the seat and remain openly committed to endorse the armed fight.<sup>51</sup> In this conference, Danny Morrison, the Sinn Fein press officer, made his famous speech: "Who here really believes that we can win the war through the ballot-box? But will anyone here object if with a ballot paper in this hand and an Armalite in this hand we take power in Ireland?" (quoted in Bishop and Mallie 1987: 378). The amendment was passed and the first chance to show the real power of the PIRA in the ballot box came the next year, with an election to set up another deliberative regional assembly. The election was a low-cost experiment for Sinn Fein, since the SDLP had already announced its intention of boycotting the resulting Assembly.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> The policy of absenteeism was finally dropped in the 1986 Annual Conference of Sinn Fein with regards to the Dublin parliament. This PIRA-endorsed switch meant another split, when the former Sinn-Fein president R. O'Bradaigh and his mainly Southern supporters walked out of the conference to set up a new republican organization. Fortunately for the architect of the policy change, Gerry Adams, the new group scarcely drained off the Sinn Fein's constituency, since most of the Northern youngsters that had filled the movement were less ideologically orthodox and more interested in following the ballot box-armalite strategy (MacDonald 1986: 157-58).

<sup>52</sup> Even though the republican movement did not put forward candidates until the 1980s, the SDLP always had to juggle things around to avoid the effect of abstention claims on its electorate. For instance, the 1973 Assembly election was held with internment still in place. Republicans and NICRA candidates called to boycott the election, unless internment were suspended. The SDLP also denounced internment, but

The election was some sort of success. Sinn Fein won 10.1 percent of the votes and 5 out of 68 seats. Furthermore, it harmed its main competitor, the SDLP, whose result went down from 19 seats in 1973 (17 seats in 1975) to 14 seats in 1982.

Where did those voters come from? It is well-known that SF voters were younger and most commonly from working-class backgrounds than SDLP voters (Irvin 1999: 125; Feeny 2002: 312). But in the absence of good survey data about the motivations for voting for the party, I propose to check whether the party collected most of its votes in districts where it had been also strong during the 1960s.<sup>53</sup> Figure 6.2 shows that the new Sinn Fein was able to recruit votes in places where it had not been historically attractive for the electorate. The Belfast districts experienced an absolutely different electoral behaviour of the Catholic population: whereas support for the Republicans was tiny in the 1960s, West Belfast became the main Republican stronghold in the province during the 1980s.

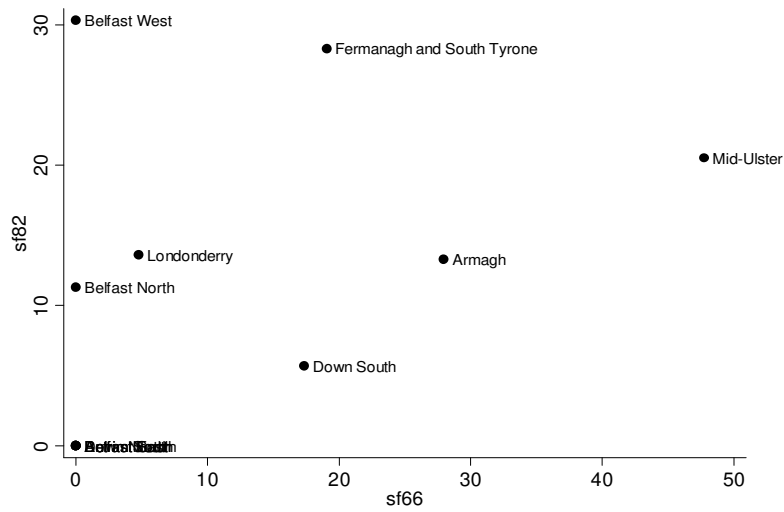
Although the hunger strikes were no doubt a relevant factor in explaining the sudden electoral surge of SF in 1982, the 1983 UK General Election viewed that the SF electorate was not context-dependent: with 13.4 percent of the vote, it cut the gap with the SDLP (17.9 percent). More relevantly, Gerry Adams won the seat of West Belfast in a very open race against the SDLP and Gerry Fit (the incumbent). The 1985 Local election in Northern Ireland allows for the testing empirically of the influence of violence on SF voting, since the number of local councils is large enough. I checked whether SF voting in each local council depends on: (i) the losses (or gains) that the other two nationalist parties experienced (the SDLP and another category including the Irish Independence Party, the Workers' Party and other minor

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argued it would be better fought off within the institutions. This was its justification to run (Laver 1976: 32-33).

<sup>53</sup> For the sake of comparison, I analyse the 1966 UK General Election and the 1982 Northern Ireland Assembly elections because the latter was the first election in which the provisional SF ran as well as the last election with the 12-district system used in UK general elections.

Figure 6.2. Sinn Fein electoral support in 1966 and 1982, parliamentary districts



republican candidates) between the 1981 and the 1985 local elections; (ii) the level of anti-republican violence experienced in the council (loyalist and security forces' killings); and (iii) the share of Catholics living in the council. Table 6.1 obviously shows that SF votes came from largely Catholic districts. Besides, SF gains came at expense of nationalist parties. But it is also interesting to see that the number of killings carried out in the council by loyalists and security forces also had explanatory power on SF electoral performance. This finding is coherent with several anecdotal accounts of the emergence of the political wind of the republican movement. According to Moloney, the Northern Republican leaders already knew in the early 1970s that the movement could count on thousands of political followers fed up with repression to show up at commemoration parades and rallies but not so much to join the IRA (Moloney 2003: 199). Although some working-class communities in West Belfast voted for the

SDLP, it was clear that they had been politically organized around the Republican movement and the memories of the troubles (O Connor 1993: 64-65; De Baroid 2000: 183; Feeny 2002: 317). 60 percent of the SF party members interviewed by Irvin mentioned to have relatives or close friends hurt or killed by security forces or paramilitaries, whereas 40 percent mentioned having been arrested (Irvin 1999: 142).

*Table 6.1. Regression analysis of Sinn Fein voting in the 1985 local council election*

	Coefficient	Rob. Std. Err.
Dif. SDLP 1981-85	-0.951*	0.283
Dif. Other Nats. 1981-85	-0.686*	0.24
Anti-republican killings	0.004***	0.002
Catholic Share	0.231*	0.054
Constant	-2.384	1.522
N	26	
Prob>F	0.0000	
R2	0.8605	

Note: \* <1 percent significance level; \*\*\* <10 percent significance level.

It is no wonder then that the share of SF votes remained pretty much stable. With around 90,000 votes obtained in the 1984 European Election, the party could boast of its electoral success. Whereas the two large previous waves of recruitment (Belfast 1969 and interment 1971) had benefited the armed wing, the Hunger Strike wave had brought the party to life (Moloney 2003: 204-05). Still, the gamble on conventional politics had a cost: to detract resources from the main armed fight towards the political contest. The PIRA experienced more criticism against its actions and larger constraints on timing and targets (Smith 1995: 172-82). The continuation of IRA killings slowly drained the electoral

support of Sinn Fein, which remained more or less constant around 10 percent of the vote. That was enough for Republican leaders to play the veto card, and make sure that no solution would be viable without the consent of the republican side (Frampton 2009: 22; O'Doherty 1998). The start of the peace process in the 1990s allowed many Catholics to vote for Sinn Fein without bearing the blame for endorsing all the killings.<sup>54</sup> The SDLP, even if broadly responsible for the strategy leading to peace, has been unable to collect the fruits of the process. In fact, the SDLP seems to have suffered the same illness that killed the old Nationalist Party: the incapacity to build a modern well-staffed political party.

#### 6.4.2.2. Mobilization in Wales

The story of internal divisions within the Welsh nationalist movement is remarkably different. As noted in the previous subsection, Tryweryn created tensions within Plaid Cymru about the convenience of using violence to force the government to stop the dam. The leader writer of the Plaid-led newspaper, the *Welsh Nation*, considered that there were two reasons to reject direct action: on the one hand, if avoiding the drowning of a valley was enough cause to use violence, what would it not be? On the other hand, coordination problems would emerge by the need of building an underground organization separated from the legal party but somehow subordinated to it (WN, May 1961). Instead of using violence, party leader Gwynfor Evans called his followers to capitalize on the grassroots efforts to stop the dam electorally.

These messages notwithstanding, there were attacks soon against the installations. In October 1962, two young nationalists

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<sup>54</sup> Not so strikingly, Sinn Fein scored poorly in the South. In the 1987 General election, the party won less than 2 percent of the votes. Absent un-mobilized constituencies to capture, and without the indispensable help of security forces repressing indiscriminately, Sinn Fein has faced a more daunting task in the South, where only after the end of violence has been able to make some (relatively small) electoral inroads.

planted a minor engine against the facilities. The bomb received wide coverage and Gwynfor Evans released a statement in which despite dissociating the party from bombers' behaviour, he praised their action:

The two people involved were not acting for Plaid Cymru nor even in accord with Party policy (...). That having been said, I must say two other things. One is that I have great respect and sympathy for the two young men who have taken this action. They have acted with the highest motives for what they think is the good of their country. This should earn the respect of all Welshmen (quoted in WN, October 1962).<sup>55</sup>

Further bombs in the first half of 1963 aroused concerns about the potential perpetuation of violence. A Welsh writer, Graham Hughes, puts the dilemma in the following way:

Is the nation sufficiently developed and awake for such actions [violence] to be understood and ultimately to be psychologically effective? Can the nation ever be awakened without such acts? The ultimate verdict is always the retrospective one of history (WN 17: p.4).

The mood in Welsh society did not seem to go against the attacks, though. Several bombers brought to court found quite sympathetic justices. Thus, the two first bombers were released with no prison charges. Another bomber received a 10-year term sentence, but the judge commended him for the goal of the action (WN 17, May 1963). Two other youngsters that planted a bomb in Tryweryn in February were acquitted. As one of the two declared in court that should they be sentenced, somebody else would replace them, it seems that the judge wanted to avoid escalation. The Welsh Nation reporter depicts very well this expectation,

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<sup>55</sup> The second thing Evans said is that all responsibility lay with the UK government because of its willingness to give powers to the Liverpool Water Corporation to drown the valley.



when he writes about the reaction of the crowd gathered to hear the sentence:

Slowly the crowd filtered outside; we were amazed by the course of events, delighted by the very sympathetic attitude of the Judge, but also faintly uneasy; it was as if one side had suddenly changed the rules of the game without consulting the other (WN 19: 1).

Before that situation, the Plaid leadership had to juggle things around constantly to avoid being overtaken by the militant wing. Evans multiplied his statements dissociating the party from the bombers, but failing to condemn.<sup>56</sup> The historian H.W.J. Edwards put plainly the dilemma the party faced:

Shall we be constitutionalists and find ourselves, willy nilly, becoming, because of the means we employ, more and more inclined to compromise over the aim we have set ourselves, or are we prepared to act unconstitutionally or at least apolitically and face general criticism which must lead to serious loss of what little approval may exist? (WN 25: p.3).

Evans' bet for constitutional means was facing internal contestation. Failure to turn the mobilizations against Tryweryn into votes could jeopardize his whole strategy and leave the party without a clear direction. As another member warned in the same WN issue:

The Plaid has many good reasons for remaining constitutional, but unless they can get quick results a lot of young men are going to consider taking independent action and the lunatic fringe will have plenty of suggestions (WN 25: p.6).

When the 1964 General Election came around, the result could not be worse: although Plaid Cymru contested three more seats

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<sup>56</sup> In the Welsh Nation's editorialist's words: "Although we do not agree with the actions they have taken, we cannot condemn them" (WN 17: 4-5).

than five years before (23 compared to 20 in 1959), it lost votes, fared badly in the Tryweryn constituency and was unable to get any MP. The party was in disarray. The lack of clarity between its two faces seemed to be the major point of discussion. For Evans, to run a “protest party” was incompatible with becoming a serious political actor capable of attracting disenchanted mainstream voters. The respectability path had a cost, though. To convince those labelling Plaid Cymru an immature party the leadership needed to show clear action against party activists involved in violence, something only straightforwardly happened after gaining its first Westminster seat in 1966.

The nationalist movement in Wales was at a crossroads in these years. In 1963 two key organizations emerge. On the one hand, the Welsh Language Society (WLS), an organization made up of young Welsh-speaking nationalists based in the Northwest areas of the region, whose project relied on civil disobedience against the administration to achieve official status for the Welsh language; on the other hand, the so-called Free Wales Army (FWA), a group of fringed nationalists without clear connections with the core of the movement, but ready to trigger terrorist attacks as the only solution to get home-rule. Caught in the dilemma between rejecting every type of outlaw behaviour and making subtle distinctions, the party endorsed the first organization (the WLS), but outright rejected the second one (the FWA). This differential backing was going to have extreme consequences for the electoral fortunes of the nationalist movement, as well as for the chances of experiencing resilient violence. Let’s see more in detail what each of these organizations pursued and why Plaid leaned towards the WLS.

The Welsh Language Society was explicitly created as an attempt led by Welsh-speaking youngsters to counter the gloomy perspectives of the language<sup>57</sup> with a more satisfactory strategy

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<sup>57</sup> The rate of decline of knowledge of Welsh was so heavy that its speakers started to actually think about its plausible extinction. It went down from 36.8 percent in 1931 to 26.0 percent in 1961 without large

than the one advocated by the party.<sup>58</sup> Seeing no advantages in the electoral path, these youngsters thought that the only way to reverse the path of language extinction was to get official status by awakening the Welsh public about the incapacity of using their language within their own territory (Davies 1979). The Society's first campaigns took on themes such as requesting post-office papers in Welsh, which put a strain on the service, or committing small crimes to reject thoroughly the court/police writs if not handed in Welsh, which always finished with public trials wherein the activists could deliver speeches to make their case for official status. Based on the remaining Welsh-speaking strongholds of the Northwest, the society took advantage of the creation of Welsh-only university residences in the University of Wales at Aberystwyth. These dorms contributed to bring hundreds of Welsh-speakers together and awake their consciousness about the bad shape of the language (Jones & Fowler 2008).

Involved in the radical mood of the time, they remained incredulous about the actual possibilities of bringing change through conventional politics. On the other hand, the tradition of non-conformist pacifism was strong within the nationalist families, and this made the use of open violence clearly illegitimate for the Welsh-speaking constituency. But there was a third way. Civil disobedience also had a well-established reputation within the nationalist ranks: it is legitimate to use

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shifts in the size of the polity (Welsh population remains stable from WW II around 3 million).

<sup>58</sup> The intellectual roots of the Society come from a speech that Plaid-Cymru-founder Saunders Lewis delivered through the BBC Wales in 1962. In that speech titled "the fate of the language", he called for immediate action to stop the demise of the Welsh language. By arguing that the constitutional path was bringing no good for the language, Lewis claimed the nationalist movement should change the path and start using direct-action methods to reverse the decline. Paradoxically, although Lewis foresaw that Plaid Cymru should be the organization in charge of the new strategy, the Party managed to avoid violence by emphasising the creation of a youth-led language-only movement.

violence for moral causes if one confesses afterwards to having committed the action and does not target people. According to one of the founders of the movement, this election neutralized the real risk of confrontation:

That CYI [the Welsh acronym for WLS] has, throughout ten years [he means from 1965 to 1975] of militant action, even at times of tension and passion, maintained a consistently non-violent approach, must be seen as no mean feat (...) There can be little doubt in fact that the activities of CYI defuse the danger of violent action that was very real early in the 'sixties (Davies 1979: 278).

Yet, there is room to hypothesize that in the absence of the quick response of the UK government and the initial electoral successes of Plaid Cymru in 1966 not a minor section of the WLS could have travelled all around towards terrorist violence. The government's reaction was almost immediate: it set up a committee to revise the situation of the language and promised an incoming Welsh Language Bill following the committee's suggestions (the Hughes Parry report released in 1965). Despite the fact of disagreements about the status granted to the language, the strategy was very successful to cut the grass under Welsh language activists' feet. The WLS next campaigns – such as the campaign to get Welsh-only mass media, or the highly-contested campaign against the Prince of Wales' Investiture<sup>59</sup> – were run against the increasing prominence of Plaid Cymru. Although the party lost again votes in the 1966 general election, it was able to win its first MP in the by-election of Carmarthen. Gwynfor Evans would be the first Nationalist MP in Westminster, and this fact

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<sup>59</sup> Masterfully created by the then Secretary of State for Wales, George Thomas, the Investiture of the Prince of Wales aimed to show publicly Welsh support for the Crown and force nationalists to take sides on the issue: would they stand against the investiture, they would receive public contempt; if, on the contrary, they would opt for endorsing the investiture, they would seem half-hearted nationalists. The trap worked pretty well.

gave a tremendous visibility to the party. Plaid's anxieties about being related to WLS' methods led its leaders to pressure the society to avoid as much direct action as possible. The renewed primacy of Plaid within the nationalist movement could not conceal the fact that the WLS was obliged to be the avant-garde at a time when electoral respectability was out of reach for the party.

The Free Wales Army, and its more serious partner, the MAC (Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru – Welsh Defence Movement), make up a second type of splinter from the nationalist core. Grown from the wave of demonstrations against Tryweryn, the FWA was more of a puppet organization than anything else. Wearing full-dress uniforms and self-imposed military ranks, FWA members showed up at the demonstrations to spread leaflets against the government and call for direct action to stop the works. In addition to using Welsh military – even if comic – regalia, the fact that the organization carried out some public drilling exercises without police intervention arose a lot of suspicion among Plaid Cymru members about the hand pulling the strings behind the FWA. According to nationalist leaders, mainstream Welsh parties took advantage of police passivity to blame the party by the misbehaviour of a bunch of nationalist outcasts without clear connections with the broader movement. As a Welsh Nation columnist put it, “they [the FWA] must realize that they do nothing but harm to Plaid Cymru which is struggling to present a mature, responsible face to the Welsh electorate” (WN January 1966: 7).

Despite the fact that the FWA kept a low organizational profile, with almost no record of violent actions and a tiny membership, Plaid leaders made it responsible for their bad electoral showing in 1966. The main op-ed of the August 1966 Welsh Nation issue insisted on the conspiratorial theory:

It has been suggested recently in Plaid circles that the so-called FWA is such a cover organization, used by the authorities for this dual purpose, to anticipate another Tryweryn-type explosion and to be a convenient rod for Plaid Cymru's back. Certainly the negative evidence supports this view (...) [Unwarranted FWA publicity] has

been invaluable for those who want to smear PC with the reputation of extremist violence (WN 1966: 4).

But at the same time, Plaid's first electoral victory won in the by-election of Camarthen in July 1966 was supposed to send a straight signal to those wrong-headed thinking that violence was the only way to stand for Wales. There were no longer reasons to justify violence by looking at the meagre electoral record of Plaid Cymru:

The cause of violence has been espoused by those who were frustrated by Plaid's failure in the political field. Now that the party has succeeded, there is every opportunity and encouragement for those with the best interests of Wales at heart to work in support of the political break-through which will achieve more for Wales than any amount of gelignite, and which will only be damaged by loud-mouthed publicity-chasing and anonymous phone calls (*ibid.*).

Once the party put its leader at Westminster, the search for respectability forced it to dissociate itself from those "wrong-headed" as much as possible. Thus, the ultimate policy with the aim of gaining reputation was the automatic expulsion of party membership of those with FWA connections, which was passed at the Plaid Annual Conference in August 1966. One year later, the then PC general secretary, Elwyn Roberts, explained in the August 1967 issue of *Welsh Nation* why this policy was necessary:

Membership of the FWA – allowing that it does actually exist – is inconsistent with membership of PC, because it claims to adopt methods totally opposed to the non-violent and constitutional methods deliberately chosen by Plaid Cymru in Conference as the means of achieving self-government for Wales (...) The action or rather the threatened action of the FWA are inimical to the growth of the Welsh national movement, and they therefore postpone the nation's advance towards freedom (WN August 1967: 3).<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> It is worth noticing that no similar condemnations were issued against the WLS. In a previous declaration, the then party general

Still, the FWA was no rival for the nationalist party after Camarthen. The arrest of its six main representatives brought to an end the odd story of the organization.<sup>61</sup> Plaid Cymru found more trouble in dealing with the other nationalist organization that defended violence to achieve home-rule: the MAC. Created in the mid-60s by an Army band's player, John Jenkins, the MAC was able to plant around 10 bombs and raised the alarms in the government's headquarters. Jenkins, who neither had nationalist family connections nor spoke the Welsh language, was the main theoretician of the use of terrorist violence in Wales.<sup>62</sup> To him, violence should awaken Welsh consciousness and polarize opinions around home-rule and the centennial English rule in the principality. Once in prison, Jenkins had the time and the strength

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secretary qualified the different types of violence used by the WLS (Tryweryn-like violence) and the FWA (widespread violent action): "We criticize the activists for their lack of political judgment, but we cannot condemn them for action we considered taking ourselves. However, any widespread campaign of violent action in Wales today would be morally unjustifiable and politically foolish. It would alienate rather than win support. We in Plaid Cymru would have nothing to do with it... violent action cannot be justified if it is a case of a minority forcing its views on the majority in Wales. But when, as in the case of Tryweryn, it is undertaken in an attempt to force the Government to respect the wishes of the people in Wales, it has ample justification" (quoted in Williams 1982: 162).

<sup>61</sup> The trial against the FWA main members finished just the day before Prince Charles was about to be invested in Wales. The sentences were exemplary and they caused the plain disbandment of the organization.

<sup>62</sup> Saunders Lewis, the pre-war PC leader, also called for direct action against the government in order to get official status for the language. However, he fell short of defending open violence against people (Thomas 1973: 69). Anecdotally, the bad relation between the two main nationalist leaders, Lewis and Evans, climbed another step with the Jenkins' trial, since Lewis turned up to the court to show solidarity with the defendant and ask Evans to join him. However, Evans refused to do so (Evans 2008: 310).

to write deeply about the goals of his organization. In a May 1971 letter sent to a Plaid Cymru member and writer, Cyril Hodges, Jenkins explained the role of violence:

My fight was in fact intended to complement yours [the electoral fight]. It was not to win Wales by violence, but to use violence as the only means available, with regard to the time left and the conditions obtaining, to awaken the national consciousness and thereby lay the foundations for your majority rule. You need not convince me of the need for constitutional action. I believe in it and I would like to use it, but when “they” monopolize the mass media, how else but by drama can one get the headlines, and thereby cause thousands of hitherto ignorant people to say “what’s all that in aid of” and be told (Jenkins nd: 77).

In a later prison letter, Jenkins elaborated again about this point. As a by-product, he recognised that MAC violence contributed to give Plaid Cymru respectability by dissociating itself from nationalist terrorist attacks.

The campaign was never intended to gain popular support, it was intended to make people up, to promote morale and to disprove the invincibility of the monolithic [England?] (or of the “lie back and enjoy it” theory). It was intended to start the boulder rolling by polarising opinions and in this it succeeded admirably. One side effort was to make Plaid Cymru respectable by giving the Party something to condemn and thus removing from them the stigma of being “radical” (Jenkins 26 February 1973).

Compared with the FWA, the MAC was serious business. The police had real trouble finding out who was behind the attacks and increased the surveillance of the region exponentially in order to avoid terrorist attacks against the Prince of Wales’ investiture, which was scheduled to be held in July 1969. Even if not really interested in killing the prince (Clews 1980: 183),<sup>63</sup> the MAC took

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<sup>63</sup> According to Jenkins: “[To kill the Prince] would not have been a good political move. The mothers of Wales would have immediately



advantage of the potential risk of his being targeted to spread its nationalist message and force the police to over-react. In John Jenkins' own words:

I quite obviously could not hope to take the mass of the Welsh people through the whole thing of making them responsive up to the point of actually bearing arms, and the fight that would follow. I couldn't hope to succeed in that. All I could do was to try to get them off their backsides and make them actually listen... I had some degree of success in this by using the mass media (...). We had to show our credentials and make the threat against Prince Charles so that the authorities, by overreacting would embitter the average Welshman against them (quoted in Clews 1980: 179-80).<sup>64</sup>

Despite the fact that most of MAC's attacks were against property,<sup>65</sup> a couple of military officers were targeted and some risk of escalation was in the air. On the eve of Investiture Day, two MAC activists killed themselves when they were planting a bomb in Abergele, a Northern-Welsh town around 40 miles far from the place where the investiture was scheduled to be held (Caernarfon).

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related it to the Queen, and this would have alienated them against us... Remember, we were fighting a propaganda war (...) It must be a very carefully graduated thing. You move on according to public opinion. If the movement is faster than current public opinion, then you become just another splinter group feuding with the existing state. You must always be able to claim that you are representing the wishes of the people" (quoted in Clews 1980: 255).

<sup>64</sup> The action-reaction mechanism can be also found in the thoughts of FWA members. As a political spokesman of this organization put it: "We were always hoping something would happen as in Ireland where the police and troops press against the people. If they'd started something like that against us we would have been prepared to head for the mountains and attempt to start a guerrilla campaign" (quoted in Clews 1980: 176).

<sup>65</sup> According to Jenkins, MAC's attacks were called off as soon as the slightest risk to damage innocent people was involved (Clews 1980: 239).

On Investiture Day, several small bombs were planted in the outskirts of Caernarfon, but without consequences. Some days later, a small boy was damaged when he kicked a device on the ground that happened to be a bomb. These were the last actions. In November 1969, the MAC leadership was arrested and the organization disappeared (Clews 1980: 257 and ss.).

Faced with these events, Plaid Cymru reacted with an uncompromising rejection of nationalist bombs. As a new player at Westminster, its positive electoral prospects seemed to rely on avoiding any cooperation with those playing violence. The death of the so-called “two of Abergele” was the litmus test for the party. The Welsh Nation editorial of August 1969 grieved with the families, but strongly affirmed Plaid’s policy against violence and in support of the constitutional path. The piece finished with these words:

It is inconceivable and even, one could argue, undesirable that the path to Welsh self-government will be a path of unbroken consensus. There will be disagreements inevitably, and some of these may be beneficial. But what is necessary, and what is to be expected, is that the use and propagation of force should be entirely abandoned (WN August 1969: p.1).

On the other hand, Jenkins and the movement of support for the Welsh political prisoners started to complain about the Plaid’s neglect of the nationalists in jail. As Jenkins would say decades later:

One of my deepest regrets is that those who died as a result [of taking action against the investiture] have never been given the recognition they deserve (...) I also regret that no lines of communication were established between MAC and the Party of Wales. But the uncompromising pacifism of Plaid Cymru meant anything of the sort was out of the question. Personally, I’m sympathetic to the pacifist approach but the truth, however unwelcome, is that it just doesn’t work (Jenkins 2003: 10).

Curiously enough, this “pacifism” did not prevent the party from endorsing publicly the behaviour of WLS activists. The February 1970 issue of the *Welsh Nation* included an editorial that praised the “bravery” of WLS activists imprisoned by refusing to pay fines to avoid going to jail. Besides, one of Gwynvor Evans’ daughters was also arrested during the same campaign, and Plaid leader had no problem about walking to the prison and showing support for her regardless of the potential votes this action could cost the party in the English-speaking areas of the region (Evans 2008: 308). Still, on the eve of the 1970 General Election, party expectations ran high: Evans thought his Parliamentary group would go up to 4 members and he would be able to return to Westminster. Election Day brought sweet-and-sour news for the party: although its electoral share did increase from 4.3 percent to 11.5 percent (also a consequence of putting forward candidates in all the 36 Welsh constituencies for the first time in party history), it lost the Camarthen seat. There were two culprits to blame for the defeat: the FWA-MAC and the WLS. However, the party did its best to reject any link with the former, whereas it did not care about being related to the latter. Why did it do so?

In 1985, Balsom identified three different, stable Welsh territories within the principality: the Welsh-speaking, rural Northwest; the Anglicized East and the heavily-industrialized South valleys (Balsom 1985). Built as the party of the Welsh speakers, Plaid Cymru mainly recruited its voters from the first Wales. For instance, the correlation between number of Welsh speakers and number of votes for Plaid Cymru at the constituency level for the 1970 General Election was extremely high (0.76) (Williams 1982). Given the language cleavage in Wales, this dependence on Welsh speakers made it comparatively more difficult for the party to attract voters from other constituencies and more efficient to expend resources with those Welsh speakers not gained yet. Given the fact that the Welsh Liberal’s remaining strongholds were grounded on the rural, Welsh-speaking enclaves of the country, the Tories and Plaid Cymru increased their competition in attempt to win over remaining Liberal voters. Thus,

whereas the Conservatives attracted the English-speaking section of liberal voters,<sup>66</sup> Plaid Cymru did the same with the Welsh-speaking voters.

In this race, the creation of a specialized organization engaged with countering the decline of the language (the WLS) was outstanding. On the one hand, the Society would assume the costs of increasing public awareness about the state of the language through the use of civil disobedience without jeopardizing Plaid's constitutional position. On the other hand, it would free the party from being labelled as the party of the Welsh speakers and allow it to spend resources to reach working-class voters. In theory, the strategy seemed very promising, since it gave the party the opportunity to fish from former-liberal Welsh speaking voters as well as from former-Labour working-class voters. In practice, the party had to keep an eye on the Society's campaigns<sup>67</sup> and endorse most of its activities in order to avoid being overtaken by the radicals within the movement.<sup>68</sup> In so doing, it fared poorly in

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<sup>66</sup> The Conservative Party in Wales gained 7 seats in 1970, four more seats than in the previous election. Although most of them were taken from Labour, electoral transfers from liberal voters in key constituencies explain most of the result. This strategy was so successful that in 1983 the party was able to double the number of conservative MPs from Wales (only 6 less than Labour in that year) with only 3.3 percentage points more of support (from 27.7 percent and 7 seats in 1970 to 31 percent and 14 seats in 1983).

<sup>67</sup> It is known that Gwynfor Evans repeatedly asked WLS leaders to switch off their campaigns when elections were coming. WLS militants used to observe party discipline on voting, and also most of the time did they follow Evans' petition (Evans 2008: 307-309).

<sup>68</sup> Ned Thomas, one of the leading "radical" intellectuals of the time, reflected very well this concern: "While Plaid Cymru seems to have an electoral chance, Welsh-speakers will for the most part continue to think in terms of conventional politics. Perhaps the British democratic institutions will, after all, work for us (...) But I cannot conceal my fear that we shall not win or be granted enough political power in Wales, at least in time to do any good (...) If the Welsh movements were to take a more violent turn, even quite a few people could cause vast disruption in

Labour's southern strongholds, where the language-based ethnic discourse was no rival for the class discourse existing all over the UK (McAllister and Mughan 1981).<sup>69</sup>

On the contrary, Plaid Cymru was very interested in building a *cordon sanitaire* around those setting off terrorist attacks. For one, it could earn reputation by completely repudiating violence from groups made up of English speakers with minor connections with the core of the language movement – such as the FWA and the MAC. But secondly, Plaid was anxious about breaking the potential links between the WLS and the FWA.<sup>70</sup> Here the language barrier turned out to be a fundamental device: knowledge of Welsh as a prerequisite for WLS membership made extremely difficult for FWA-MAC militants to hang around with language activists.<sup>71</sup> The apparent incongruence of using legal arguments to

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the complicated web of public services and communications within such a densely populated country as Britain” (Thomas 1973: 128-31).

<sup>69</sup> Even if the party was able to get good electoral showings in two Southern Labour strongholds during by-elections held between 1966 and 1970, all Plaid MPs returned from 1966 won invariably Welsh-speaking seats.

<sup>70</sup> The support for violence against people should not be understated. A 1974 survey showed that in Wales 6 percent of the population (7 percent in Scotland) was willing to support political actions that could lead to injure people, compared to less than 3 percent in the rest of countries included in the survey (USA, Germany, Austria, Netherlands, UK) (Barnes and Kaase 1979). A new survey run in 1979 showed that 22 percent of Plaid Cymru supporters and 18 percent of those thinking the language was in crisis supported political violence against people. Still, these groups made up tiny shares of the survey. Besides, the profile identified by the authors of the survey as “fully Welsh” did not have a higher propensity towards violence against people than the other profiles (“British” and “English” types). On the contrary, they did show more support for violence against property, a consequence no doubt of the WLS's campaigns against monolingual road signs (Miller *et al.* 1982).

<sup>71</sup> As a FWA militant recalled it: “That's another sad thing about Wales, there is no middle ground. In Ireland or Scotland if you don't speak Gaelic but only English, still you are not taken solely into the

reject MAC violence but moral arguments to grant WLS's direct action cost the party dearly outside the nationalist constituency, but it was relatively successful in keeping the lead within it.

Plaid Cymru's electoral strength was largely dependent on the Welsh-speaking communities. By recruiting from the outskirts of the nationalist movement, with a majority of English speakers, the FWA/MAC was not a serious contender for Plaid's support. For this reason, the party did not save words in condemning MAC terrorist attacks and gain a reputation of being tough against violence. In other words, affability with the FWA would have won no additional votes for the party, but it could have cost it some support from those reluctant to violence. On the contrary, the intermediate road pursued by the WLS was praised by the party, since it increased linguistic consciousness and attracted Welsh-speaking voters towards Plaid Cymru at the expense of infuriating English-speaking voters and conservative-minded Welsh-speakers. Like Catalan nationalists, Welsh nationalist moderates could not risk losing their main language-based electoral constituency by condemning the Society's efforts to achieve official status, since failure to meet its needs would have opened the door for radicals claiming to be the voice of the Welsh-speaking community. In the end, party backing together with state responsiveness did much to avoid escalation, but it harmed Plaid's chances of moving beyond the Welsh-speaking constituency electorally.

We can track this dual party's response by looking at two key moments for the nationalist movement: the 1970 legislature, in which Plaid became again a non-parliamentary party, and the 1979 Referendum for the Welsh Assembly, the crushing defeat of which left the whole movement in disarray.

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English sphere of influence, you still have a music and a culture to step into. In Wales you can only step into the English influence. The failure of the Language Society is that they say "Well, if you're not Welsh speaking, that's it, you're out!" I, and a few others thought we must attempt something in South Wales to rally people towards nationalism, but obviously being English speakers it couldn't be done through the Welsh language" (quoted in Clews 1980: 96).

As said above, the 1970 General Election saw Plaid Cymru's spectacular increase in votes, but also the loss of its only seat in Carmarthen. The failure of the electoral strategy was used by some WLS members to cast doubts about the convenience of obeying Plaid leadership. Faced with a conservative government in London whose decisions could not be checked by Welsh nationalists in parliament, WLS youngsters called for a new strategy that put less weight on elections and more on direct action. The debate can be followed in the pages of the *Welsh Nation*.

Ffred Ffrancis, a leading member of the WLS wrote against two false assumptions: that constitutional means alone will bring in the Welsh parliament; and that this is possible because Wales lives within a democracy. If both assumptions are rejected, then the constitutional path is no longer viable, and alternative strategies should be attempted (*WN* February 1973: 3). In a follow-up article, he insisted that electoral politics should not walk alone, since direct action is more successful to raise consciousness (*WN* February 1973: p.2). In August, an op-ed titled "Is Wales heading for political violence?" mentions that a small fringe of the WLS was very unsatisfied with the results achieved from the last campaigns of the Society. If the government did not make any concession in the following weeks, there was real risk of violence. The editor countered this risk in this way: "Those people who believe violence will serve their ends must be made to rethink. In a nation such as Wales, democratic albeit imperfectly, violence will serve to destroy the perpetrators" (*WN* August 1973: 1/3). This climate of latent violence was also experienced by a foreign writer, who attended a meeting of the Welsh Political Prisoners Defence Committee. There she notices "a dangerous admiration for and an envy of the IRA" (*WN* September 1973). All in all, Plaid's control of the nationalist movement was under attack.

At the same time, a parallel debate was taking place between Plaid's supporters. Some of them claimed that the only way to become the party of all Wales was to break its ties with the language movement. Even if very relevant to the survival of the language, the alliance between the party and the Society

jeopardized the former's electoral possibilities by damaging its reputation as a constitutional party and making almost impossible to win votes from English-speaking citizens more concerned about "bread and butter" issues. In reaction to that, other party activists praised the Society's task and recalled that, as the party was created to save the language, any effort in that direction should be strongly endorsed. In the end, the second opinion remained dominant, and words of admiration were still included in the newspaper to recognize the Society's campaigns.

The general elections of 1974 brought to an end all this talk about breaking the alliance between the booth and the street. Plaid Cymru was able to get 2 seats (plus Carmarthen in the October election) by concentrating its votes in the Welsh-speaking constituencies regardless of the fact that its actual share of the vote went down slightly (from 11.5 percent in 1970 to 10.8 percent in 1974). This new electoral victory, together with the commitment of the incoming Labour government to promote a process of devolution for Scotland and Wales, rehabilitated the party as the leading branch within the nationalist movement. Plaid Cymru has always held two seats at least in Westminster since then.

The other key moment came with the defeat of the Assembly for Wales 1979 Referendum. The high expectations created with the possibility of having a Welsh Parliament were quickly frustrated when the realization that there was not even a tiny majority in favour of it came to the fore. Among those to blame for the failure of the Referendum, Labour was found most wanting, since a relevant share of its Welsh MPs campaigned against devolution. According to the then Plaid president, D. Wigley, Labour's failure to get the proposal approved would empower radicals within the nationalist movement: "Something has to fill that void, and it may well be something much more unyielding than Plaid Cymru. The events of this last week have lent a strong hand to those who argue for unconstitutional action" (quoted in Pritchard Jones 1983: 179).

Thus, there was again room for violence. In the immediate aftermath of the defeat, the Welsh Socialist Republican Movement



(WSRM) was founded. Moulded in an Irish-republican fashion, the movement aimed at gathering together disappointed nationalists and Welsh union-minded workers around a left-wing nationalist program. However, it did not go very far. Unable to make inroads within the unions, its major influence was to move Plaid Cymru left-wing. The party collapsed in 1982-83. As one of its leaders recalls, “the fractures had already begun to appear as the WSRM failed to resolve internal differences on questions of class politics, terrorism, the relationship with Plaid Cymru and so on – thereby making us even less able to withstand the State’s onslaught” (Griffiths 1985: 196). Leaving aside class politics, the relationship with PC and the relevance of violence likewise had a lot to do with the demise of the movement.

Initially created as a left-wing current within Plaid Cymru, the movement was brought to life when its leaders foresaw that PC’s project for home-rule did not include socialist institutions. Once in place, the leadership had real trouble in pushing forward its agenda, because of the gap between leaders and followers around two points. On the one hand, the leaders wanted to build a new party, capable of fighting against Plaid Cymru to become the main nationalist contender. Yet, the rank-and-file of the movement did not want to break ties, since many of them retained an allegiance to Plaid Cymru (Osmond 1984: 30-31). On the other hand, the leaders prioritised the class war over home rule, whereas the rank-and-file had just the opposite preferences. This reluctance to break ties with the party made extremely difficult for the WSRM the articulation of a radical nationalist pole around the defence of unconstitutional means to achieve a socialist independent Wales.

On the other side, after the failure of the 1979 Referendum, violence was in the air. We have already seen how Plaid president justified the potential emergence of violence. R. Griffiths, WSRM spokesman, had similar views:

Our attitude is that, in the past, peaceful methods have been tried, democratic methods such as occupation of homes by homeless families and so on. There have got nowhere. No-one has taken any notice of them. Therefore, we quite understand, as a movement, why

there are people who have been driven to take these sorts of measures (quoted in Osmond 1984: 40).

Between 1980 and 1982, the so-called Workers' Army of the Welsh Republic (WAWR) carried out 13 terrorist attacks against conservative party premises, firms in risk of closure and army premises, without injuring people.<sup>72</sup> In its first statement, the organization demanded full control of the natural resources of Wales for the Welsh people, but it did not say anything about the right of self-determination. The WSRM was quick to act as the political front of the organization and take credit for its actions against the system. However, its journey was short. Apparently more left-wing than Welsh-wing, the organization did not recruit easily, since many of its supporters remained Plaid Cymru-oriented.<sup>73</sup> Secondly, police forces reacted swiftly to behead the whole movement by making arrests within the WSRM leadership.<sup>74</sup> And finally, former Plaid Cymru president, Gwynfor

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<sup>72</sup> During the first years of the 1980s, there were also some bomb attacks against holiday homes in North Wales. As many English families were buying second residences in the tourist resorts of the Welsh coast, this new demand had increased house prices exponentially with the result of making it more difficult for locals to have access to the market. Apparently, the bombs aimed to bring to the media this issue. But no organization ever claimed them (a so-called "the Sons of Glyndwr" did it, but without any proof of being behind them). Besides, there were no arrests, and the bombs dropped off as soon as the government started to show interest in the issue. No doubt Plaid Cymru also condemned this bomb campaign.

<sup>73</sup> As Pritchard Jones depicts it, most of the WAWR activists were English-speaking: "Some observers predicted a violent backlash to the failure of the devolution movement. It is salutary to note that the violence which has occurred, it seems, has emanated from the non Welsh speaking sector of the population" (Pritchard Jones 1983: 183).

<sup>74</sup> Osmond (1984) contends that many arrests were based on mere suspicions of being a member of the political front. However, the blow was successful, since the party could not be rebuilt after the trial regardless of the fact that several defendants were acquitted.

Evans, took advantage of his reputation as a man of peace to rally all nationalists against the new Tory cabinet around the set-up of a new Welsh-only TV station. By reneging on a previous government commitment to set up the station, the Thatcher government gave Evans the possibility of catching the media by announcing that he would fast to death if the channel were not created. The challenge was very effective in bringing Welshmen of all political persuasions together around the defence of the language and to articulate the nationalist forces around Plaid Cymru again. Curiously, at a time when Thatcher was making a show of force against IRA hunger strikers by rejecting any political status to them, she decided to withdraw in the Welsh case and grant the new Welsh-only TV station. Fortunately for Evans, this happened before his fast was due to begin.<sup>75</sup> This success for the Welsh speaking community contributed again to keep Plaid primacy within the movement and avoid potential violent contenders.

#### *6.4.3. Local political elites and state responsiveness*

The power of institutions is, no doubt, one of the most relevant variables in trying to account for the different outcomes we observe in Northern Ireland and Wales. Northern Ireland remained barren land for state-wide political parties, while Wales was a competitive region where Liberals first and Labour later won electoral landslides. Therefore, state-wide parties reacted in a different way to nationalist challenges coming from those two regions: with passivity and a policy of “minimal involvement” in Ireland (nothing to win but a lot to lose), and with government

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<sup>75</sup> Even if some accounts of the negotiation show that Evans’ intransigency did little for the fortune of the station, and that it was the good faith of the civil servants dealing with TV affairs what defused the problem (Evans 2008: 421), the fact remains that Thatcher showed more understanding towards the TV claim than towards the “political status” one.

initiatives in Wales to cut off nationalist growth. In this section I finally analyze in-depth the different record of London responsiveness to nationalist demands.

#### 6.4.3.1. State responsiveness in Wales

The Liberal era in British politics gave Wales the necessary boost so as to efface the well-known motto “For Wales, see England” that had dominated the principality since the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Welsh national renaissance in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century showed the cultural and economic potentiality of the region, but also foresaw its defects. Thus, the religious revival contributed to the golden age of Welsh-speaking culture but the process of industrialization laid the ground for its twilight. Liberal concessions, such as the University colleges, the National Library, and the religious disestablishment, fell short of the home-rule that the more proto-nationalist liberals called for, but they were successful in switching nationalism off until the aftermath of WW II. As noted above, Labour played the Welsh card to defuse Liberal attacks of being alien to Wales. But once they took over the region, Labour’s program focused on an all-UK strategy to foster redistribution and spread social rights. The reconstruction effort buried Welsh home-rule temporarily. Plaid Cymru also contributed to that, because its policies aimed at representing the decreasing rural, Welsh-speaking section of Welsh society, with no hint about how to deal with the overwhelming economic problems South Wales faced.

However, the flux of concessions did not stop. In 1949, a non-elected Council for Wales was set up by the Labour cabinet with the goal of releasing reports about the state of affairs in the principality (Jones and Rhys 2000). In 1955 a Conservative cabinet proclaimed Cardiff as the capital city of Wales and recognised the term “England and Wales” to make reference to what was commonly mentioned before as simply “England”. In the early ‘50s, an all-party Parliament for Wales Campaign tried to bring the home-rule claim to life again. Even if 250,000 signatures

were collected and a private bill was presented in Westminster, most Welsh MPs voted against it under Labour threats of being punished (Evans 2008: Ch. 5).

Despite the failure of the initiative, Plaid Cymru took advantage of campaigning with other political forces to spread a renewed message. Its electoral escalation, from 0.7 percent in 1951 to 5.1 percent nine years later, forced Labour to react. In 1959, under the sponsorship of Welsh-speaking Labour MPs, Labour included in its electoral platform a Secretaryship of State for Wales,<sup>76</sup> which was established in 1964, during the first Wilson term in office (Jones and Jones 2000). The explicit goal of this policy shift was to stop Plaid's electoral surge. No doubt it worked, since Plaid's increases were completely halted by 1966. As a Welsh Labour MP unambiguously put it:

The iron law of our two-party system dictates that one, the other or both major parties will seek to adjust their policies to absorb or neutralise threats from new popular movements (Anderson 1985: 175).

Thus, all state-wide parties reacted.<sup>77</sup> Being the largest party, Labour took the lead, but the others did not stay behind.<sup>78</sup> Despite

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<sup>76</sup> Labour legitimacy for this policy shift came from a report released by the Council for Wales that demanded some measure of representative decentralization based on efficiency arguments (Jones and Jones 2000).

<sup>77</sup> On the contrary, Bradbury (1998) claims that not all concessions were purely endogenous to nationalist parties' strength. Thus, for instance, the over-representation of Wales in Westminster or the creation of the Welsh Office could not follow from nationalist pressures, since nationalists were almost negligible when those measures reached the statute books (Bradbury 1998: 124). Still, many of the other examples the author mentions can be related to endogenous changes in party policy motivated by nationalist performance.

<sup>78</sup> One of the best examples is their reaction against the Welsh Language Society's campaigns. The Conservative cabinet in office in 1963 commissioned a report on the state of the language, the so-called Hughes Parry report, which, released in 1965, recommended giving

the fact of having been the party of Wales for decades, the Liberal party did not have any official Welsh branch. In 1966 it set one up as an attempt to retain its last pockets of support within the Welsh-speaking communities (Roberts 1985). As for the Conservatives, party-commissioned surveys showed that it was broadly seen as “the English Party in Wales”.<sup>79</sup> To change this image, the Tories promoted a grassroots campaign to approach the rural Welsh-speaking constituencies. When they took office in 1970, Conservatives devolved non-university education to the Welsh Office and increase the funds for the Welsh language. Finally, its vision about the failure of the 1979 Referendum granted the party a good deal of Welsh votes (Butler 1985). In brief, Welsh identity and nationalist voting were not necessarily the same. In Colin Williams’ words:

There is no necessary correlation between Welsh national identity and support for Welsh Nationalism, because other major parties are increasingly adept at presenting their case within a Welsh national context (...) Welshness is an amorphous and variable collection of cultural and social attributes, which may be expressed just as well through a Liberal or Labour vote. In Welsh polemical terms no true “Welshman” votes Conservative (though one in five of voters in Wales do so) but many “true” Welshmen find an agreeable home in the Liberal or Labour parties. The separatist have yet to convince the electorate at large that they have a monopoly of interest on Welsh affairs, a task which has been made increasingly difficult as autonomist and devolutionist factions in other parties grow stronger

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“equal status” to English and Welsh. Its recommendations were used to write the Language of Wales Act passed in 1967, during Wilson’s office. Leaving aside the campaign against Investiture, most WLS’s campaigns found some measure of responsiveness from the government, normally by setting up a report charged with investigating the Society’s complaints and giving some advice on how to fix them.

<sup>79</sup> Thus, it is no wonder the Tryweryn affair took place under a Conservative cabinet, even if it had been replaced by Labour when the dam was officially inaugurated.

and threaten to undermine much of the rationale for Plaid Cymru (Williams 1982: 186).

This “responsive” capacity forced PC to play the “head-counting” game and limited its possibilities of growing electorally. As a Welsh radical thinker put it:

There is a question that the English reader will have asked himself several times in this book: if the Welsh national movement has such a strong case (...) why is it not larger? Why has it not achieved more? Part of the answer lies in the power of institutions (Thomas 1973: 65).<sup>80</sup>

The power of institutions imposed the rules of the game and threatened those working outside with ostracism and public condemnation. But it also turned small parties into major competitors as soon as they reached Westminster. Thus, after winning its first seat in 1966, Plaid Cymru started to be seen as a serious rival. Faced with criticisms about its vagueness on the use of non-constitutional means, Plaid’s strategy consisted on combating Labour but trying to attract votes from Liberals. In an issue of *Welsh Nation* released just before the 1966 by-election of Carmarthen, Evans included an article called “Labour betrayed Wales”. Writing about the supposed Labour’s betrayal of Wales organized from its headquarters in London, he still recognised the difficulty of winning Labour voters:

The betrayal was blurred for many by the fact that some individual Labour members [in Wales] continued to adhere to a belief in self-government. Although this did not help Wales, the party profited

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<sup>80</sup> Another radical thinker, in this case related to the WRSM, wrote: “We have now come to the heart of the matter – to the “sacred cow” of Plaid Cymru thinking – parliamentary and non-violent change (...) The preoccupation with head-counting constricts PC thinking, and results in a misdirection of energies along lines exactly predetermined by the English establishment and its Welsh puppets” (Hearne 1982: 20-21).

much from this dichotomy of personal and party policy, and still does so (WN July 1966: 8).<sup>81</sup>

As said above, the Conservative cabinets between 1970 and 1974 also delivered some minor concessions. Yet, the big electoral jump Plaid Cymru experienced in 1970 (from 4.3 percent in 1966 to 11.5 percent) prompted Labour to react with a new twist of its discourse on devolution. Fearing that new electoral nationalist advances in Wales and, more importantly, in Scotland would be at the expense of its comfortable majorities in the two regions, Labour decided to promote a process of decentralization consistent on granting regional parliaments to Wales and Scotland. Given the tiny majority Labour held in parliament after the second general election in 1974, one of the first things Wilson did after taking office was to purge his Shadow Secretary of State for Wales, George Thomas, a recognised Welsh anti-nationalist. In exchange for sustaining the Labour cabinet, Welsh and Scottish nationalist MPs were promised some sort of regional parliaments with elected representatives.<sup>82</sup> However, the bill encountered a lot of trouble in parliament. Most Conservative MPs and many Labour backbenchers decided to kill it by passing a resolution that required a binding referendum to grant devolution. The referendum had to be voted positively by at least 40 percent of the Census. In addition to this stringent condition, the referenda were scheduled just at the worst time for the government, after the so-

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<sup>81</sup> Seven years later, Evans explicitly recognised in passing the role of Labour in fostering the rights of the Welsh people: “Whereas three generations ago people believed that a national status could be achieved through the Liberal Party, and a generation ago through the Labour Party, today the conviction grows that change will come only through the power of the people acting through their own party [Plaid Cymru]” (Evans 1973: 20).

<sup>82</sup> As the SNP parliamentary group was much stronger, the number of competencies the bill granted the Scottish parliament was larger. It was broadly understood that the argument was purely utilitarian, even if sometimes it was covered with historical reasons.



called “Winter of Discontent”, which saw a huge wave of strikes against the deterioration of the economic conditions, and which harmed the electoral prospects of the Labour party.

The campaign in Wales was an absolute failure. Together with the Conservatives, relevant Labour MPs did not respect party policy and ran against devolution. The No Campaign communicated a clear message: devolution only meant another layer of administration with more costs and no advantage in terms of efficiency. Besides, they masterfully exploited the linguistic divide between North and South, by claiming that the Parliament would be the last reserve of Welsh speakers trying to reverse the linguistic decline with compulsory policies. On the other side, the heterogenous Yes campaign was mainly run by the nationalists.<sup>83</sup> Pro-devolution Labour MPs did not find collaboration either in the local councils or in a government fearful of being messed in the internal party infighting (Jones and Wilford 1983). Despite the fact of having the half-hearted support of the WLS and the endorsement of the Welsh-speaking intellectuality (Pritchard Jones 1983), the referendum was staunchly defeated even in the Welsh-speaking counties. With 75 percent of the votes against, the experiment of devolution was buried until the early 1990s, when Labour drew on devolution again as an effort to counter the Conservative landslide in England.

The 1979 Referendum was not the last stop in this road of concessions. As noted above, Thatcher reneged on the previous government’s commitment to set up a Welsh-only TV station on the grounds that there was no funding for it. Evans used this switch to raise nationalists’ morale by triggering a campaign consistent in his fasting to death if the government did not reverse its decision. The Government’s initial reaction was not very sympathetic to Evans’ announcement. Its intention was to increase the number of Welsh-run programs broadcasted in the English-

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<sup>83</sup> Not even the nationalists campaigned faithfully for the victory, since the proposal put to the voters was the worst option for Plaid voters (Balsom and McAllister 1978).

speaking stations. Although this solution had technical and practical advantages, the nationalist movement recovered the initiative with the pre-hunger campaign and gathered political momentum. Several Welsh personalities tried to mediate before the cabinet to get the channel and avoid the catastrophic outcome that Evans' death could have brought to Wales. Finally, the government gave in and endorsed the new Welsh-only public TV station. Evans' victory was shared by the nationalist movement and gave new strength to Plaid Cymru.

The Conservative policy for Wales yielded good results as well. With a third of the vote, it got 14 seats in the 1983 general elections, its best figure ever. The transfer of new competencies to ad-hoc "quangos" controlled from the Welsh office increased the regional discretion in the allocation of funds, and that allowed the conservatives to create their own network of support (Andrews 1999: 39). However, some unpopular government decisions, such as the poll tax and the fight against the miners on strike, contained the Tory upsurge and passed the political initiative to Labour again. This party, after 10 years in opposition, started to theorise that devolution could be a good thing to kill two birds with one stone: Labourites could appease nationalists and at the same time, they could gain regional centres of power in Scotland and Wales to fight back against Conservative England, given the then overwhelming Labour majority in the two regions.

Therefore, the new Labour leadership led by Tony Blair embarked itself on the task of gaining the referendum for devolution in Scotland and Wales. Although there was no doubt that a positive result would come out from Scotland, Labour was not so sure about Wales. The memories of 1979 were very strong, and Plaid Cymru was fearful of being betrayed again by the government. However, this time there was a unitary campaign with a solid central message: decentralization brings democracy closer to the citizen. Thus, devolution would rationalize the numerous quangos that the successive conservative cabinets had set up and give Wales a more democratic framework to defend itself against Welsh-hostile governments in London. This time the

Blair cabinet took an active part in the campaign and Labour was not internally divided. Despite all these improvements, the result was too close to call until the returns of the last county were known. When Gwynedd was called, the Yes campaign reported victory by the smallest of the possible margins: 50 percent against 49 percent. Finally, Plaid Cymru could vindicate its constitutional path, even if, again, a state-wide party would have borne the cost of defeat.

#### 6.4.3.2. State responsiveness in Northern Ireland

The reaction of the state-wide parties to the first Catholic campaigns for civil rights was extraordinarily different in Northern Ireland. Labour and Conservative leaders showed extreme caution when it came to getting involved in Northern Irish affairs. The reluctance had deep roots. Since 1905, when the Ulster Conservative MPs walked out of the party to set up the Ulster-based Unionist Party, neither Labour nor the Conservative party kept any electoral interest in the province. Although Conservative leaders staunchly spoke up against Irish secession on behalf of the Unionists (Lustick 1993), they thought the issue had been fixed for good with the creation of the Northern Irish parliament. Thus, the main UK parties did not care much about Ulster's political life, regardless of the fact that Unionists tended to side with Conservatives at Westminster. This does not mean that those parties were careless about the fate of the Catholic minority. As in the Welsh case, Labour and Conservative cabinets commissioned a considerable number of reports to gather information on the troubles, its causes and potential remedies. Unlike Wales, these cabinets did not show the political willingness to override Stormont and pass anti-discrimination legislation that could have contained the conflict without escalation. To begin with, they did not have the necessary political incentives to react quickly. Besides, the Unionist government tried to cheat Westminster about the real nature of the civil rights movement. By claiming that IRA elements were pulling the strings behind the

stage, they wanted Westminster to collaborate in the repressive effort without forcing them to introduce stringent reforms. As seen in section 2, the Protestant coalition in power was built on a clear-cut deal: full employment for working-class Protestants in exchange for loyalty. The poor economic performance of the province, together with the inevitable increase in Catholic competition for jobs if the whole system of discrimination were brought down, likely jeopardized the deal. In short, Protestants could not expect to pass reforms without seeing the collapse of the coalition in power since 1922. The stakes were high, and Unionists behaved accordingly.

But, the question remains, why did the UK government not react to the first warning signals? James Callaghan, Home Secretary between 1967 and 1970, recalls in his memoirs that when he took over the job, information about Northern Ireland was scarce. Issues related to the province shared sub-department level with such attractive themes as liquor licensing and British summertime (Callaghan 1973). There were no specialized public servants working on the province, and as a corollary, there was no information.<sup>84</sup> When the first disturbances broke out in Londonderry in 1968, the Stormont secretary of Home Affairs, the hard-line William Craig, tried to convince Callaghan that violence

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<sup>84</sup> Apparently, the British Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, and Terence O'Neill had a meeting in 1966 in which Wilson granted O'Neill more time to consolidate his power before introducing reforms. Five years later, Wilson still thought he had taken the right decision, despite the time lost. According to the Sunday Times Insight Team, "it is doubtful if Wilson, in 1966, realized how "explosive" the situation was. For until October 1968 –more than two years after that lunch with O'Neill and the first talk of military intervention- Whitehall had no civil servant devoting full-time attention to Ulster" (Sunday Times 1972: 82). According to another source, Wilson did not put pressure on O'Neill because he thought the Northern-Irish Prime Minister was serious about his reform plans, but he was unable to push them forward because the IRA was on the verge of carrying out a new campaign (Patterson 2002: 197).

was led by the IRA and that the most efficient reaction against this organization was repression. To that end, Craig and O'Neill demanded the use of British troops to calm things down. Very quickly, Callaghan realized that the deployment of the British Army in Ulster under Stormont command would create more trouble, since it would inevitably mean the involvement of Westminster in the management of security issues in the province.<sup>85</sup> From then on, Callaghan and O'Neill played a chicken game: Callaghan threatened the Unionist government with taking over security issues (which, in the practice, meant direct rule) if it did not put forward a reform package, whereas O'Neill was distrustful about the deal and, in turn, threatened resignation if the Labour government did not send more troops under Stormont authority.

Given the aforementioned reasons, the UK government, Tories and Labour alike, maintained a strong preference for a strict policy of "minimal involvement" in Ulster (Bew *et al.* 1996).<sup>86</sup> On the other side, Unionists had a strong preference for not making any concession to Catholics, since power-sharing would finish their rule-based advantage and push the North closer to reunification with the South. Besides, Unionists were not that uncomfortable

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<sup>85</sup> According to the same Callaghan, "At that stage, [in 1968] we knew little enough at first hand about what was going on, and had few reliable means of finding out. We had no idea what the attitude of the RUC would be if such a drastic step became necessary, nor did we know with certainty whether we could expect the loyal services of the Northern Irish civil servants, though before long both uncertainties were happily removed" (Callaghan 1973: 23).

<sup>86</sup> Wright offers a different interpretation. According to him, the UK reluctance to intervene pursued to force Unionists to solve the problem: "Rather than threaten intervention it [the UK government] gave private warnings about the possible constitutional implications of lending military support which were calculated to deter the unionist ministers from making any such request. In other words, they showed a strong determination to make the unionist governments responsible for managing their own affairs" (Wright 1988: 198). In my opinion, this "strong determination" was missing during the start of the conflict.

with Direct Rule. In the end, Protestants were British citizens, so it did not care very much if the province was under autonomous or London rule. The absence of a credible threat based on forcing power-sharing (or worse, to pass unilaterally the end of partition no matter what Unionists thought) against the will of the Protestant majority gave the latter a resounding definitive advantage at the bargaining table.

The only effective tool Callaghan had was the production of reports. By commissioning several reports on the nature of the conflict, he expected that O'Neill would finally be obliged to introduce reforms that reduce the levels of open discrimination.<sup>87</sup> There was a moment when the conflict could have been contained. The Callaghan-O'Neill joint declaration in early 1969 aimed at revising some of the main Catholic grievances (housing, public jobs, gerrymandering) and the disbandment of the B-Specials (a Protestant paramilitary reserve unit with an ugly record of repressive acts against Catholics). The harsh Protestant reaction against these measures forced O'Neill to call elections to make a show of force. His incapacity to get a workable majority put him out of the job, which passed to another moderate, Chichester-Clark (Kelly 1972: 78).

When violence broke out again in August 1969, the intervention of the troops became absolutely inevitable. The repressive behaviour of the discredited local security forces, the RUC and the B-Specials, guaranteed that the Army would receive

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<sup>87</sup> The successful strategy of producing reports to calm things down worked very well in Wales, because the authorities had the interest to take note about their recommendations. In Ulster, on the contrary, the strategy was used to procrastinate the reforms. The strategy of reporting (Cameron on the disturbances until 1969; Scarman on the Troubles in the second half of 1969; Hunt on Police forces; Macrory on Local government; Compton on allegations of brutality on the day in which internment was implemented –August 9 1971; Widgery on Bloody Sunday in 1972; etc.) backfired, since it gave food for complaining about the regime without having the tools to implement the report's recommendations.

a happy welcome from the Catholic communities in Londonderry and Belfast. The UK government finally authorised the intervention, under the expectation that once law and order were re-established, the Army would walk back to its barracks. Besides, in its statement the government restated that Ulster would always be a part of the UK as long as its parliament and its people wanted to be so (Callaghan 1973: 43-44). Although the government claimed that, with the transfer of security issues to the Army General Officer, the troops would always be under the ultimate responsibility of Westminster, the fact is the security policy was led by a joint committee in which Unionist leaders had a large say (Kelly 1972).<sup>88</sup>

Callaghan pressed Chichester-Clark again to get the same deal that knocked O'Neill down.<sup>89</sup> He was anxious about avoiding military involvement, but a quick inspection of the state of the RUC had alarmed him. If he wanted the military to walk out of the conflict, a new security force was necessary, and this was impossible without Protestant collaboration. Chichester-Clark was somehow willing to pass symbolic measures to reduce the tension, such as the creation of a portfolio for Community Relations, but his main concern lay in the security front.<sup>90</sup> The Conservative

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<sup>88</sup> In his memoirs, the SDLP leader, John Hume, recalls how he brought an incident with the Army in Londonderry into the House of Lords. The chamber had to decide whether the Army had been deployed in Northern Ireland under Westminster's authority (as the Constitution ruled) or under Stormont's powers (as Hume argued it was actually happening). The House backed Hume's opinion and this decision forced the UK government to resume security powers. As Stormont opposed this, London finally decided to suspend devolution in 1972 (Hume 1996: 11).

<sup>89</sup> By the end of 1969, several measures to correct discrimination on housing, public jobs and gerrymandering had been passed. However, as their fruits were not expected to be short-term (for instance, there were no local elections until 1973), Catholics remained broadly distrustful about the real intentions of the Unionist regime.

<sup>90</sup> Chichester-Clark also endorsed the "Republican plot" argument to justify more repressive measures against the Catholic demonstrators. He

victory in the 1970 General Election also encouraged the Unionists to take stronger steps against the insurgents. The Army's reluctance to retire the barricades that prevented the security forces from patrolling in the Catholic ghettos of Derry and Belfast had been broadly criticised from the Protestant side. Thus, when the ban on public marches was overridden in the face of increasing Protestant pressures to march, large-scale violence broke out again. In the joint security committee, Unionists pressed the Army to assume a tougher line against Catholic rioters. The plan was to harass the renewed IRA by carrying out an arms' search in West Belfast. The curfew backfired, and the population started to look with increasing sympathy to the PIRA (MacStiofáin 1975: 157).<sup>91</sup>

Not so surprisingly, Chichester-Clark also failed in his attempt to appease Catholics with the lukewarm reforms he introduced. After the PIRA killing of three soldiers, he flew to London to ask Heath for more troops. The Prime Minister acquiesced, but

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blamed the IRA for the 1969 August disturbances in Belfast to undermine NICRA's public appeal and legitimacy (Burton 1978: 124).

<sup>91</sup> Despite his reluctance to intervene, Callaghan swiftly analyzed later the effect of the Curfew on the birth of the PIRA. He wrote: "The IRA had few numbers in August 1968 and it was not until later that it reorganised and mobilised. I believe that if events had not gone so tragically wrong in the summer of 1970 [just after he left office], the IRA might have broken fresh ground with an entirely new policy of recognising Stormont and of working through the civil rights association and similar organizations. This may sound a bold claim, but I believe we were within a touch of this happening (...) the Provos gained the ascendancy [with respect to the Officials], but they did so only by capturing the support of the majority of the Catholic population after insensitive British handling had disenchanting it. If other political courses had been followed in 1970 and 1971, it is possible that the OIRA would have kept their hold and the Provos would never have gained the ground they did" (Callaghan 1973: 47-48). Darby shares the same opinion: "It is unlikely that the opposition to the IRA's moves towards socialism would ever have amounted to more than murmurings without the invasion of the Falls" (Darby 1976: 94).



resisted Stormont's efforts to gain additional leverage on the control of the troops. In the face of this rejection, Chichester-Clark resigned. The new Prime Minister, Brian Faulkner, kept playing the game of offering some small concessions to moderate Catholics, but his last recipe was definitively to introduce internment without trial as the last card to tackle the PIRA down.<sup>92</sup> For Faulkner, internment should work.<sup>93</sup> As minister of Home Affairs during the last IRA campaign, he saw how the seal of the border and the internment of potential suspects could drain off the resources feeding the fight.

Internment was introduced in August 1971. It did not work at all. For one, the absence of collaboration from the other side of the border, a central factor to explain why internment worked very well in the previous IRA campaign, meant that IRA gunners could hit and run away to the South and operate freely there. Moreover, the intelligence used to arrest suspects was weak to say the least (Alonso 2001: 153). Less than a quarter of the arrested were charged (Adams 1996: 261). Thirdly, internment focused only on the Catholic community, with almost no effect on Protestant extremists. Fourthly, the systematic use of torture to gain information was broadly broadcasted and this jeopardised even further the reputation of the Army. Finally, the PIRA escalated its level of violence after internment, since it multiplied by three the number of killings carried out – from 18 in the first seven months of the year to 64 in the remaining five months.

The effect of this policy was brutal. The apparent existence of a shoot-to-kill Army policy endorsed by Faulkner, together with

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<sup>92</sup> Internment without trial was the main reason why the Catholic community demanded the repeal of the Special Powers Act. By granting the detention without charges of suspect citizens, the act contravened several European conventions of rights. Still, Protestants saw it as a very important leg of their defence system against Republican revolt.

<sup>93</sup> The Army was less enthusiastic about the efficiency of internment. They discounted a certain post-internment increase of violence, but they thought this was the price to pay for gathering information about the republican movement (Sunday Times 1972: 269).

internment and Bloody Sunday (the killing of 13 Catholics by the Army in a peaceful demonstration carried out in Londonderry in January 1972) signalled the incapacity of the state to bring Catholics in, whose most obvious evidence was the indiscriminate repression the security forces were carrying out against the Catholic minority.<sup>94</sup> In brief, the PIRA had almost two years to build a new organization in the no-go areas of the main Catholic enclaves. And the repressive measures, far from beheading the organization, fed it with crowds of recruits and political legitimacy. It was only a question of time before the UK government took over Stormont's powers, and this happened in March 1972, when Faulkner flew again to London to ask for more troops. Heath answered that there would be more troops certainly, but that security affairs would now be controlled by his cabinet. Faulkner did not accept the proposal and resigned. Immediately, Westminster suspended Stormont and assumed its powers, concentrated in the figure of the new Secretaryship of State for Northern Ireland.

From now on, there was agreement between the two main UK parties that any Ulster solution would pass by two principles: the respect of Ulster self-determination, and the creation of power-sharing institutions. The Unionists agreed with the first one, but rejected the second one; the PIRA could agree with the second one, but rejected the first. Thus, the government's efforts to reach a deal were always damned to failure. Peace initiatives, such as the 1975 truce, inflamed the Protestant community and contributed to the triggering of loyalist paramilitary organizations, which fed further rounds of sectarian violence. The government's attempt to "Ulsterize" the conflict, by reducing the presence of the Army and

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<sup>94</sup> In 1972, the conflict seemed to become a three-actor game, with security forces and protestant extremists on one side and republicans on the other. The number of killings peaked in that year, with a record 497 deaths. The different IRA branches were responsible for 56 percent of the killings, loyalists killed 24 percent of the victims, and the remaining 19 percent was killed by the security forces (McKittrick *et al.* 2004: 1528).

taking away the political prisoner's status for those convicted of terrorist acts, contributed to a reduction in the level of violence, but at the expense of strengthening the support for IRA activities.<sup>95</sup> For instance, the prisoners' fight to achieve "political status" was very successful in turning the PIRA passive support community into the public. The fact that the conservative cabinet did not concede to minor claims about the way prisoners had to wear in prison at a time when it did concede to a similar threat in Wales about the setup of a Welsh-only TV channel showed ultimately the different power of UK responsiveness: whereas Thatcher was really interested in taking out seats from Welsh Labour, she did not care pretty much about the Northern Irish Catholic vote –not even about the Unionist vote, as she showed with the peace initiatives of the '80s. In the end, only when Republicans realised that their strength was enough to veto new initiatives but not to impose their goals decided to open the peace process that ended with the Good Friday Agreement (O'Doherty 1998). Ironically, although the agreement recognised the principles moderate Catholics had defended since the beginning of the troubles, it was Sinn Fein, the PIRA political front, that reaped the political benefits at the expense of the moderate SDLP.

### **6.5. Concluding remarks**

Wales and Northern Ireland experienced similar surges of nationalist mobilization during the late 1960s, when a growing middle-class took pride in local customs and started to push for devolution. More interestingly, these new nationalist movements pursued similar strategies of claim-making, based on civil-right arguments with unorthodox street techniques of mobilization. By then, the IRA had been militarily defeated and Belfast Catholics

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<sup>95</sup> From 1975, most of the policemen killed were Protestants. This added a complex dimension of sectarianism to PIRA violence, even if they rejected the label.

were moving towards Labour candidates, whereas the old Nationalist Party and the new middle-class movement competed fiercely for the nationalist pockets of Derry and the Catholic countryside. It is also quite interesting to recall that in both regions hunger strikes were used to impose pressure on decision makers, but also with a very different outcome. Why was this so?

In Wales, the nationalist party followed a two-track strategy consistent in denouncing terrorism but standing for non-violent direct action. The electoral inroads of Plaid Cymru forced Labour to make concessions in successive waves of containment. The 1979 referendum was something of a success for nationalism, even if the result was disappointing for the PC. In Northern Ireland, on the contrary, the initial peaceful demonstrations were responded to with fierce communal violence and passivity from Stormont, whose main concern was to defeat Labour's inroads within the Protestant working-class constituency. The Stormont government called for Army intervention without relinquishing its control of security issues. Not only did the UK government not have good information on the ground, but they also did not want to bear the cost of intervention, since they did not have anything to win there.

Thus, violence in Belfast, Londonderry and the border areas became self-sustaining as security forces reacted in siding with Protestants and the Stormont government passed internment without trial. Bloody Sunday was the last trigger of the new wave of Republican violence, which drew strongly on the working-class constituencies of Belfast and Londonderry, together with the previous traditions of republicanism in the border areas. In Wales, on the contrary, the UK government always combined the stick and the carrot. Thus, prison terms for language activists were balanced by several language bills and funds to develop them; police puppet trials against Republican nationalists were compensated with concessions to constitutional nationalists, such as the Welsh-only TV channel.

## **CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSIONS AND EXTENSIONS**

### **7.1. Introduction**

In this final chapter I use additional tests to check the consistency of the argument. Firstly, I bring together the six regions under analysis in order to identify what factors could have explained resilient violence in the Basque Country, Corsica and Northern Ireland and its absence in Catalonia, Sardinia and Wales. Furthermore, it is interesting to offer some clues about the different intensity of violence between these nationalist conflicts. Secondly, to establish the scope conditions of this research, I analyze whether its main insights could be applied to developing countries. In rich countries, the incapacity of insurgents to liberate territory forces them to rely on the creation of a support constituency that endorses their political demands. In settings where the state is not as strong as to deter the emergence of guerrillas within its territory, the use of violence as a mobilizational device could be less relevant. That said, failed state efforts to nationalize politics within the state and the existence of abundant resources for ethnic mobilization could produce similar dynamics to the ones we have found in richer countries. Implicit “contracts” between state elites and regional politicians to share power in exchange for loyalty could backfire if: (i) the latter are afraid of formal concessions to nationalists; and (ii) radical nationalists foresee alternative groups of support that could be mobilized through the use of violence.

## **7.2. Bringing all the cases together**

In the last three chapters, I have offered pair-wise comparisons of some of the most relevant cases of nationalist mobilization in Western Europe since World War II. By keeping some of the main structural factors constant, I have been able to put the focus on the two key independent variables: state responsiveness and the existence of potentially new support constituencies for armed nationalists. Table 7.1 summarizes these variables. In what follows, I analyze commonalities and differences between the six cases under discussion.

The three positive cases (Basque Country, Corsica and Northern Ireland) involved states reluctant to concede on behalf of local politicians fearful of losing their grip to power. In the Basque Country, a dictatorial regime did not show any concern about redressing some of the softer nationalist complaints – for instance, the restoration of the abolished *Fueros* for Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa, and the voluntary learning of Basque within the formal educative curricula. In Corsica, the demand for some degree of political autonomy remained unanswered from Paris, given the tiny electoral presence of nationalists and the strong opposition of local politicians against it. Finally, the Northern Irish regime blocked as much as it could any suggestion coming from London about giving moderate Catholics access to the regional institutions within some sort of power-sharing framework. Instead of establishing direct rule on the eve of the first disturbances, the British parties avoided to become entangled in the province by relying on the Unionist management of the conflict. Fearful of concessions, Protestant leaders used the IRA sponsorship of the NICRA movement to discredit its demands under allegations of being a Republican smokescreen. Although the UK government quickly commissioned several reports about the nature of the troubles, it did not use their output to change course and force Protestants to accommodate Catholics. Only when the last Protestant card – internment – failed too did London take over Stormont's powers.

Table 7.1. Summary of the main variables

Regions	Potential for nationalist mobilization	Behavior of local political elites	State reaction	Outcome
Basque Country	<i>Large:</i> Basque-speaking constituencies mobilized before by a decaying regional force (Carlists).	<i>Autonomous,</i> antinationalist elites adverse to change.	<i>Repression:</i> misperception of the threat, irrelevance of Basque local elites within the ruling coalition at the centre.	<i>Resilient Terrorism:</i> less than 1,000 deaths (1968-2009).
Corsica	<i>Moderate:</i> Losers from the patronage system.	<i>Autonomous,</i> anti-nationalist elites adverse to change.	<i>Repression:</i> misinformation about the support for nationalism, little impact of Corsican votes on decision-making at the centre.	<i>Resilient terrorism:</i> around 50 deaths (1975-2000).
Northern Ireland	<i>Large:</i> Working-class catholic groups mobilized before by the waning labor forces.	<i>Autonomous,</i> anti-nationalist local elites adverse to power-sharing schemes.	<i>Repression:</i> misinformation about the size of the threat, little impact of Northern-Irish votes on decision-making at the centre.	<i>Resilient terrorism:</i> around 3,500 deaths (1969-2009).

Table 7.1. *Summary of the main variables (continues)*

Regions	Potential for nationalist mobilization	Behavior of local political elites	State reaction	Outcome
Catalonia	<i>Negligible:</i> full mobilization before the War.	<i>Regionalist</i> elites, with some leverage to compete against nationalists.	<i>Restraint:</i> state rulers interested in avoiding trouble in the largest regional economy, good information about the potential for rebellion.	<i>Minor episodes of terrorism: 4 deaths (1973-1992).</i>
Sardinia	<i>Large:</i> Sardinian-speaking constituencies.	<i>State-wide</i> dependent local elites. Very competitive against nationalists.	<i>Concessions:</i> the two main state-wide parties interested in not losing votes in favor of nationalists. Good information channeled from local political elites.	<i>No violence</i>
Wales	<i>Moderate:</i> Welsh-speaking groups mobilized by decaying state-wide parties (Liberals).	<i>State-wide</i> dependent local elites open to competition from nationalists.	<i>Concessions:</i> state-wide parties interested in not losing votes in favor of nationalists. Good information from local politicians.	<i>Minor attacks without victims</i>



Additionally, these three cases also involved some degree of potential for nationalist growth. In all these regions there were electoral constituencies up for grabs that had been previously controlled by marginal, local political actors whose capacity to satisfy their voters in case of nationalist unrest would be very limited. In the Basque Country, the strength of the Carlists in the Basque-speaking countryside dissolved when industrialization dramatically changed its economic landscape. The discovery of Basque identity in places where nationalism had not been very strong during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic was accelerated by the armed activism of second-wave nationalists within ETA, whose actions contributed to raise consciousness. Fearful of losing ground, the remaining Carlists in power did not lift a finger against the repressive reaction of the state, because they knew their survival was conditional on the permanence of the dictatorship. In the end, their calculation proved wrong, since large-scale indiscriminate repression contributed to increase the nationalist fold. By the mid '70s, there was no chance for Carlists to be competitive in the Basque-speaking areas of Euskadi and Navarre and they were consequently swept away once democracy arrived. The consequence was the increase of nationalism, increasing from around one third during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic to more than 60 percent after the decay of the dictatorship.

In Corsica, in turn, nationalism built its support around the losers of the patronage system: farmers and artisans whose market position was damaged by the newcomers from the former colonies, university students disillusioned with the few jobs available for them in the island and professionals disenchanted with the normal management of affairs led by the local notables. Traditionally abstaining or voting for parties without institutional presence, moderates and radicals fought among each other for capturing these groups. Local politicians understood very well that any concession to nationalists – such as a regional parliament elected with a PR electoral rule – would involve splitting their power. For this reason, they patronized repression against nationalists. Still, unlike the Basque Country, the rural nature of

the Corsican language (spoken in small towns with aged populations) put limits on the electoral advances of the nationalists. Besides, once devolution was implemented, Northern and Southern notables came together to fill the new offices and keep control of the larger funds for the development of the island. For all these reasons, Corsican nationalism never mobilized more than one quarter of the electorate.

Finally, the new Republican branch led by the Provisional IRA built its support around the ashes of the aborted Northern Irish Labour movement in the big cities (Belfast and Londonderry), together with the remnants of the strong tradition of Republican support in the largely Catholic areas close to the border. There is no doubt that Catholics in Northern Ireland saw themselves as a besieged minority, with a dominant feeling against the partition of the island. Still, on the eve of the troubles they were also overwhelmingly against violence as the right method to end partition. The “bread-and-butter” campaigns of the NICRA brought to the fore issues about inequality and increased the popularity of the Labour party among Protestants and Catholics alike. The onset of sectarian violence in Londonderry meant the practical extinction of the old Nationalist leadership, replaced by the Catholic leaders of the NICRA movement. In turn, the spread of sectarian riots to Belfast left the Catholic working-class segments of the city devoid of political leadership. The need to react against the incursions of Loyalist mobs and security forces within the Catholic areas provided an excellent opportunity for the new IRA to show skill and the ability to command. The Provisionals soon controlled the local committees and took advantage of the increasing indiscriminate repression to accelerate the recruiting process within the working-class strongholds. As Sinn Fein ran for the first time for an election in 1982, Catholic working-class West Belfast emerged as the largest bastion of support for the political front of the PIRA at the expense of the moderate SDLP. Since the Good Friday Agreement that ended the conflict in 1998, SF has repeatedly collected more than 60 percent of the votes there.

All that said, it is clear too that these two mechanisms did not have the same relevance in the cases I analyzed. Thus, in Northern Ireland the unresponsive nature of the political establishment as well as the existence of potential constituencies amenable to being mobilized through violence contributed likewise to the emergence of resilient armed nationalist organizations that lasted for decades and in the end played a very important role in the solution to the conflict. In Corsica, on the contrary, the reluctance of local notables to concede seems to have carried the burden for the emergence of nationalist terrorism in the island. Finally, ETA was no doubt a consequence of the repressive nature of the dictatorship, but it would have never lasted if there would not have been a potentially nationalist constituency ready to jump ship in favor of a new definition of being Basque consisting of speaking the language.

The influence of the different mechanisms could have something to do with the intensity of violence in each conflict. Northern Ireland bears the dubious honor of having the largest number of terrorist deaths in Western Europe, with more than 3,500 victims – of which around 2,000 are of Republican authorship. The troubles were most of the time based on a three-corner fight between Loyalists (local vigilantes), Republicans and Security forces. The large mobilization of working-class constituencies by the most radical armed organizations within each community increased the lethality of violence. For instance, many attacks bore a sectarian tit-for-tat nature, favored for the territorial contiguity between the two areas in Belfast. Moreover, the unchecked intervention of the security forces, with such controversial decisions as the shoot-to-kill policy practiced during the '80s, helped keep a steady flow of recruits, money and legitimacy for the Republican terrorist organizations.

The conflict in the Basque Country did not reach the intensity of Northern Ireland. For one, those citizens with a lower inclination towards nationalism – mainly immigrants from other regions of the state – did not arm themselves to fight back against ETA. The absence of retaliatory violence forced ETA to keep its

list of targets tight, and the number of sectarian attacks low.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, although ETA was born during the dictatorship, it very soon had to fight against a democratic regime that had granted large autonomy to the Basque Country. The fact that moderate nationalists always controlled the regional government between 1980 and 2009 meant that ETA was running against a pro-nationalist status quo, so that it had to be very careful about the types of targets they selected. Finally, the widespread use of torture, and the activities against ETA members and nationalists in general of several terrorist organizations linked to the security forces had strongly legitimized ETA and increased its recruiting capacity. However, the deployment of the Basque police (*Ertzaintza*) in substitution for the hated Spanish security forces during the late 1980s and the use of more efficient methods to gather intelligence than torture and indiscriminate arrests decreased the appeal of violence and therefore the number of recruits and attacks. On the eve of the 1998 peace process, ETA was barely able to kill 10 people yearly, when in the early '80s its units murdered around 100 victims. In all, the Basque conflict has produced around 1,000 victims, with ETA being responsible for 835 deaths (as of June 2009).

Corsica, in comparison, displays much lower levels of violence. Corsican armed groups killed around 50 people, with a tiny number of victims due to anti-nationalist organizations. Thus, it would be possible to wonder if this case matches at all the type of conflict we see in the other two regions. However, I argue the similarities among these conflicts are worth pursuing. Firstly, it must be borne in mind that Corsica is a very small island, with 250,000 inhabitants. That means that if Corsica had the same

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<sup>1</sup> ETA targeted members of the dictatorship during the transition period, but it rejected attacks against politicians during the 1980s. However, given the increasing weakness of the organization since 1992, when the long-serving leadership of ETA was arrested, it switched the strategy and started to kill local politicians from state-wide parties to bring the central government under direct pressure to negotiate (Domínguez-Iribarren 1998b).

population as the Basque Country (roughly 2 million), then the expected number of killings in the island would have been around 400. Although this figure is still lower than in the other two conflicts, it is respectable. Secondly, Corsica also experienced the emergence of anti-nationalist armed organizations that carried out attacks against moderate and radical nationalists. As we saw in Chapter 5, the fact that *vendetta* was a well-rooted mechanism for dispute settlement lies behind many of the terrorist killings in the island. Finally, aware of their own weakness, radical nationalists avoided carrying out attacks against the local notables and their milieu. Rather than undermining the foundations of the clan power, nationalists longed to become notables with their alternative networks of support. The limited spread of violence fitted well with this goal.

We have discussed so far in this chapter how the argument could fit the variation within the nationalist movements with armed branches. But what about the negative cases? Catalonia, Sardinia and Wales all shared some features of their political environments, but also had some relevant differences. In Catalonia, nationalists achieved the full mobilization of their constituency during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic. With few supporters in Catalonia, the winners of the Civil War had to attract former regionalists to fill the positions in the local administration, once the dictatorship moved towards the Catholic Church as the main pillar of the regime. Although right-wing Catalanists did not raise their voices to claim political autonomy, they still cared about the fate of the language and the state of the regional economy. For them, prosperity and order would be the best paths for keeping the distinctiveness of Catalonia and bringing back its past autonomy when transition to democracy arrived.

Second-wave radical nationalists could have triggered violence against the dictatorship in the '60s, but the experiment would have been doomed to failure, not only because of the overwhelming repressive power of the regime. Without any chance of winning, and with almost no mobilizational premium, nationalists adopted a moderate stance that suited well the interests

of Catalan local political elites. Given the broad consensus in Catalonia around the restoration of political autonomy, the new Spanish Constitution granted large powers to the region in 1978, and nationalists took over the regional government in 1980. To avoid competition from radical nationalists articulated around the small armed organization Terra Lliure, moderates strategically manipulated the movement in defense of the language and pressed Madrid to get more concessions in order to contain violence. The strategy paid off, and radical organizations were disbanded in the early 1990s with most of their members joining the legal separatist party ERC. The risk of violent contagion from the Basque Country had been deactivated for good.

Sardinia's is a different story. Here nationalists could have made electoral inroads, but they found a very competitive regional political system led by parties whose headquarters were based in Rome. Devolution in the aftermath of World War II was essential for understanding how nationalist claims evolved later. The establishment of regional representative institutions convinced all parties to compete on the Sardinian dimension. Given the relative backwardness of the region, voters rewarded state-wide parties whose connections to the centre could attract investments and rents, and penalized the autonomists, unable to update their goals once autonomy had been granted. Second-wave nationalists emerged when the unwanted consequences of the accelerated process of industrialization, such as the increasing economic unbalances within the island and the concern about the extinction of traditional cultural and economic practices, became apparent.

Despite discussions about the usefulness of triggering violence, radical nationalists played within the institutions, for two reasons. Firstly, the existing autonomist party hosted the new nationalist cohort and switched its ideology towards independence. Secondly, the state-wide parties reacted against the challenge, in order to avoid losing voters. The failure of the DC in Rome to make concessions boosted the support for nationalists, who took power in 1984. However, their happiness was short-term, since the collapse of the Italian 1<sup>st</sup> Republic did not favor the

nationalist party, whose voters were spread between the new state-wide coalitions of parties. Nowadays, even though the nationalist parties in Sardinia only get around 10 percent of the vote, many politicians from the state-wide parties define themselves as *Sardisti*.

Finally, Wales is perhaps the region where nationalist violence had more likelihood of breaking out. Tied by the worrisome perspectives of the language, Nationalists tried to mobilize the Welsh-speaking constituency politically, largely concentrated on rural, Northwestern Wales. However, they found strong competition from Liberals and the Labour party. On the one side, Liberals represented a marginal political party in Westminster, and therefore up for grabs in case of ethnic polarization. On the other side, the Labour party made up the largest party in the region and a regular sitting tenant in the UK government. Labour was secularly divided with regards to devolution. Whereas their working-class strongholds in South Wales emphasized “ideological” issues against any “territorial” debate, Northern sections of the party concerned about the potential increase of the nationalists. As the internal balance favored the English-speaking South, concessions delivered to the region were constant, but mild.

In 1966, moderate nationalists won their first parliamentary seat, and this involved a boost of support for the party and its pathway to devolution. Endorsed by the party, radicals kept running civil-disobedience campaigns to raise consciousness about the bad shape of the language, which received quick accommodating reactions from London. It was in 1974 when the electoral upsurge of the Scottish National Party (SNP), which got 30 percent of the Scottish votes, combined with the electoral consolidation of Plaid Cymru in Wales (10 percent of the votes, with 3 seats) forced the tiny Labour majority in Westminster to promote a process of devolution with the goal of containing nationalist contestation mainly in Scotland. As a by-product, Welsh nationalists also got a Devolution Bill, but with fewer powers than in the other region. State reaction to increasing nationalist support avoided the activation of the armed pathway,

which could have drawn Welsh speakers towards radical nationalism at the expense of marginal parties such as the Liberals. The failure of the 1979 referendum for a Welsh Assembly forced nationalists to recognize the limited support in Wales for their goals, since the referendum was defeated even in the Welsh-speaking counties of the region. Despite the fact that Plaid Cymru has rarely been able to collect more than 15 percent of the vote in general elections, the party has experienced an electoral boost in regional elections, nowadays being a member of the regional government.

To summarize, all these regions circumvented resilient nationalist violence thanks to the responsive reaction of their main regional forces against the emergence of competitive nationalists. However, radical nationalists did not face the same internal conditions to build their own support constituency. In Sardinia they faced very competitive state-wide parties. In Catalonia and Wales, absent state-wide forces, they were also doomed to recruit from the fringes of the regional language-speaking constituency, but because of different reasons: the overwhelming support for nationalism in Catalonia left no room for radicals, whereas violence in Wales had to compete with civil-disobedience activists and marginal constitutional parties.

In the end, Catalonia could have experienced ETA-like violence if the support for nationalism would have been lower during the Republic and state repression against second-wave nationalists tougher. However, given the larger weight of Catalonia within Spain, the dictatorship would have had to deal more carefully with nationalist violence in that region. And, even though it may seem impossible to analysts of the Basque conflict today, if the dictatorship would have given way to the regionalist project of the Carlist movement in Gipuzkoa during the 40s, perhaps nationalist violence would not have escalated so dramatically. In Wales, radical nationalists could have thrived had London not quickly conceded to language activists and Plaid Cymru electoral advances. In that scenario, a combination of indiscriminate repression and bad economic outcomes could have



pushed many English-speaking Welsh from working-class backgrounds towards joining the ranks of the emerging armed organizations – just like in the Basque Country. And by the same token, violence could have been contained in Northern Ireland if the Protestant population would have agreed to some sort of power-sharing solution. Finally, Sardinia could have been another Corsica if the Italian Constitution had not granted autonomy to the region in 1948. Similarly, Corsica could have passed without violence if the 1968 Referendum De Gaulle promoted to decentralize the country would have succeeded. In sum, if these counterfactuals make sense, they seem to point to the fact that state responsiveness and mobilizational incentives played a relevant role in accounting for the emergence of resilient nationalist violence in Western Europe.

### **7.3. Extensions**

The increasing move towards decentralization in affluent countries (Hooghe et al. 2008) may have made radicals' incentives to trigger violence useless. In Western Europe, the generalization of mechanisms to share power at the regional level have given moderate nationalists a say in decision-making, and this has dwarfed the relative appeal of violence as a technique for extracting concessions. As terrorism thrives in countries where the state is able to deter insurgencies taking control of territory within its borders, armed organizations cannot survive without some sort of popular support. To the contrary, the rules of warfare in weak states seem to be different from the mechanisms analyzed in this dissertation. Weak states give opportunities for insurgents to control territory and launch guerrilla wars that rely less on public legitimacy and more on physical force.

Developing countries offer an interesting intermediate scenario. Many of them are democracies without consolidated state-wide parties. This has two consequences. On the one hand, state decision makers rely on coalitions of local actors to capture

votes and channel information about voters' preferences on policies (Chhibber and Kollman 2004). On the other hand, failure to nationalize the polity leaves abundant sources for ethnic mobilization. Given these two features, many governments could have disincentives to concede in order to avoid contagion effects (Walter 2006). Hence, loose "indirect rule" solutions could backfire, if local actors are change-averse and there is room for nationalist contestation. Quite the opposite, schemes of decentralized decision-making could be largely beneficial for the country as long as state-wide parties remain competitive at the regional level.

In this last section I propose taking a look at Serbia, China and India, three developing countries that have experienced different levels of nationalist unrest. In Serbia, a former socialist state part of Yugoslavia, we have seen in the last decade the de-facto secession of the province of Kosovo.<sup>2</sup> In China, ethno-nationalism seems to have revived again in the Autonomous Region of Xinjiang since the decay of the Soviet Union. The largely Muslim Uyghurs have started to demand more powers from Beijing in order to shield their culture and identity from the overwhelming presence of the state in the region. Despite being one of the most repressive regimes in the world, Chinese communist decision-makers have reacted with a carrot and stick policy whose success

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<sup>2</sup> There are other potentially interesting cases in Eastern Europe, many of them related to Russia. Unlike the behaviour of third actors in regionalist conflicts such as Austria in the South Tyrol question or Ireland in the troubles, Russia directly intervened in the civil wars breaking out in the early 1990s in Transnistria, South Ossetia and Abkhazia. This direct intervention makes difficult the application of my argument to these regional conflicts, since Russia-backed ringleaders might set off violence without the need to gather too much support thanks to the armed resources coming from the loyal neighbour. Jenne (2007) analyzes how the dynamics of internal ethnic conflict are altered when the minority's side makes up the majority of the population in a bordering state.

is so far remarkable.<sup>3</sup> Finally, in India, the largest democracy in the world, different governments faced nationalist demands for devolution. The Sikh group fought for, and succeeded in achieving, its own linguistic state. However, further ethnic demands led by radical nationalists were heavily repressed, which contributed to the escalation of violence.

After the dismemberment of Yugoslavia<sup>4</sup> in 1991, Serbia suffered several reductions of its territory. The carnage in the Bosnian war was succeeded by Kosovo in 1996. Three years later, NATO imposed on Serbia a statute of full autonomy for Kosovo under UN oversight. In 2008, the Parliament of Kosovo declared unilaterally the independence of the province.<sup>5</sup> I wonder whether

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<sup>3</sup> The recent ethnic unrest in Urumqi, the capital city of Xinjiang, could mean that the apparent success of the Chinese policy no longer holds. Given the fact that violence has taken the shape of inter-ethnic communal riots between the two largest ethnic groups in the region – Uyghur and Han - and that Uyghurs have voiced economic demands rather than separatist ones, it is still early to know if radical Uyghurs will take advantage of these riots to mobilize support and build a more resilient pro-secession insurgency against the Chinese government. For an overview of the recent riots, see “Is China fraying?” *The Economist*, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> I have not discussed the break-up of Yugoslavia in this dissertation. Wars in Croatia and Bosnia were devised by state leaders within the republics and fought by some sort of regular armies in a guerrilla-like way. Therefore, the need to gather resources or being responsive to others’ demands stayed low. However, several authors have stood out the relevance of violence within the nationalist drives to polarize the respective national groups and gather support along ethnic lines (Caspersen 2009; Kumar 1997; Pavković 2000). Although Gagnon (2004) rightly points out that violence could have been also used to demobilize (supporters, demonstrators), there is no doubt that violence was manufactured on purposes beyond fighting for territory.

<sup>5</sup> Another intriguing case within Serbia is the province of Vojvodina. Although the province was made up of Serbs and Hungarians equally before World War II, the process of ethnic resettlement that followed the end of the war manufactured a large Serbian majority. Thus, in the 1948

an argument based on mobilization and grievances could shed some light on the case of Kosovo.

The Albanian-speaking community made up an overwhelming majority of Kosovo since World War II. During the 1960s, the economy of the province grew, but its fruits were unevenly distributed, with a larger share of the pie going to the North, heavily populated by Serbians. Thus, revolts were sparked, led by students who complained about the neglect of their culture and their lower life chances. Even if repressed by the security forces, the regime decided to grant several concessions, as the set up of an Albanian-run independent university or the upgrading of the province's status within the federation. Under the 1974 Constitution of Yugoslavia, Kosovo and Vojvodina became autonomous provinces within Serbia, which in practice involved republican status. Hence, ethnic Albanian Kosovars remained comfortable within the offices of the multi-ethnic communist one-party.

Yet new animosities and clashes broke out between the two communities during the 80s. Under allegations of ethnic cleansing against the Serb minority, Milosevic, the then Serbian president,

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Census Serbians doubled the number of Hungarians (50.6 percent vs. 25.8 percent). Nowadays, the province remains largely Serbian (65 percent), with a relevant minority of ethnic Hungarians (15 percent), concentrated around the Northern border with Hungary. This minority resented the liquidation of the provincial powers in 1990 and voiced its complaints. However, in contrast to state reaction against local challenges in Bosnia and Kosovo, Serbian local leaders in Vojvodina remained quiet and did not challenge minorities' rights. On the other side, the moderate party of the main minority, the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians, was able to keep violence at bay by having a relevant position within the opposition force against Milosevic's party and holding several mayorships at the Hungarian-speaking Northern Vojvodina. The removal of Milosevic and its replacement by the coalition of opposition parties in 2000 granted the concession of more autonomy to the region. Despite some isolated ethnic incidents in 2003 and 2004, violence did not break out and the province remained peaceful (Bieber and Winterhagen 2006).

forced the provincial parliament of Kosovo to relinquish its powers in 1989, downgraded the role of the Albanian language and replaced local leaders with loyal Serbs.<sup>6</sup> Massive demonstrations were held against the vote, with the result of indiscriminate repression and several deaths – at least 25 killings, according to official sources. The potential communist leaders of the revolt were arrested, and the movement was beheaded. The new Serbian constitution was scheduled to be voted on in referendum in July 1990. Days before, a majority of Kosovo Albanian members of the regional assembly convened, against the wishes of its Serbian Kosovo president, to demand the right of self-determination for Kosovo, effectively declaring the province independent from Serbia within the federation of Yugoslavia. They voted to annul the March 1989 decision of the assembly to diminish its powers. On September 1990, Albanian delegates to the Kosovo assembly, a two-thirds majority, met again and adopted a constitution for an independent Kosovo. Serbia issued arrest warrants against its members and rejected the constitution. Finally this same month the new Serbian constitution was enacted.<sup>7</sup>

The takeover was contested by the Albanian community, which set up alternative educative institutions to teach its

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<sup>6</sup> To abolish the autonomous powers of Vojvodina and Kosovo, Milosevic needed their respective autonomous assemblies to vote in favour of it. There was no problem in the first region, where there was already a pro-centralizing majority in office. However, the Serbian nationalists faced more trouble in Kosovo. The solution was to oust in a one-by-one basis some of the most pro-autonomous Kosovo Albanians within the single communist party: those leaders were replaced by Albanians loyal to Belgrade. It also seems that the vote at the provincial parliament was manufactured with people without parliamentary credentials casting valid votes in favour of devolving powers to Belgrade (Mertus 1999: 179-180).

<sup>7</sup> Although it granted some rights to “nationalities” within the country, it did not allow them to create autonomous parliaments without Serbian oversight.

language. Its main political force, the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), promoted a campaign of civil disobedience and “illegal” presidential and parliamentary elections were called in May 1992. The main Kosovo Albanian political figure, Ibrahim Rugova, LDK’s leader, won the elections, with more than 95 percent of the votes cast. Although Serbians boycotted the illegal election, 87 percent of the census reportedly turned out. In 1996, Serbian and Kosovo Albanian moderate leaders signed an agreement to allow the return of Albanian students to mainstream education, after a 6-year boycott. This is the first time the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) emerges as an armed group. Disappointed with the strategy of passive resistance led by Rugova, and fearful of the potential successes of the bargaining process between Serbs and moderate Kosovo Albanians, they started a terrorism-like campaign that virtually became a guerrilla war against the Yugoslav army. Serbian overreaction encouraged the Western countries to intervene under the NATO banner. The outcome of the short war was Serbian retreat and de-facto secession for Kosovo under a UN mandate.

Obviously, the abolition of the autonomous status of the province in 1989 and the substitution of Albanian politicians by change-averse Serbian leaders explains a large part of the conflict. The province, ruled by local communist leaders responsive to the demands of the ethnic Albanian community, passed to the hands of Serbian politicians interested in protecting the rights and privileges of the Serbian minority (Mertus 1999). However, it is puzzling why Kosovo Albanians did not use force until 1996, as negotiations between the parts were starting off. The influence of the Bosnian war seems to be of importance here. There is also little information about the state of mobilization of the Kosovo Albanian community. The conventional wisdom is that most of them remained already staunch separatists from 1989, for whom violence would have been used as “voice” mechanism in 1996. Nevertheless, it would be interesting to investigate if the population was openly supportive of secession before the birth of the KLA and consequently, if war broke out first in the staunchest

pro-secessionist areas of the province.<sup>8</sup> In one way or another, there is no doubt that the armed conflict allowed the KLA war leaders to build their own support communities, and use them to set up an alternative political party which pursued to crush the mainstream LDK. As several elections held since the end of the war have repeatedly shown, the LDK has remained strong enough as to survive, but the KLA has also become a major contender for the representation of the ethnic Albanian population in Kosovo (ICG 2000; 2005).

In China, decentralization has been essential for explaining the unabated rate of economic growth the country has experienced during the last two decades (Landry 2008). However, decentralization without centralized political forces could bear some costs too. Xinjiang makes up a good test. When in 1949 it was definitively incorporated into China after half a century of frontier switches in the area and Uyghur aspirations to keep political autonomy, the demographic composition of Xinjiang remained largely dominated by Uyghurs, who made up 76 percent of the population (Mackerras 2001: 293). The region suffered the erratic policies of the Mao era, and experienced large waves of economic immigration led by ethnic Hans, the leading ethnic group in the country, that brought stress into the region. For instance, the number of Uyghurs decreased from 76 percent of the regional population in 1949 to 45 percent in 1982 –with a parallel increase for the Hans from 7 percent to 40 percent in the same period. However, Uyghur nationalism did not surface for two reasons.

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<sup>8</sup> A survey run just on the eve of the war saw that 100 percent of the ethnic Albanians interviewed favoured either secession or joining Albania as the solution to the conflict. On the other hand, 37 percent thought war was not likely to break out (with 46 percent giving no answer) and 72 percent considered negotiations between Milosevic and Rugova as necessary. Still, the data are not very reliable, because the sample procedures could have somehow biased the results (Mertus 1999: 319-321).

Firstly and uppermost, Xinjiang comprises one sixth of China's landmass, and some of the largest reserves of natural resources in the country. Once the new programmatic line of the Communist Party in the 1970s switched from ideological orthodoxy to the spread of economic growth, decision makers had broad strategic interests in keeping the region safe and peaceful. Therefore, the Communist Party tried to become responsive to the demands of the internal minorities. The 1982 Constitution and the 1984 Law on Regional Autonomy for Minority Nationalities protected minorities' rights – such as the right to receive education in the pupil's mother language and the protection of religious beliefs –, and give symbolic powers to their representatives. Thus, the head of government of the autonomous regions should be a member of the minority. Besides, the regions would be allowed to avoid the application in their territory of legislation passed for the rest of the country, as long as it could jeopardize the survival of the group – as was the case with the one-child policy.

The policy change was not only symbolic, though. The composition of bureaucratic cadres saw the percentage of Uyghurs increase from 44 percent in 1983 to 49 percent in 1997. The share of Hans in the population was halted, with a slight drop to 38 percent in 1990. There were also affirmative-action policies passed to favour the economic mobility of Uyghur farmers and the unemployed from the countryside to the cities of the region. Finally, the higher economic output helped spread wealth all over the region and increase the standard of living of its inhabitants (Mackerras 2001: 290; Millward 2004: 7-8). Obviously, all these policies were implemented in a highly authoritarian political setting, but it is clear that Chinese decision-makers did not aim to exterminate the Uyghurs.

The second factor is related to the problems the same nationalist movement faced. During the '60s and '70s, there were some episodes of ethnic unrest in Xinjiang, but without cementing it into a clandestine movement. The absence of a first-wave nationalist movement whose structures maintain the separatist ideology alive hindered the chances of second-wave militants. As



noted above, many Uyghurs collaborated with the regime without renouncing their specific ethnic traits – such as language and religion. For them, to be Uyghurs and accept Chinese rule were not incompatible. This explains why a number of several tiny nationalist armed organizations that emerged in the early '90s targeted coethnics uppermost, in order to create polarization and force the state to over-react. Although the Chinese government somehow turned to a more assimilationist policy in that decade, with a renewal of Han immigration and a larger oversight on regional budgets (Becquelin 2000: 67), repression never became openly indiscriminate and nationalist violence did never escalate (Millward 2004).<sup>9</sup> Therefore, despite being a brutal dictatorship, China seems to have avoided nationalist insurgencies in Xinjiang with a combination of decentralized representation and centralized policy-making that resembles the Italian case we have analyzed in this dissertation.

In India, finally, it is normally assumed that whereas the dominant Congress Party has been able to nationalize politics at the country-wide elections, local issues control the agenda at the state-wide level (Chhibber and Kollman 2004: 194-208). India is formally a federal country, and its composing units (states) have several powers. However, when the country became linguistically federalized in 1956, the Sikhs did not get their own state, despite being one of the constitutionally recognized languages. The Sikhs, enclosed within the former Punjab state, made up around one third of the population –compared to 60 percent of Hindi speakers. The Indian government did not seem very concerned about responding

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<sup>9</sup> This assimilationist turn could be in the root of the July communal riots in Urumqi. As this city comprises mainly Chinese Han (around 75 percent of its population, compared to 16 percent Uyghur), Uyghur rioters could have put their growing realization of the Han-led demographic overtaking in the region on top of their direct exposure to job market discrimination. However, as noted before, it is not clear yet if this instance of communal violence will escalate into a more organized separatist insurgency.

to Sikhs' demands of statehood -perhaps the fact that they were 25 million speakers in a 1 billion country could have something to do.

Sikh reaction involved a large campaign of demonstrations and rallies in the 1960s led by the main Sikh party. The campaign was articulated around linguistic demands rather than religious ones, since there were many Punjabi Hindus who knew the language but did not share the Sikh faith. After some unrest, they won their own state in 1966 by dividing former Punjab into two new states: Haryana and Punjab proper, the second being Sikh-dominated (Judge 2005). In the late 1970s, the dominant party in Delhi, the Congress, triggered a new centralizing drive.<sup>10</sup> Sikhs very quickly resumed their complaints, but this time they framed them in economic terms around water disputes. Demographically, the new Punjab had a tiny Sikh majority, so the main Sikh party needed votes from the Hindu community living in the state (around 40 percent of the population), since not all Sikhs voted for the nationalist party (Bakke 2009).

In this a scenario where state institutions remained reluctant to concede, more radical ethnic nationalists emerged, demanding stronger protection for the Sikh culture, and engaging themselves in sectarian encounters against Hindi radicals. The combination of the reluctance of state institutions to concede and the existence of Sikh communities whose political loyalty went to the Congress party could have encouraged Sikh radicals to openly use violence. Still, they did not call for secession. The Golden Temple incident was the watershed event. In 1984 Sikh militants flooded into the Golden Temple, a Sikh holy place, to defend their leader, who had been staying there in order to avoid being arrested for four years. Under allegations of hiding weapons and terrorists, the Military raided the sanctuary, killing around 500 Sikh militants. The subsequent repression was countered by open violence from the nationalists' ranks, whose main goal now was overtly the creation

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<sup>10</sup> According to Chhibber, the emergence of separatism in Punjab was due to the machinations of the Congress Party to divide the regionalist party and increase its electoral vote (Chhibber 1999: 178).

of a new state, called Khalistan. The brutal fight that ended with the crushing of the Sikh insurgency resembled more a guerrilla war than a terrorist conflict. Yet, there remains room to hypothesize that the two mechanisms discussed throughout this dissertation were in some ways at work here: states without collaborators at the regional level trying to fight radicals willing to use violence to create their own support constituency.

There is no doubt that guerrilla-like insurgencies create their own dynamics of the conflict, as was the case in Kosovo and Punjab. Territorial control has a large impact on the patterns of recruitment in civil wars and therefore on the development of the conflict. Besides, state weakness favours the intervention of third actors, which usually modifies actors' constraints as well as their goals. Other specific features, such as the ideological leanings of the nationalist groups, and the tradition of armed unrest in the country, can impact upon the emergence of violent challenges in developing countries too. Still, the factors leading to these nationalist-led internal conflicts have also been broadly related to unresponsiveness and mobilization. Developing countries can take some lessons from this evidence. Although dictatorships seem to have more leverage in trying to suppress political disidney, efforts from state decision-makers to remain regionally competitive could be more important for deterring nationalist violence in the long run.

## APPENDIX

### Additional tables to Chapter 3

Table A.3.1. Dataset matrix

region	state	dv1	dv2	popshare	Gdp gap	natives	langfam	majority	autonomy	matching	Elections
Flanders	belgium	1.39	0.00	56.50	1.00	86.00	2	1	0	0.26	61-65-68
Walloon	belgium	0.00	0.00	32.75	0.83	83.00	10	1	0	0.74	61-65-68
Scotland	great britain	2.48	0.00	9.26	0.96	96.00	2	1	1	0.43	64-66-70
Northern Ireland	great britain	10.63	11.06	2.74	0.77	47.74	2	0	2.5	0	64-66-70
Wales	great britain	0.00	0.00	4.97	0.98	88.00	2	1	1	0.13	64-66-70
Faroe	denmark	0.00	0.00	0.79	0.72	95.00	6	0	4	0	70-74-78
Greenland	denmark	0.00	0.00	0.98	0.46	80.76	1	1	1	0.61	79-83-84
Aaland	finland	0.00	0.00	0.48	1.29	96.00	1	0	3	0	72-75-79
French Catalonia	france	0.00	0.00	0.57	0.75	85.48	6	1	0.5	0.37	68-73-78
Fr. Basque Country	france	4.25	2.56	1.01	0.87	91.68	1	1	0.5	0.35	68-73-78
Corsica	france	11.03	7.24	0.43	0.84	55.00	4	0	0	0.21	68-73-78
Alsatia	france	0.00	0.00	2.88	1.07	75.00	2	1	0	0.19	68-73-78
Brittany	france	5.95	0.69	4.94	0.74	72.00	2	1	0	0.77	68-73-78

Table A.3.1. Dataset matrix (continues)

region	state	dv1	dv2	popshare	Gdp gap	natives	langfam	majority	autonomy	matching	Elections
Friuli	italy	0.00	0.00	2.22	1.13	91.00	6	1	1.5	0.96	72-76-79
Aosta	italy	0.00	0.00	0.20	1.48	61.00	2	0	2.5	0	72-76-79
South Tyrol	italy	8.39	4.63	1.55	1.09	70.00	2	0	0	0	58-63-68
West Frisia	netherlands	0.00	0.00	4.08	0.75	89.00	6	1	1.5	0.2	67-71-72
Sardinia	italy	0.00	0.00	2.76	0.75	80.00	4	1	2.5	0.88	72-76-79
Spanish Catalonia	spain	3.87	3.43	15.65	1.21	75.00	8	1	1	0.63	77-79-82-86
Sp. Basque Count.	spain	9.93	10.29	5.73	1.25	73.00	1	0	0	0	65-75
Galicia	spain	4.74	1.61	7.66	0.85	94.00	6	1	2.5	0.66	77-79-82-86
Jura	switzerland	4.65	0.00	1.06	0.79	91.00	2	1	0	0.37	67-71-75
Bavaria	germany	0.00	0.00	17.52	0.98	80.00	6	0	3	0.38	72-76-80
Canary Islands	spain	5.16	0.69	3.59	0.98	90.00	10	1	0	0.5	77-79-82-86
Lombardy	italy	0.00	0.00	15.77	1.29	77.00	5	1	2	0.93	83-87-92
Venetia	italy	0.00	0.00	7.65	1.03	78.00	6	1	2	0.29	83-87-92
Sicily	italy	0.00	0.00	8.65	0.71	94.00	6	1	2.5	0.33	83-87-92
Quebec	canada	7.10	3.58	22.16	0.89	78.00	2	0	2	0.4	62-63-65-68
Madeira	portugal	0.69	0.00	2.63	1.17	92.00	8	1	3	0.34	75-76-79
Azores	portugal	1.10	0.00	2.48	0.82	96.00	8	1	1.5	0.53	75-76-79

*Table A.3.2. Variable correlations*

	<i>dv1</i>	<i>dv2</i>	<i>autonomy</i>	<i>Natives</i>	<i>Population share</i>	<i>GDP gap</i>	<i>Linguistic gap</i>	<i>majority</i>	<i>matching</i>	<i>Potential</i>
<i>dv1</i>	1									
<i>dv2</i>	0.875*	1								
<i>autonomy</i>	-0.368*	-0.181	1							
<i>natives</i>	-0.519*	-0.639*	0.167	1						
<i>Population share</i>	-0.103	-0.108	-0.174	0.044	1					
<i>GDP gap</i>	-0.034	0.061	0.076	-0.146	0.069	1				
<i>linguistic gap</i>	-0.289	-0.289	0.157	0.288	0.11	-0.051	1			
<i>majority</i>	-0.395*	-0.535*	-0.364*	0.314	0.182	-0.337	0.29	1		
<i>matching</i>	-0.246	-0.368*	-0.089	0.225	0.175	-0.184	0.396*	0.626*	1	
<i>potential</i>	0.269	0.401*	0.238	-0.344	0.033	0.121	-0.231	-0.370*	-0.178	1

\* denotes significant at the 1 percent level at least.

*Table A.3.3. Cut points for dichotomizing variables*

variables	cut points	value
majority	Not nec.	1
autonomy	>1.49	1
natives	<79	1
potential	>0.15	1
violence (dv1)	>2.54	1
deadly violence (dv2)	>5 deaths	1

Table A.3.4. Data on contested regions in Western Europe (plus Quebec)

name	majority	autonomy	natives	polarization	dv1	dv2
Flanders	1	0	0	0	0	0
Walloon	1	0	0	0	0	0
Scotland	1	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Ireland	0	1	1	1	1	1
Wales	1	0	0	0	0	0
Faroe	0	1	0	0	0	0
Greenland	1	0	0	0	0	0
Aaland	0	1	0	0	0	0
French Catalonia	1	0	0	0	0	0
Fr. Basque Country	1	0	0	0	1	0
Corsica	0	0	1	0	1	1
Alsatia	1	0	1	0	0	0
Brittany	1	0	1	0	1	0
Friuli	1	1	0	0	0	0
Aosta	0	1	1	0	0	0
South Tyrol	0	0	1	0	1	1
Sardinia	1	1	0	0	0	0
West Frisia	1	1	0	0	0	0
Spanish Catalonia	1	0	1	1	1	0
Sp. Basque Country	0	0	1	1	1	1
Galicia	1	1	0	0	1	0
Jura	1	0	0	1	1	0
Bavaria	0	1	0	1	0	0
Canary Islands	1	0	0	0	1	0
Lombardy	1	1	1	0	0	0
Venetia	1	1	1	0	0	0
Sicily	1	1	0	0	0	0
Quebec	0	1	1	1	1	1
Madeira	1	1	0	0	0	0
Azores	1	1	0	0	0	0



**Additional figures to Chapter 4**

*Figure A.4.1. Correlation between 1936 ERC votes and 1980 PSC votes in Catalonia*

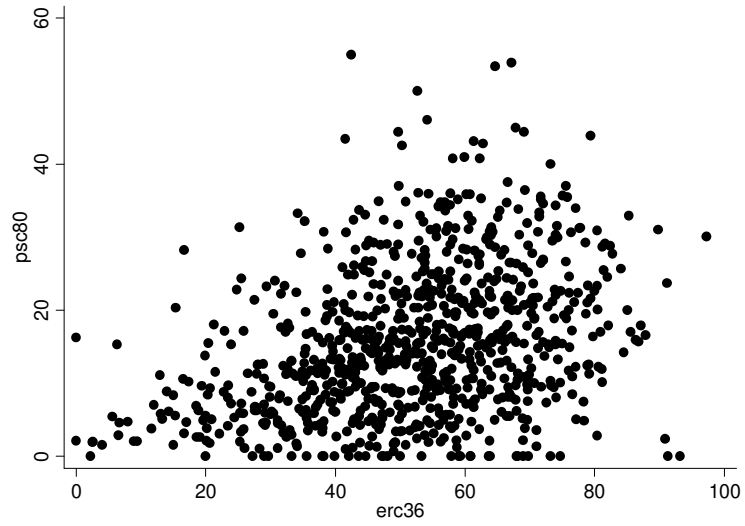


Figure A.4.2. Correlation between 1931 Lliga votes and 1980 CiU votes in Catalonia

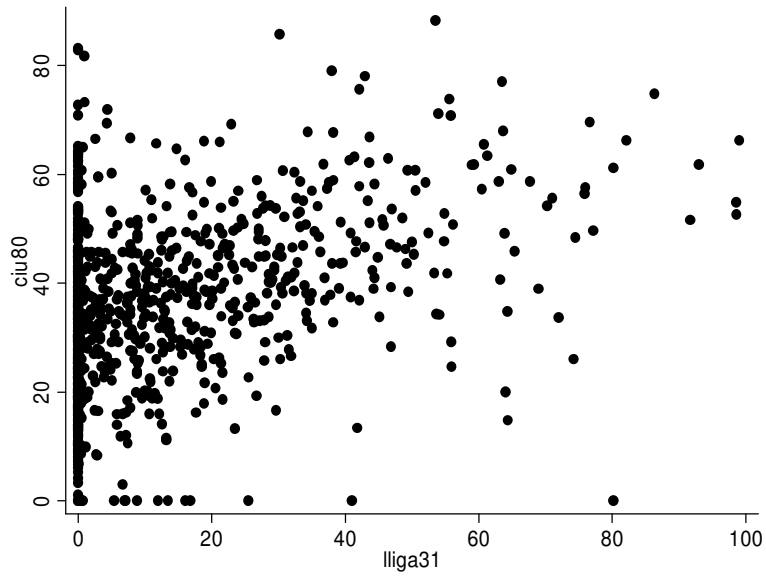


Figure A.4.3. Correlation between 1933 Carlist votes and 1980 Abertzale votes in Gipuzkoa (Orexa is not included)

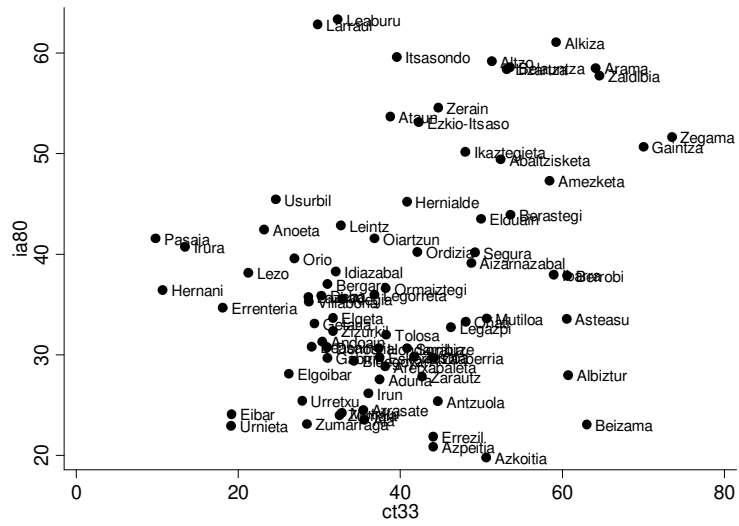


Figure A.4.4. Correlations between 1933 Carlist votes and 1980 Abertzale votes in Alava (Zalduondo is not included)

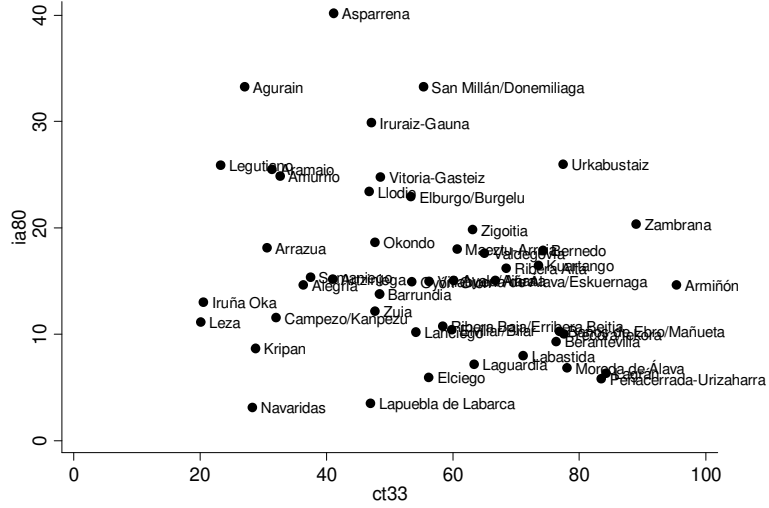
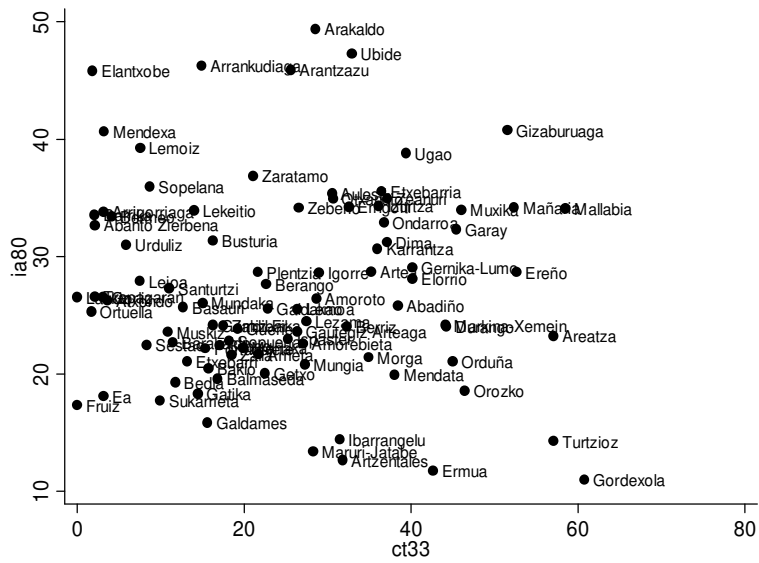


Figure A.4.5. Correlation between 1933 Carlist votes and 1980 Abertzale votes in Bizkaia (Lanestosa is not included)



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