

CATALONIA IS A COUNTRY: WORLD HERITAGE  
AND REGIONAL NATIONALISM

by

MATTHEW WORTH LANDERS

A THESIS

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“Catalonia Is a Country: World Heritage and Regional Nationalism,” a thesis prepared by Matthew Worth Landers in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in the Department of Geography. This thesis has been approved and accepted by:

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Dr. Alexander B. Murphy, Chair of the Examining Committee

*March 9, 2010*

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Date

Committee in Charge:      Dr. Alexander B. Murphy, Chair  
   Dr. Xiaobo Su

Accepted by:

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Dean of the Graduate School

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## An Abstract of the Thesis of

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Title: CATALONIA IS A COUNTRY: WORLD HERITAGE AND REGIONAL  
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Alexander B. Murphy

Since 1975, the Spanish autonomous region of Catalonia has been renegotiating its political and cultural place within Spain. The designation and promotion of places within Catalonia as World Heritage Sites—a matter over which regional authorities have competency—provides insights into the national and territorial ideas that have emerged in recent decades. This study of the selection and portrayal of World Heritage sites by Turisme de Catalunya shows that the sites reflect a view of the region as 1) home to a distinct cultural group, 2) a place with an ancient past, and 3) a place with a history of territorial autonomy. These characteristics suggest that even though many Catalan regionalists seek a novel territorial status that is neither independent of nor subservient to the Spanish state, the dominant territorial norms of the modern state system continue to be at the heart of the Catalan nation-building project.

## CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME OF AUTHOR: Matthew Worth Landers

PLACE OF BIRTH: New York City, NY

DATE OF BIRTH: September 24, 1984

## GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOLS ATTENDED:

University of Oregon, Eugene, OR  
Macalester College, St. Paul, MN

## DEGREES AWARDED:

Master of Arts, Geography, 2010, University of Oregon  
Bachelor of Arts, Geography, 2006, Macalester College

## AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST:

Political Geography  
National Identity and Nationalism  
European Union

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Graduate Teaching Fellow, Department of Geography, University of Oregon,  
2007-2010

Graduate Research Fellow, Department of Geography, University of Oregon,  
2008-2009

## GRANTS, AWARDS AND HONORS:

Bill Loy Award for Excellence in Cartographic Design, "World Heritage  
Imbalance", University of Oregon, 2009

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DEDICATION

For my grandparents and godparents

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

*Catalonia is Carolingian, Mediterranean and peninsular, although only while it chooses to be. Past, present and future intertwine. The example of the ambitious Catalonia of the past is only valid now if its citizens feel the same ambition and look to the future. We have known how to conserve the heritage and language of the founding fathers of the Catalan nation. We must remain loyal to their spirit. We must be the custodians of the country they began to build. And we must make ourselves known to the world and to future generations.*

- Jordi Pujol (2010)

On September 16, 2009, the inhabitants of the town of Arenys de Munt voted on the question “Do you agree that Catalonia should become a social, democratic, and independent state within the European Union?” The Constitutional Court ruled that the vote ran contrary to the Spanish Constitution, and so the town government was prohibited from allowing the campaign to use public buildings and resources. Popular pressure assured that the unofficial, non-binding vote went ahead. Since then, nearly four hundred more municipalities have held the same referendum, with 95% voting “yes” (Coordinadora per la Consulta).

While there was an overwhelming result for the affirmative, the poll is deceiving; separatism does not actually enjoy widespread political support in Catalonia. The largest Spanish and Catalan political parties boycotted the referendum, which in the end received only 27% turnout. The vote was held mostly in the rural communities outside of the Barcelona metropolitan region, which is home to approximately 70% of the population of

Catalonia, including the majority of non-ethnic Catalans. Nonetheless, this shows that the status of Catalonia is being actively debated and negotiated more than thirty years after the return to democracy. The Constitutional Court has remained deadlocked for several months regarding a legal challenge to the 2006 reform of the Catalan Statute of Autonomy which explicitly defines the region as a nation within Spain.

Catalonia, as one of seventeen autonomous communities, has been renegotiating its political and cultural place within democratic Spain since the late 1970s. Half a century of Francoist efforts to eliminate the peripheral nationalist identities in Spain were reversed, and Catalonia very quickly began to reassert itself. Nationalist parties have received the largest share of the vote in every regional election since the return to democracy. The Generalitat de Catalunya, or regional government, has taken an active role in promoting a Spain of the Autonomies and a Europe of the Regions, seeing both as a way for Catalonia increasingly to act for itself in those geographical spheres.

There is a general consensus around the objective of obtaining the highest degree of self-rule possible within the context of the Spanish state (Castells 1997; Keating 2002; Payne 2004). The current President of the Generalitat, José Montilla of the *Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya* (PSC), has been quoted as saying that Catalonia “is a nation within the nation of nations that is Spain” (Prieto 2006). The largest political parties of Catalonia, *Covergència i Unió* (CiU) and the PSC are in agreement of Catalonia’s special position that is somewhere between simply an autonomous region of Spain and a sovereign state. Former President Jordi Pujol of CiU insists that Catalonia is a nation without its own state, and that Catalonia peacefully exists within the Spanish state

without secessionist ambitions (Pujol i Soley 1996, 251). There are plenty of disagreements between Catalans over the appropriate courses of action to follow, but the dominant consensus is that the region should continue to press for increasing political devolution without advocating for independence.

The designation and promotion of places within Catalonia as World Heritage Sites provides insights into the national and territorial ideas that have emerged in recent decades. With that in mind, what does the World Heritage process tell us about how the Generalitat is advancing a particular image of Catalan identity? To what extent are the World Heritage initiatives of the Generalitat influenced by long-standing dominant political-territorial ideas about representing a nation and its past? While seeking a novel territorial status that is not subservient to Spain, but at the same time not fully independent, the dominant territorial norms of the modern state system remain at the heart of the Generalitat's nation-building project. These norms are reflected in the publications of Turisme de Catalunya, the Generalitat's tourism board, particularly in the presentation of cultural heritage and World Heritage.

Anssi Paasi (1997; 2003) writes that a major survival strategy for a state is the endless promotion of the practices and discourses of nation and national identity, with identity serving as a key for political geographers to understand ethnoregionalism, nationalism, and citizenship. Therefore it is crucial to reflect how discourses and representation of national identity are created and whose stories dominate the narratives through which the nation is represented. Murphy (2002, 194) argues that the historical construction of peoplehood – of a nation – should be complemented by studies focused

on the construction of the territorial ideologies central to how nations and nation-states view themselves. The establishment of the autonomous communities reflecting the peripheral nationalities of Spain has allowed the substate administrative regions to be construed as territorial foci for national identity (Murphy 1989). Most nations have landscapes which are of significance in their iconography (Meinig 1979); therefore examining how the meanings of these places are assembled and disseminated is important for understanding how national groups imagine themselves. Tangible cultural representation, such as that appearing in tourism brochures, deserves serious examination by scholars.

UNESCO's World Heritage designation is not just a title; rather it is the "key element in a more ambitious placemaking strategy designed to rearrange the geopolitical landscape into a reconceptualization of the world" (Di Giovine 2009, 6). World Heritage designation, while ostensibly geared toward increasing intercultural understandings and fostering peace, has a more practical and immediate function as a prime tourist brand. Tourism images are strongly linked to the establishment and maintenance of what Benedict Anderson terms the "imagined community" (Anderson 1983; Jokela forthcoming). Michael Urry (1995, 2) adds that national identity is produced partly out of the images constructed or reproduced for tourists. Tourist brochures present a consciously selected narrative to explain to visitors the history and significance of a destination. In this case, the process through which the brochures and signage aim to depict a particular reality is more important than whether or not those texts contain true or false statements (Silverman 2000). Memory and heritage are necessarily limited and

selective, and therefore are conceived differently by almost everyone. Multiple interpretations have the potential to lend themselves to contested claims.

The focus of this research is on the specific messages that are published by Generalitat and the image these messages create of Catalonia. Consider the following statement:

There are clear parallels between Catalonia's periods of splendor and the proximity of Catalan art forms to those predominant elsewhere in Europe: classical art when Hispania Tarraconensis became one of the foremost provinces in the Roman empire; Romanesque art at the time of Catalonia's birth as a nation; Gothic art and the great medieval and pre-Renaissance literature when Catalonia dominated the Western Mediterranean; and Modernism – Catalan Art Nouveau – in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the time of Catalonia's national rebirth and the rise of its industrial bourgeoisie. (*The Seal of Quality*)

In this single paragraph, each of Catalonia's World Heritage Sites is listed in a concise version of the region's history, including the point when Catalonia first could be considered a single territorial unit and the nationalist revivals of the late eighteenth century. The golden ages of the country are mentioned, informing the reader that Catalonia has long been an important member of the Mediterranean world. Turisme de Catalunya highlights connections with Europe, an integral part of many conceptions of Catalan identity. Inscription on the World Heritage List is undoubtedly a partly political process, as heritage sites are widely recognized as representing the attitudes of a particular time, place and perspective (Beck 2006). As Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2005, 506) note "any consideration of the fundamental geographical idea of sense of place must include the deliberate creation of such senses through place marketing."



### Methods

A suite of qualitative methods was used to examine the manner in which the Generalitat represents itself, its history, and its territory. Brochures and tourist pamphlets were collected from the London office of Catalunya de Turisme as well as the bureau's central office in Barcelona. The focus of the brochures varied widely, including those solely promoting the six Catalan World Heritage Sites, those promoting cultural tourism in all of Catalonia, and to those promoting the region as a whole to a wide audience. Touristic publications are recognized as playing a role in the production and reproduction of national identity (Urry 1995, Jokela forthcoming), and thus the images and text presented in the Turisme de Catalunya brochures are vehicles for the Generalitat to communicate its ideas of what Catalonia is to its own citizens, to other Spaniards and to foreigners. Promotional brochures and pamphlets serve as narrative texts in the process of place creation (Beck 2006), with a particular point of view being given an official status. With limited space available, the most important messages must be determined and presented up front. The text and accompanying images focus the attention of visitors on particular details that might not otherwise have been noticed or perceived as significant.

Field work for this project was carried out in the spring of 2009. Site visits to the Catalan World Heritage Sites included participating in official tours, conducting semi-structured interviews with site managers and tour guides, and comparing of the presentations of the monuments in the brochures and on-site presentation. Additional semi-structured interviews were held with officials from Turisme de Catalunya, as well

as others from the Catalan Ministry of Culture, to gain a clearer understanding of the actions of the Generalitat.

Each of the autonomous communities has its own department of tourism and its own plans for attracting visitors (Ivars Baidal 2004), represented by Turisme de Catalunya in Catalonia. Turisme de Catalunya was a public consortium of tourist boards at various scales (regional, provincial, county, municipal), funded entirely by transfers from the Generalitat. Along with the directors of heritage from the other sixteen communities, the Generalitat sent a representative to the regularly convened meetings of the Spanish Ministry of Culture at the *Consejo del Patrimonio Histórico* to discuss plans for getting sites on either the Tentative List or the World Heritage List (Hernández Herrero 2009). In October 2009, after all the field work for this project had been completed, the consortium was remodeled as a public-private enterprise called the Agència Catalana de Turisme. It remains to be seen if or how this organizational change may shift the messages included in the regional promotional publications.

### Thesis Structure

Chapter II provides a geographical context for Catalonia, examining how notions of Catalonia as a distinctive territorial and cultural unit arose over the last two thousand years. Chapter III explores theories of nationalism and heritage, as well as how and why they are commonly used in the construction of national identity. A case study of the Catalan World Heritage Sites is presented in Chapter IV, laying out how each is perceived as representative of Catalonia. This study of the selection and portrayal of

World Heritage sites by Turisme de Catalunya shows that the sites reflect a view of the region as 1) home to a distinct cultural group, 2) a place with an ancient past, and 3) a place with a history of territorial autonomy. The geographical vocabulary of the modern state system is employed to justify and legitimate Catalonia's present-day position within the Kingdom of Spain. Conclusions and several implications of this study are presented in Chapter V.

## CHAPTER II

### CONTEXTUALIZING CATALONIA

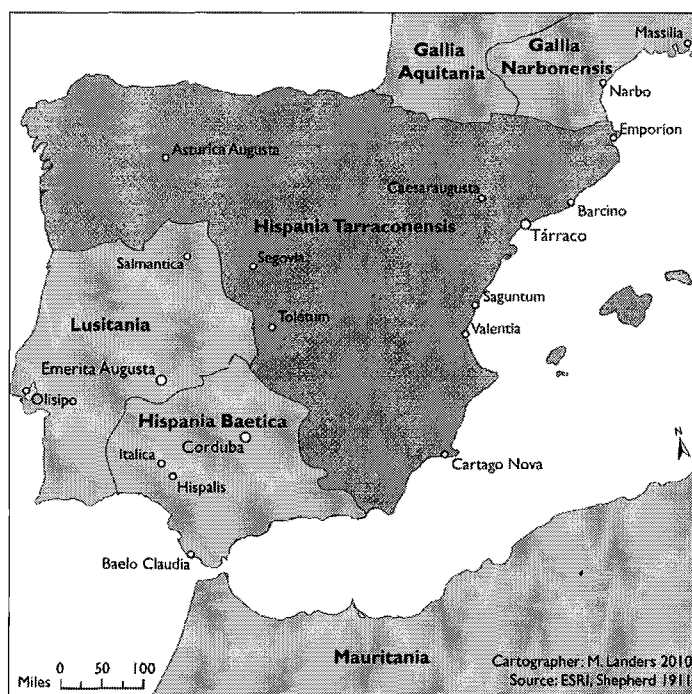
In order to understand Catalonia's positioning of itself and its current territorial status, its past must be examined. The region's historical trajectory has given rise to two important modern positions: that Catalonia has a sense of being a territory apart from the rest of Spain and that Catalans have a sense of cultural distinctiveness. There are still many visible reminders of the geographical and cultural divisions of medieval Spain. Not only has a history as a separate people shaped the Catalans, but in many ways the attempts to assimilate them into a broader Spanish nation have been equally foundational. The regional Statute of Autonomy, widely referred to as the *Estatut*, is positioned as only the latest in a long line of charters recognizing the distinguished personality of Catalonia, which holds a unique position within the continuously evolving Spain of the Autonomies. To set the stage for the discussion in the following chapters, it is important to understand where these positions came from.

#### Catalonia as a Political and Territorial Unit

Catalonia's borders have remained largely unchanged over the last 800 years. This territorial longevity has caused a deep-seated geographical identity to develop. Many Catalan claims to civilization, however, reach back to the classical Mediterranean, before Catalonia was yet Catalonia. While much of the Iberian Peninsula was populated

by various Celtic and Iberian tribes through the second century BCE, the region entered into recorded history with the establishment of the Greek colonies at Emporion (Empúries) and Rhodes (Roses), in the sixth century BCE. The westernmost Phocaen settlements, Emporion and Rhodes were small and relatively unremarkable aside from the fact that they were the only Greek colonies in northern Iberia (Hughes 1992). The area first gained significant political and economic power under the Romans. Sparked by Hannibal's crossing of the Alps, the Second Punic War resulted in the establishment of Roman hegemony over the Western Mediterranean. The legions of Scipio Africanus landed in Emporion and conquered southward, eventually succeeding in evicting the Carthaginians from the entire Iberian Peninsula after the Battle of Ilipa in 206 BCE.

Former military camps were converted into the colonies of Tàrraco (modern Tarragona) and Barcino (Barcelona). Tàrraco became the administrative capital of the



**Figure 2.1** Roman Spain

new province of Hispania Citerior, later renamed Hispania Tarraconensis (see figure 2.1). The Romans established a network of cities, roads, and irrigation systems, and they brought new crops, tools, and techniques with them. This rich classical history remains a source of pride for many

Catalans. Ancient Greece and Rome are frequently seen as the basis of Western civilization. The presence of some of the best-preserved Greek and Roman ruins in Spain remains a point of pride for many Catalans.

As with much of the Mediterranean world, Hispania Tarraconensis suffered during the collapse of the Roman Empire, experiencing widespread destruction and urban depopulation as the economic, social, and political systems broke down as Germanic tribes such as the Visigoths moved against the crumbling Empire. The Visigoths left little physical mark in Catalonia, although they ruled the area from Tolosa and Toledo between the fifth and early eighth centuries. The Moors, landing in Gibraltar in 711, quickly established control over the vast majority of the Iberian Peninsula, as well as reaching into Septimania and central France within seven years. Pushing back against the Umayyad caliphate, Charlemagne established the Spanish March south of the Pyrenees at the very end of the eighth century as a buffer zone between the Frankish kingdom and the Moors. Jordi Pujol considers Catalonia's Carolingian origins as a defining characteristic of the region:

Catalonia was born as the Spanish March, as a southern bastion of the Carolingian Empire, which was the Europe of the era. On the other hand, Asturias<sup>1</sup> was born marked by the Visigothic legacy. The goal of Catalonia was to protect the southern flank of Carolingian Europe; that of Asturias, on the other hand, was to reconquer Toledo and reestablish the unity of the Visigothic monarchy... The idea that inspired the birth of Catalonia is not peninsular, it is not Hispanic, but rather Carolingian, it comes from the North, and its goal, I repeat, is not the reconquest; at least that is not its principal goal, it is not its *raison d'être*. (Pujol i Soley 1991, 12).

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<sup>1</sup> Asturias was the precursor to the kingdoms of León and Castilla.

The various counts of the Spanish March did manage to prevent the Moors from again reaching the Pyrenees. Count Guifré *el Pelós* (“the Hairy”) of Barcelona consolidated most of the distinct counties of the Spanish March in the 870s, uniting them for the first time under a single ruler. Feudal ties with the Franks were later severed under Count Borrell II around 988, marking the establishment of the first Catalan state according to many modern Catalans. It is from this point that Catalonia is truly situated as a discrete territorial unit.

The Counts of Barcelona controlled several counties along the Mediterranean and up into the Pyrenees, but Catalonia had not yet assumed its modern form. In 1137, Count Ramon Berenguer IV married Queen Petronella of Aragon, bringing together their respective realms in a dynastic union. As Petronella had a higher lineage and grander title, Ramon Berenguer took his wife’s family name and the title of Prince<sup>2</sup>, allowing Barcelona to be subsumed under what came to be known as the Crown of Aragon.<sup>3</sup> Although Aragon gave the union its name and the official capital (Zaragoza), Barcelona remained the largest city as well as economic and administrative center of the realm for its whole existence.

Under the Crown of Aragon, Catalonia took what John Payne (2004, 47) calls its “Mediterranean turn.” No longer content to be a domain centered within the protected valleys and foothills of the Pyrenees, the Catalans began to expand outwards. King Jaume I *el Conqueridor* famously and bloodily took Valencia and Mallorca from the

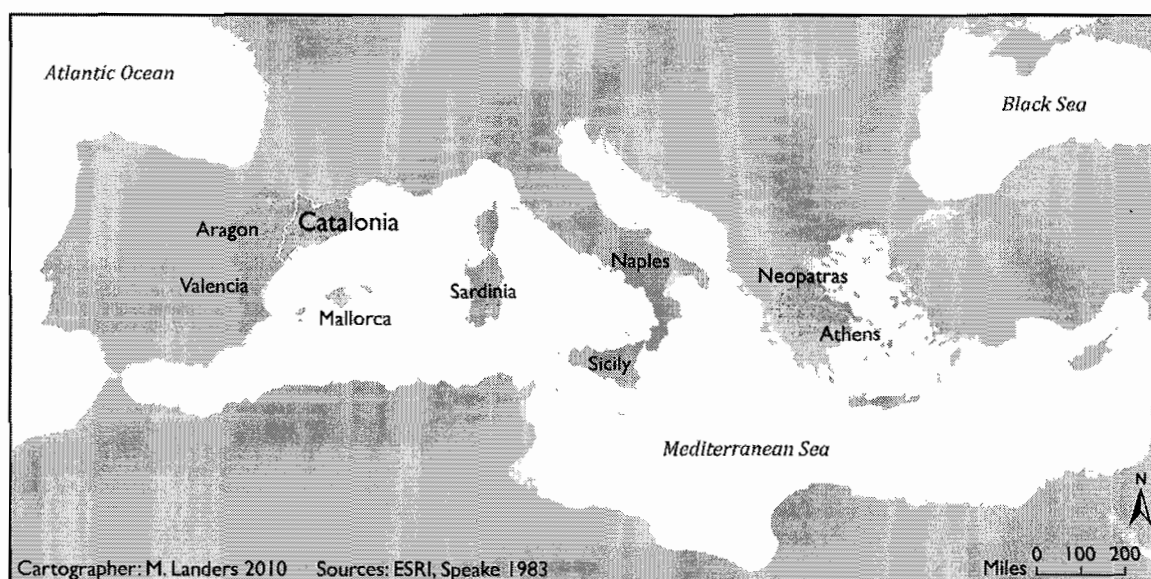
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<sup>2</sup> Ramon Berenguer’s new title points to the origins of the tendency to refer to Catalonia proper as *el Principat*.

<sup>3</sup> The Crown of Aragon is frequently referred to as the Crown of Catalonia-Aragon or the Catalan-Aragonese Confederation by some Catalan scholars.

Moors, with both becoming constituent kingdoms alongside Aragon and Catalonia. As shown in figure 2.2., subsequent kings spread their reach throughout the western Mediterranean, adding by conquest or marriage the rest of the Balearic Islands, Sardinia, the Kingdom of Sicily, the Kingdom of Naples, and the duchies of Athens and Neopatras (Casey 1979; Bisson 1986). This multilingual, multiethnic thalassalocracy was a powerful force in the Mediterranean in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, with Catalan serving as a language of commerce and diplomacy in the western parts of the sea. The Generalitat was first established as the chief governing institution of Catalonia after the king in the mid-1300s.

After decades of social unrest, repeated waves of the plague, and subsequent economic decline, Ferdinand (Ferran, in Catalan) II of Aragon was married off by his father to Queen Isabella of Castilla in 1469 in the interest of stability. The dynastic union between Isabella and Ferdinand not only created the first unified Kingdom of Spain, but



**Figure 2.2** Maximum extent of the Crown of Aragon in the fourteenth century



also irrevocably changed the lands of the Crown of Aragon. With Columbus' arrival in the Americas in 1492, Iberia shifted its focus from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic and beyond. While allowed to maintain their own traditional laws and customs, the Aragonese lands were at the same time forbidden from engaging in trade with New Spain, which were exclusively Castilian colonies. This shut out Catalonia from the massive influx of riches from New Spain, which quickly spread out across Europe with the Habsburgs'<sup>4</sup> many military endeavors across Europe.

In response to financial pressures brought on by the Thirty Years War, King Felipe IV's chief minister, the Conduque de Olivares, sought to impose a uniform set of laws and taxes across all of Spain. Resentful of conscription and quartering troops, the Catalan peasantry revolted in the *Guerra dels Segadors* (1640-1652).<sup>5</sup> Pau Claris, the 94<sup>th</sup> president of the Generalitat, appealed to Louis XIII of France for assistance, the first of what John Payne (2004) notes was Catalonia's unfortunate tendency to "back the wrong horse." The French defeated a Habsburg army at Montjuïc, but departed just as quickly, leaving Barcelona to suffer a year-long siege. In the Treaty of the Pyrenees of 1652, France was given the counties of Rosselló (Roussillon), Conflent, Vallespir, and half of Cerdanya, amounting to approximately one-fifth of the Catalan population. Some Catalans continue to lament the severing of *Catalunya Nord* from the *Principat* and argue

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<sup>4</sup> Carlos I, the first single ruler of Spain, inherited a vast domain across Europe, including the Kingdom of Castilla, the Crown of Aragon, the Archduchy of Austria, and the Duchy of Burgundy. From his paternal grandfather, Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I, he inherited the Habsburg dynasty; from his maternal grandmother Duchess Mary, the Valois line; and from his maternal grandparents Isabella and Ferdinand the house of Trastámara.

<sup>5</sup> Which gave modern Catalonia its national anthem, *Els Segadors* ("the Reapers").

for the establishment of the *Països Catalans*<sup>6</sup> (see figure 2.3), although their calls have been largely unheeded and the borders of Catalonia have remained unchanged for the last 358 years.

The War of Spanish Succession (1705-1714) marks a major turning point in



**Figure 2.3** *Els Països Catalans*

<sup>6</sup>The *Països Catalans* (Catalan Countries) would include not only the *Principat* and *Catalunya Nord*, but any area seen as culturally Catalan, usually marked by the presence of native Catalan speakers. This encompasses the Valencian Community, the Balearic Islands, parts of eastern Aragón, a strip of northern Murcia, the Principality of Andorra, and the town of l'Alguer in Sardinia. As this irredentist vision ignores the linguistic and cultural diversity of the modern territories, many people in the other regions resent the perceived cultural dominance of the *Principat* and have little desire to enter into a hypothetical union based on the Crown of Aragón (Llobera 1989).

Catalonia's history. When King Carlos II died without an heir, the Austrian Habsburgs and the French Bourbons each put forth their own candidate and embroiled most of Europe in a protracted conflict over the Spanish throne. Despite supporting the Habsburgs over the French this time, Catalonia once again chose the losing side. Modern Catalonia's national holiday is September 11, marking the date that the Bourbon army finally captured and subjugated Barcelona (Hughes 1992; Payne 2004). Two years later, in 1716, Felipe V issued his *Nueva Planta* decrees abolishing the separate legal systems of the Spanish regions and setting up the first foundations for a unitary Spanish state. The Catalan constitutions, the Generalitat, and the universities were also abolished and the public use of the Catalan language was proscribed. Catalonia, which had enjoyed, at least in theory, a wide degree of self-government since its foundation, was now under the firm control of Madrid. While Catalonia's distinct political identity was taken away in 1716, it was not forgotten.

A period of economic and demographic recovery was followed by the Napoleonic wars, when Catalonia was incorporated into the First French Empire from 1808 to 1824.<sup>7</sup> For most of the nineteenth century, Spain experienced profound political instability, oscillating between liberal revolutions to autocracy, between dynasties, and between monarchy and republic (Alvarez Junco 1996). The Mancomunitat de Catalunya was established in 1914, marking the first official form of Catalan self-government since *Nueva Planta*. Reflecting the dominant artistic and cultural thinking of the time, the Mancomunitat was based on the "memory of a medieval past" (Keating 2001). General

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<sup>7</sup> As the *départements* of Sègre, Ter, Montserrat, and Bouches de l'Èbre.

Manuel Primo de Rivera, an avowed centralist, seized power in 1925, abolishing the Mancomunitat under his military dictatorship. Primo de Rivera was replaced by the Second Spanish Republic in 1931, but his sons went on to found the fascist *Falange* party.

Desperate to hold the Catalans as allies, the Republic restored the Generalitat and granted Catalonia its first *Estatut*. In the elections of 1936, the leftists and liberals won decisively, further enraging the right wing and the conservatives, who viewed any level of regional autonomy as a prelude to the intolerable breakup of the Spanish state. On July 18, 1936, the Spanish military garrison in Morocco led by General Francisco Franco rose up in the name of defending Christian Spain from the communist, anti-clerical, anarchist, and separatist machinations of the Republicans. Franco revered Primo de Rivera and had become leader of the *Falange* movement, and accordingly was stridently opposed to any recognition of regional autonomy.

Catalonia, with its new Statute of Autonomy, was firmly in the Republican camp during the Spanish Civil War. Barcelona was one of the last Republican strongholds to fall, and Catalonia suffered greatly at the hands of Franco. Once again, Catalonia's political identity was removed and violently suppressed. Catalonia as a unit ceased to exist within Spain. The fifty provinces were the only officially recognized territorial divisions, with Barcelona, Tarragona, Gerona, and Lérida replacing the previous autonomous government.

After the death of Franco in 1975, King Juan Carlos unexpectedly allowed the return to democracy and the ratification of a new liberal Constitution which recognized

the existence and autonomy of several historical nationalities of Spain, including Catalonia. Using the *Estatut* of the Second Republic and the historical privileges under the Crown of Aragon, the Generalitat and other Catalan political institutions were restored. The autonomous communities of Spain (see figure 2.4) have been granted significant ability to claim power over many aspects of governance within their own borders. Catalonia has its own regional police force and receives a large portion of its national taxes back from Madrid. Many other legal competencies are elaborated in the *Estatut*, which is detailed later in this chapter.

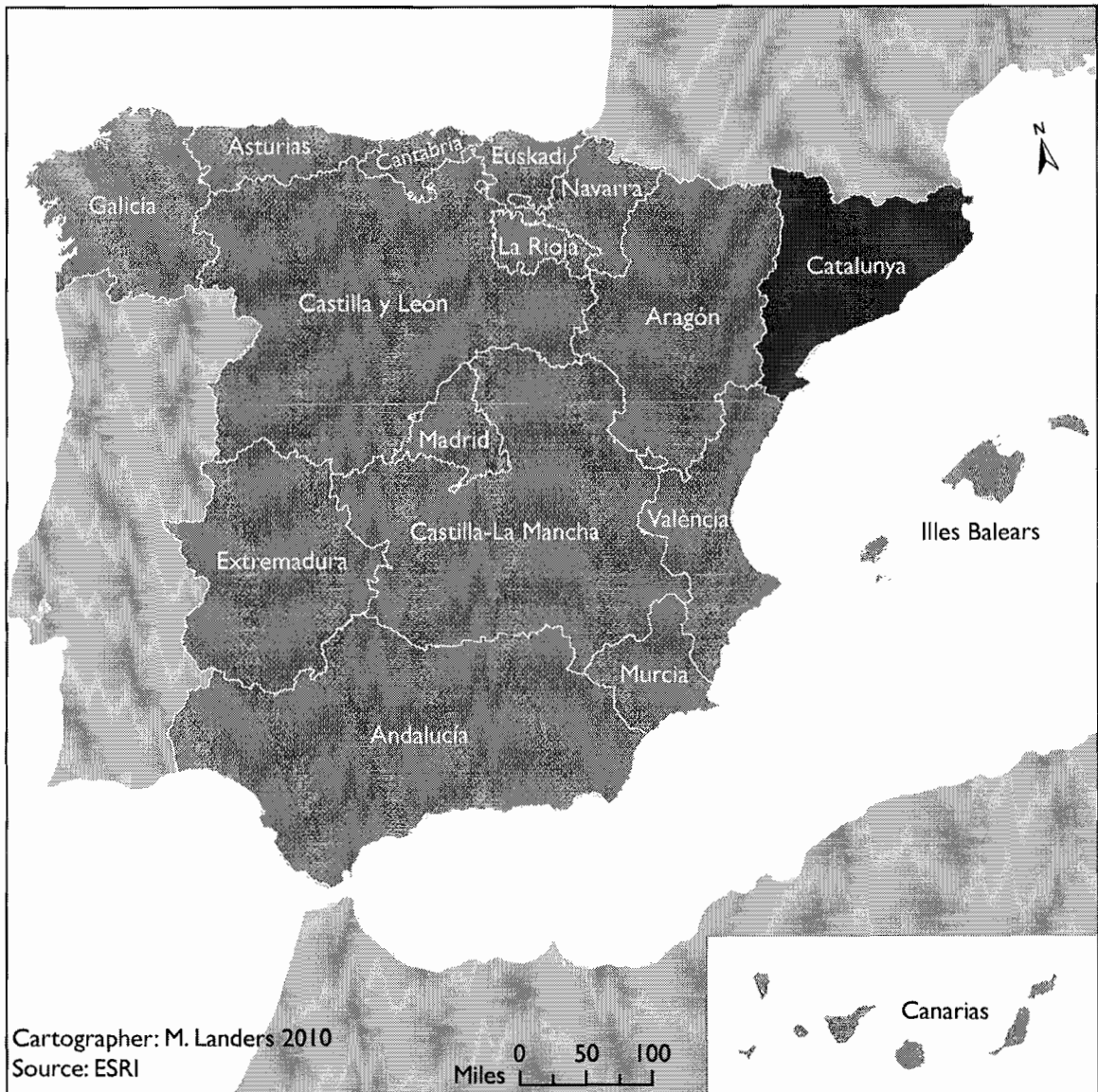
The political negotiation of Catalonia's place within a Spain of the Autonomies has not always been smooth. In 1981, reacting against the democratic reforms, Coronel Antonio Tejero took the Spanish parliament hostage and attempted a military coup, which ended quickly after King Juan Carlos forcefully denounced Tejero's actions. The rapid process of regional devolution was slowed, though, and the *café para todos* model<sup>8</sup> was adopted and all seventeen regions were granted equal rights to claim autonomy. The Spanish right wing, primarily represented by the *Partido Popular* (PP), has offered some concessions for recognizing the regional minorities, but draws the line at recognizing them as nations, a term they see as reserved exclusively for Spain itself. In general, the PP opposes further regional devolution and recognition of the *hecho diferencial*<sup>9</sup> of

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<sup>8</sup> Meaning "coffee for everyone," this model allowed all seventeen regions of Spain, not just the three identified as having an *hecho diferencial*, to claim autonomy. This allowed for regions which had no historical basis, such as Madrid and La Rioja, to make similar devolutionary demands as Catalonia and the Basque Country, angering regional nationalists who argued for a special status within the Spanish state.

<sup>9</sup> This term, loosely translated as "differentiated situation," was applied to Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia, the three regions with ratified or planned statutes of autonomy from the Second Republic. These three communities represent the most linguistic minorities of Spain, and the phrase draws on notions

Catalonia. Nonetheless, several Spanish administrations, including those of the PP, have relied on the parliamentary support of the center-right and moderate nationalist *Covergència i Unió* (CiU) party to form a governing coalition, giving Catalan politicians a degree of power to press for their demands at the state level.



**Figure 2.4** The Autonomous Communities of Spain (M. Landers 2010)

that their differentiation from Castilian Spain entitles them to a greater degree of self-rule than the other autonomous communities.

### Catalonia, a Country With Its Own Language and Culture

The development of distinct sense of cultural identity paralleled the political and territorial formation of Catalonia. Catalonia's links to the Carolingians are seen not only as a defining feature of its existence as a geographical unit, but also as a defining feature of Catalan cultural identity.

Catalonia is a country in which the Europeanist tradition is very old and very established. We have always been proud of being a country of Carolingian origin. And that dimension of our identity is for us much more important because, historically speaking, we are the only Carolingian country of Spain. (Pujol i Soley 1996, 253)

These historical origins of the region gave rise to an initial cultural distinction from the Asturians, Leonese and Castilians. As the Spanish March was being consolidated under the Counts of Barcelona, the Catalan language was gradually being codified. Each of the constituent realms of the Crown of Aragon, including the *Principat*, preserved their own rights and privileges while answering to a single monarch. This allowed a sense of Catalanness to be maintained as the *Principat* became subsumed into ever-larger political unions; for example, governing was conducted in the Catalan language by the Generalitat. As the Crown of Aragon expanded out across the Mediterranean, Catalan language and culture spread as well.

The tradition of recognizing regional legal privileges under the Aragonese Trastámaras was continued after the throne passed to the Habsburg dynasty of Carlos I. Enthroned in Toledo (and later Madrid), Spanish kings and queens had to separately swear to observe and uphold Catalan laws, along with those of Aragon, Valencia, Naples

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and Navarra (Casey 1979; Bisson 1986). However, as discussed earlier, once the Bourbons took the throne in 1714, they attempted to set up a centralized state along the lines of their native France with the *Nueva Planta* decrees. The regional laws and customs of Catalonia were abolished in favor of establishing a unified system of governance across Spain. Even as Catalonia's political identity was taken away, its cultural identity was maintained. In contrast to France, and despite the goals of the Bourbons, top-down nation-building was weak in Spain, allowing Catalonia and other regions to maintain their own identities (Alvarez Junco 1996; Sidaway 2000). The elites in Madrid never formed a single "imagined community" and invested little in education, encouraging the continued use of regional languages in a period when they might have been replaced by Castilian (Mansvelt Beck 2001).

The same decrees that abolished Catalan self-government also opened up the American colonies and the Philippines to all Spanish regions. The businessmen of rapidly industrializing Catalonia took advantage of these large protected markets and the favorable tariff system. As Catalonia was becoming the industrial center of Spain, it was simultaneously undergoing a cultural rebirth known as the *Renaixença*, which was based on German romantic nationalism. During the second half of the nineteenth century, similar movements sprouted up throughout Spain, emphasizing supposedly ahistorical, immutable markers such as race, spirit, culture and language; Galicians argued that they were a Celtic people, Basques fancied themselves the pristine European race, and Andalusians were marked by their mixed Christian-Moorish lineage (Angel and Mar-Molinero 1996). With the Romantic preoccupation with the past, Catalans gave



themselves a nationalist ideology which mythologized the past to provide a modern legitimacy (Llobera 1989, Keating 2002). Catalans gradually reasserted their own traditions, reinventing a time when they had been powerful and when Catalan had been the language of literature, commerce and the state. Medieval traditions, such as the *Jocs Florals*<sup>10</sup> and the *sardana*, were revived and given new national status. Stemming from the ideals of the *Renaixença*, Catalan *modernisme* arose as the “national style.” *Modernisme* was an artistic movement, most notable for its architectural expression, related to *Art Nouveau* in France and Belgium, *Jugendstil* in Germany, *Sezession* in Austria-Hungary, and *Stile Liberty* in Italy.

*Catalanisme*, a term suggesting that every issue in public life had a specifically Catalan dimension, became a political ideology with wide popular support (Payne 2004). The cultural memory of autonomy prior to the *Nueva Planta* decree inspired calls for a return to the historical rights and status of Catalonia (Keating 2001). The *Unió Catalanista* party, led by architect Lluís Domènech i Montaner, drew up a provisional Catalan constitution in the city of Manresa in 1892, which announced that Catalonia alone should manage its internal government as a state; it proposed its own organic laws, mandated that all public positions would be filled by Catalans, and that education would be geared “towards the need and character of the civilization of Catalonia” (Hughes 1992, 376). Madrid paid no attention to the demands, but the *Bases de Manresa*, as the document became known, were used as the political platform for Enric Prat de la Riba in his work *Catalan Nationality* (1906) which proposed an independent provincial

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<sup>10</sup> A literary competition with prizes given out to the best poems in the Catalan language relating to the themes of patriotism, faith, and love.

government of Catalonia – a Catalan state within Spain (Hughes 1992, 506). The nationalist fervor for the reclamation of self-government culminated with the establishment of the Mancomunitat in 1913, with Prat de la Riba at its head.

The existence of Catalonia as a nation was a primary justification for its self-government which, interrupted when the right-wing dictatorship of Primo de Rivera abolished the Mancomunitat, was reestablished with the granting of the first *Estatut* in 1932 after Francesc Macià and the ultranationalists of the *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya* (ERC) assumed power in the Generalitat and unsuccessfully attempted to proclaim an independent Catalan Republic. Catalans increasingly saw their language and culture as threatened by fundamentally threatened by Madrid, and so overwhelmingly sided with the Republican camp during the Spanish Civil War.

The Civil War involved competing ideas of what the Spanish state would look like (Llobera 1989). The granting of autonomy to Catalonia and the Basque Country was one of Franco's main justifications for his uprising; much like his role model Primo de Rivera, Franco saw Spain as fundamentally Catholic, conservative, centralist and based on Castilian primacy. As the Generalísimo himself said, "The character of each region will be respected, whenever it does not threaten national unity, which we want absolute, with a single language, Castilian, and a single personality, Spanish" (Franco Bahamonde 1939, 226). Franco's victory in 1939 quickly reversed the gains made under the Second Republic. Once again, Catalan self-government was taken away by the centralizing powers in Madrid. A process of Castilianization was undertaken to completely eradicate any form of cultural expression that did not conform to that advanced by Franco,

including any form of Catalan, Basque, or Galician identity. Use of the Catalan language was forbidden and strictly punished. Catalan politicians and intellectuals were imprisoned, murdered, or exiled. The education system was co-opted as many Catalan teachers went into exile and were replaced by Castilian speakers from Murcia and Andalucía. As Catalonia, particularly metropolitan Barcelona, was the industrial hub of Spain, many workers from the poorer south were encouraged to migrate as well. The demographic profile of the capital region changed dramatically, with 40% of the population having been born outside of the *Principat* by the 1970s (Keating 2002).

After Franco died in 1975, Catalan civil society was united in its calls for recognition and respect for its cultural identity and a return to self government (Guibernau i Berdún 1997). On September 11, 1977, over a million Catalans took to the streets of Barcelona to demand a new *Estatut*, which was overwhelmingly approved in the regional referendum and confirmed by the Spanish parliament in 1978. Statues of autonomy were likewise granted to Galicia and the Basque Country, recognizing the *hecho diferencial* of those regions. The *Estatut* affirmed Catalonia's existence as a historical unit, and, reflecting the language of the new Spanish constitution, as a historical nationality. Jordi Pujol of CiU was elected first president of the restored Generalitat.<sup>11</sup>

After the reclamation of autonomy, the unity of Catalan political parties ended and a diversity of opinions arose, with CiU and the PSC arguing for Catalonia to find its distinguished place within the Spanish state, the ERC demanding an independent *Països*

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<sup>11</sup> Jordi Pujol, reelected as President of the Generalitat five times until 2003, is a monolithic figure in post-Franco Catalan politics. During the twenty-three years of CiU's dominance of the Generalitat, members of other parties accused Pujol of pursuing a strategy of identity politics in which the CiU's vision of Catalan identity was promoted as the only one (Guibernau i Berdún 1997; Giordano and Roller 2002).

*Catalans*, and a branch of the centralist *Partido Popular* which rejects recognition of the *hecho diferencial* (Guibernau i Berdún 1997, Giordano and Roller 2002). Post-Franco Catalanist efforts began to be increasingly focused on cultural projects. The 1992 Summer Olympics in Barcelona gave Catalonia a chance to present itself to the world as a modern European country. An advertisement placed in several international newspapers asked the reader “In what country would you place this city?” with a map showing Barcelona in a decontextualized map of Europe. The following page replied “In Catalonia, of course!” showing the region colored red without any other borders or countries marked. Certain Spanish politicians were not pleased and responded with their own campaign of “In which country would you place Catalonia? In Spain, of course!” (Pearce 1997; Hargreaves 2000).

The Generalitat has been involved in carving out a space for itself in cyberspace as well. In 2005, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) approved the generic top-level domain *.cat*<sup>12</sup> for the Catalan linguistic and cultural community. While explicitly *not* defined in terms of a territory, the Catalans are the only non-state cultural group to acquire their own top-level domain; French Canadians, the Scottish, and the Basques have yet to obtain a distinct location on the internet. The Generalitat has established a presence in the popular online game Second Life, with its virtual office geared toward promoting Catalonia to a new audience (GenCatEng 2008).

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<sup>12</sup> As opposed to *.com*, *.org*, *.es* (Spain), or *.fr* (France).

The process of redefining Catalonia's status within Spain is ongoing. The definition of who is a Catalan has even received a considerable amount of debate, with the general consensus coalescing around Jordi Pujol's (1979, 20) definition:

A Catalan is anyone who lives and works in Catalonia, and makes it their country. Rather, a Catalan is anyone who lives and works in Catalonia and with his work, with his power, helps shape Catalonia. More simply: a Catalan is anyone who lives and works in Catalonia and wishes to be.

Thus, Catalan identity has been detached from its original ethnic context and given a civic character, opening up *catalanisme* to a much broader group including migrants from Castilian-speaking areas of Spain and the increasing numbers of workers from Latin America, Africa, and Eastern Europe (Keating 2002, Payne 2004). At the same time, Catalans are increasingly identifying themselves with Europe alongside Catalonia and Spain (Guibernau i Berdún 1997a, 1997b, 2006, 2007). The Generalitat succeeded in having the Catalan language officially recognized for limited purposes at the level of the European Union (Council of the European Union 2005). To the consternation of many Spaniards, more towns keep holding the nonbinding referendum on independence mentioned in Chapter I, with similar outcome of an overwhelming "yes" vote but with light turnout. The prolonged deadlock of the Constitutional Court over the definition of Catalonia as a nation has done little to endear the opposing sides to one another.

#### *El Estatut and a Spain of the Autonomies*

Catalonia has been shaped over the course of time through the contribution of the energy of many generations, traditions and cultures, which found in Catalonia a land of welcome.

The Catalan people have maintained a constant will to self-government over the course of the centuries, embodied in such institutions as the *Generalitat* – created in 1359 by the *Cervera Corts* – and in its own specific legal system, assembled, together with other legal compilations, in the *Constitucions i altres drets de Catalunya* (Constitutions and other laws of Catalonia). After 1714, various attempts were made to restore the institutions of self-government. Milestones include the *Mancomunitat* of 1914, the recovery of the *Generalitat* with the 1932 Statute, the re-establishment of the *Generalitat* in 1977 and the 1979 Statute, coinciding with the return of democracy, the Constitution of 1978 and the State of the Autonomies.

The Preamble of the *Estatut* (the Catalan statute of autonomy) begins with this historical outline of the community, immediately linking the modern *Generalitat* to historical political entities. From the *Corts*, which predate the establishment of the Spanish state, to the recuperation of democracy, Catalonia's continuing historical right to self-government is made clear. Article 1 of the 1979 *Estatut*, mirroring the Constitution, declared Catalonia a 'nationality', an unusual phrase reflecting the fraught politics surrounding the devolution of powers to the Spanish autonomous communities. The term nation itself was reserved for Spain as a whole, with Article 2 of the Spanish Constitution stating that the document

is based upon the indissoluble unity of the Spanish nation, the common and indivisible homeland of all Spaniards, and recognizes and guarantees the right to autonomy of the nationalities and regions which make it up and the solidarity among all of them.

This sentence has proved to be one of the most controversial of the Constitution; not only does it reject the centralist model of Franco, but there is significant disagreement over the exact definition of the term "nationality" (Guibernau i Berdún 1997). With their *hechos diferenciales*, Catalonia, the Basque Country, and Galicia were the first to be referred to as nationalities when they were granted their autonomy. With the *café para todos* model,

however, other communities have been given the right to proclaim their own status as nationalities, including not only regions with historical and cultural differences such as Aragon and Valencia, but also regions that are not typically associated with having a national identity such as Andalucía and the Canary Islands. The *Estatut*, while proclaiming the right to Catalan self-government, expresses Catalonia's desire to "develop its political personality within the framework of a State which recognizes and respects the diversity of identities of the peoples of Spain." This is an unambiguous rejection of the violent centralization and Castilianization of the Franco years.

The 2006 reform of the *Estatut* has caused a new round of political controversy. The Preamble, revised from the 1979 version, contains an explicit declaration of Catalonia as a nation within Spain: "In reflection of the feelings and the wishes of the citizens of Catalonia, the Parliament of Catalonia has defined Catalonia as a nation by an ample majority." This statement is the most controversial element of the *Estatut* (Sotelo 2010). The Catalan people are presented as recognizing themselves as constituting a nation, one of the primary requirements identified by many scholars of nationalism. The regional governments of Aragon, the Balearic Islands, and the Valencian Community, as well as the PP, have challenged the legality of the reformed *Estatut* in the Spanish Constitutional Court. Mariano Rajoy, the president of the PP, was quoted in *El País* (July 31, 2006) as stating that, first and foremost, the reform is unconstitutional because of its use of the term nation, as "the only nation envisaged by the Constitution is Spain." This position contrasts with that of many Catalans, who see "nationality" as equivalent to nation, notably the current and former presidents of the Generalitat from both CiU and

the PSC. On November 26, 2009, twelve of the major newspapers of Catalonia collectively published an editorial entitled “The Dignity of Catalonia,” calling on the Constitutional Court to not make the *Estatut* the first piece of legislation rejected after its approval in a popular referendum and at all levels of the Spanish government. Specifically, the article’s authors mention the signatures of King Juan Carlos and Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero.

Aside from the emotional fight over terminology, Catalonia actually has a fairly significant degree of control over the presentation of its own story. Article 54 (Historical Memory) of the *Estatut* concerns the knowledge and maintenance of “the historical memory of Catalonia as a collective heritage.” Framed as a consequence of resistance and struggle for rights and freedoms, the Generalitat strives to establish its own historical memory as a symbol of “tolerance, of the dignity of democratic values, of the rejection of totalitarianism, and of the recognition for all individuals who have suffered persecution as a consequence of personal, ideological or conscientious choices.” Interestingly, this can be seen as universalizing Catalonia’s heritage of repression to establish commonalities with other groups who have experienced similar maltreatment. A form of official historical memory, embodying a particular history or group of histories, is adopted that places it in explicit opposition to various centralizing forces that served to revoke Catalonia’s self-government, from Felipe V to Primo de Rivera to Franco.

The *Estatut* elaborates the specific powers of the Generalitat that have been devolved from the central government. Article 127 (Culture) states that the Generalitat has exclusive power over cultural matters within its own borders, including the



“promotion, planning, construction and management of cultural facilities located in Catalonia”; the regulation, inspection, inventory, restoration, protection and dissemination of cultural heritage; and the regional and international projection of Catalan culture. Article 198 (Participation in International Bodies) specifically mentions UNESCO as an international body of important interest for Catalonia. While UNESCO itself places its sovereign member states (the States Parties) as the main authority regarding World Heritage Sites, the Spanish constitution and regional statutes give the autonomous communities exclusive control of the nomination and maintenance.

While reiterating its own political claims, the Generalitat acknowledges its constitutional reality as part of the Spanish state and the continuing need to operate within it (Keating 2000). As Montserrat Guibernau i Berdún (1997) remarks, the *Estatut* above all else uses Catalonia’s continuity over time and distinctive culture as defining criteria of identity as well as the basis for Catalan self-government. These legitimations correspond with the dominant norms of the modern state system, which are discussed in the following chapter.

### CHAPTER III

#### HERITAGE AND NATIONALISM

Since the history of Catalonia is foundational to conceptions of Catalan national identity, the past plays an important role in the region's promotion of itself. To examine the Generalitat's approach to marketing its heritage, it is necessary to understand how ideas of identity and heritage are implicated in the process of nation-building. How does UNESCO, with its World Heritage Programme, seek to influence the role of heritage sites? What makes the past a powerful tool in understanding a nation's present and future? As the ideal of the nation-state dominates discussions of identity and territory, how do the prevailing norms of the modern state system involve heritage?

This chapter explores current theories of nationalism and heritage, and examines how and why heritage sites are used in the construction of national identity. Three common territorial themes observed in the promotion of cultural heritage are presented: 1) that the land is home to a distinctive cultural group, 2) that the land has a long history as a political-territorial unit, and, 3) that the land has a history of autonomy or sovereignty. These legitimations not only consolidate territorial claims but also provide points of commonality for those within the "imagined community of the nation" (Anderson 1983).

### Nations and Nationalism

Anssi Paasi (1997, 42) writes that national identity has become crucial in the definition of the essence of the individual and that it is separated from other forms of identity because it “is based on the fact that the source of identity is located within a people understood as the bearer of sovereignty and the basis of collective solidarity.”

While the popular notion of the nation as something natural and permanent is widespread, one of its primary characteristics is its modernity (Keating 1988, 2002; Hobsbawm 1990; Guibernau i Berdún 2007). The concept of nationalism has its legacy in the Enlightenment and German Romanticism. Political legitimacy shifted away from divine-right monarchs to the unity and self-determination of the people of a certain territory. The nation-state, where political boundaries would match the cultural groups living within them, became the territorial ideal of the modern state system. This ideal was used simultaneously as a justification for the uniting of the German Empire and the break-up of the multiethnic Austro-Hungarian Empire. Whereas territory was previously defined by the people who lived there – “England is where the English live” – increasingly the people themselves came to be defined by the territory – “the English are those who live in England” (Knight 1982, 517).

Although there is no single accepted definition of a nation, Benedict Anderson’s (1983, 15) concept of the “imagined political community – imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” – has gained particular traction. The national community is imagined since its members will never know the majority of their fellow members. It is limited because all nations have finite, though changeable, borders beyond which lie

other nations. It is sovereign because when the concept was born during the Enlightenment, the nation was breaking down the previously dominant notions of divine-right dynastic rule. Finally, it is imagined as a community since, regardless of actual inequalities, it is conceived of as a deep, horizontal comradeship (Anderson 1983, 1997). Whether or not the imagined qualities are based on history or fact is less important than how they are used to create national identity. The ways in which different nations are imagined is what distinguishes them from one another.

The idea that the nation and the state should be coterminous has become so prevalent that the two terms have become nearly synonymous. The widespread idealization of the nation-state belies the fact that there are very few of them in reality (Knight 1982; Mikesell and Murphy 1991; Keating 2002; Murphy 2002). With the American and French revolutions at the end of the eighteenth century, the nation was seen as the body of citizens whose popular sovereignty constituted a state and replaced that of divine-right monarchs; power came into the hands of the people as a nation, or at least those who claimed to speak for it (Knight 1982; Hobsbawm 1990). In identifying the people as the source of political power, the people and the state became seen as one and the same (Connor 1994). Ernest Gellner (1997, 52) defines nationalism as the “political principle that holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent.” Knight (1982) and Keating (1988) both directly equate nationalism with the doctrine of self-determination, which remains a potent rallying call for self-professed nationalist groups that feel slighted or oppressed by a more dominant nation, from Kosovo to Québec, from West Papua to Western Sahara.

Most definitions of the term 'nation' invoke some form of recognition of a shared common culture, which can take the form of customs, language, beliefs, history, descent, destiny or any number of other traits. Gellner (1997) gives two potential definitions of a nation: 1) a group with a shared culture; and, 2) a group with mutual recognition of belonging to the same nation. However, Gellner admits that each of these is unsatisfactory in certain ways, and that nationality has become almost an inherent aspect of humanity. He posits that one can easily imagine a condition of statelessness, but that it is rather more difficult to conceive of a condition of being nationless. Different aspects of national identity can be evoked with varying intensities over time, but they all contribute to the establishment of a collective sentiment of nationhood. Montserrat Guibernau i Berdún (2007) argues that to construct a national identity, the self-identifying imagined community must create and disseminate a shared vision of a common history, culture and territory.

Senses of place and territory are key to the conceptions of nations and nationalism. The *International Relations Dictionary* (Plano and Olton 1988, 33) differentiates a nation from other self-recognized communities such as religions in that "there is also present a strong sense of belonging associated with a particular territory considered to be peculiarly its own." Links to a common culture are supplemented and augmented by attachment to a common homeland. "Nationalist mythology has created a whole string of places of collective identification in which place is understood as a limited area, a specific portion of space laden with symbols and acting as a transmission centre for cultural messages" (Häkli 2001; Nogué Font and Vicente Rufi 2004, 117). The

land serves as a physical manifestation, as the receptacle of a collectively shared consciousness in the form of the homeland, the *patria*, the *heimat* described by Ferdinand Tönnies (1957, 206), with patriotism signifying love of the *terra patria* (Tuan 1974, 100).

The modern state system privileges a set of discrete political units across the surface of the Earth, each of which has a boundary separating it from others. Common territory is not enough to cement the claims of nationalist groups; there must be a set of other factors that link the people who live in disparate parts of the common territory. In constructing a national history, a particular people must legitimize its claims as a nation and, potentially, as a sovereign state. To examine how national groups imagine themselves, territorial ideologies must be complemented by the historical construction of nationhood (Murphy, 2002).

### The Creation of Places and Nations Through the Past

Place is how we make the world meaningful and the way we experience the world. Place, at the basic level, is space invested with meaning in the context of power. (Cresswell 2004, 12)

The place meanings imbued by those in positions of power frequently draw on the idea of a common past to establish the guiding fictions of the nation. The manner in which the past is remembered and represented has significant implications in the creation of place, as well as the marking of identity (Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge 2000; Cresswell 2004; Kavaratzis and Ashworth 2005). There is a constant desire to show how both places and identity are rooted in history, as if history itself gives them legitimacy. Significant time and money are spent on the production and reproduction of historical

narratives in order to have them consumed as heritage. These narratives serve to convey the meanings of the heritage commodity, and as such take part in the process of deliberately or accidentally creating place identities

In discussing landscape and national identity, Joan Nogué Font and Joan Vicente Ruffi (2004, 115-116) write:

Nationalisms claim specific territories as part of their own identity by emphasizing their so-called particular, exceptional and historical nature. One of the most characteristic features of the nationalist ideology and movement is its ability to redefine and politicize space, by considering it as a distinctive, historical territory. Nationalist movements interpret and appropriate space, place and time and from there proceed to construct and alternative history and geography.

Space, given meaning by history, becomes place. The land claimed by the nation as its own is given meaning to reinforce those claims. Those in power draw on the past to establish the guiding fictions that bind the imagined community together and that prove their difference from their neighbors. The embodiment of public memory in landscape provides an example of the ways in which representations of place are intimately related to the creation and reinforcement of official constructions of identity and power (Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge 2000).

The invention of national traditions (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) often draws heavily on geographical imagery and myth. In the case of Welsh nationalism in the beginning of the twentieth century, Gruffudd (1995) explores how territory is nationalized through its treatment as a distinctive land, which is highly dependent on geographical, historical and cultural context. Lacking political recognition since the 1536 Act of Union with England, Wales was primarily an imagined nation. Claims for

autonomy from Great Britain were constructed around the nation of a Celtic Wales as one of the historical nations of Europe, despite the fact that Wales did not exist as a unified entity prior to its incorporation into England.

Former President of the Generalitat Jordi Pujol has compared Catalonia's fight for recognition as a nation to the Baltic Republics, arguing "Catalonia is like Lithuania, but Spain is not the Soviet Union" (Bassets 2009). Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, was recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1994, shortly after the reestablishment of independence from the Soviet Union. The city has a number of historical cultural influences, including Polish, Swedish, Russian, and Soviet. Vilnius has been presented as a distinctly Lithuanian city, but also as one with a Western heritage (Munasinghe 2005). The Eurocentric views of the post-independence nationalist elite were the driving force behind the construction of a new national identity, and in the process many aspects of the Soviet era were cast as undesirable and were obscured or minimized (ibid.). A legacy of oppression can be used to shape and validate a present identity; the threat of cultural annihilation often leads to a strong resurgence in nationalistic identification and expression, framed around opposition to the repressors (Lowenthal 1996; Guibernau i Berdún 1997). The image of Vilnius was shaped by a particular group's selective image of their preferred past. Lithuanians could turn to an idealized past focused on their historical links to Western Europe – a framing that provided ideological justification for Lithuania's entry into the European Union in 2004.



## Heritage

Heritage refers to almost any sort of intergenerational exchange or relationship between individuals as well as societies (Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge 2000, 1). DiGiovine (2009) contends that heritage can be almost anything. Most succinctly, it is defined as the contemporary use of the past (Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge 2000; McDowell, 2008). David Lowenthal (1998, xv), however, provides one of the clearer explanations, arguing that heritage “clarifies the pasts so as to infuse them with present purposes.” Elements of the past, whether cultural, political, social or economic, are selected in the present for a particular purpose. Nearly everything we do draws on the past in some manner, and often the older the better. Heritage, as in any telling of history, is inherently selective, and as such always has a bias in favor of who is producing or proclaiming it. As Orwell (1949, 32) writes in *1984*, “Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past.” It follows that the ways in which the past is remembered and represented have tremendous implications for the meaning of place and identity. Heritage is less about the tangible material artifacts or intangible forms of the past than about the meanings placed upon them and the representations that are created from them (Graham and Howard 2008, 2).

Inherently collective, heritage increasingly denotes that which we hold jointly with others (Lowenthal 1996, 60) . While conceptions of national heritage in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries largely referred exclusively to the nobility at the expense of the masses, the rise of populist nationalism coincided with the rise of the modern idea of the nation-state. Royal collections and properties became public

museums and icons of national patrimony. Heritage itself becomes a defining aspect of a nation. Lowenthal even describes heritage in a manner very similar to how others describe nationality:

As doctrine, heritage is mandatory. It comes to us willy-nilly and cannot be shed, however shaming it may be. To share a legacy is to belong to a family, a community, a race, a nation. What each inherits is in some measure unique, but common commitments bind us to others within our group. Inheritors are fellow countrymen – not just patriots, but *compatriots*. Mutual identity demands mutual allegiance. (Lowenthal 1996, 2)

As the “principal instrument for shaping distinctive local representation of place,” heritage “can be exploited for external promotion as well as in strengthening the identification of inhabitants with their localities” (Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge 2000, 204). The past is utilized to increase feelings of attachment to place and nation. A link to some long-standing form of place provides a form of legitimacy and justification for its continuity. These feelings of attachment are abstract ideas – the consumption and experiencing of heritage are not of the site itself as a building or landscape, but rather their representation in the form of a historical narrative (Groote and Haartsen 2008, 181). Nations and states invest in monuments, grand buildings and museums to fill with the meanings and memories that comprise that narrative (Holo 1999). National memorials convey and perpetuate the values of the past, becoming deeply implicated in the creation and reinforcement of official constructions of identity.

Heritage claims, even (or especially) those of UNESCO, can be controversial, particularly when they are shared by multiple groups. As the “chief focus of patriotism,” the guiding fictions of heritage shape the ideology of identities at all scales (Lowenthal

1998; Pretes 2003). The importance that states, nations, and other actors place on their heritage monuments can be difficult to overcome when contestation and/or conflict arises. The recent case of the Preah Vihear temple in Cambodia is a good example. The land on which the tenth century Khmer temple was built has changed hands numerous times over a millennium. The modern Cambodian state draws on the Khmer Empire as its historical antecedent, and Thailand likewise incorporated the Khmers and their temples as a part of its own heritage and national origins. A 1907 treaty between Siam (as Thailand was then known) and the French colonial government put the temple on the Cambodian side of the border. With French withdrawal in 1954, the Thai army occupied the area and claimed that it did not recognize the previous border treaty. Newly independent Cambodia appealed to the International Court of Justice, which ruled in 1962 that the land and temple belonged to Cambodia. While both states used historical territorial divisions as the basis for their claims, the ICJ focused solely on the maps drawn up between the Siamese and French (Cuasay 1998; Oliver 1962). When Preah Vihear was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2008, the Thai opposition parties decried a supposed loss of Thai sovereignty and heritage (Limthongkul 2008). Its World Heritage inscription was a catalyst for the resumption of protests against the government of Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej, eventually leading to his ousting. In October 2008 there were even a few incidents of Thai and Cambodian troops firing on one another, resulting in several deaths (Mydans 2008).

Both states agree on the universal value of Preah Vihear itself, but their particular versions of history which use the monument to legitimate their respective claims are at

odds with one another. Instead of fostering peace, World Heritage Designation in this case resulted in one of the most serious border conflicts in Southeast Asia in recent years. Thailand and Cambodia both see the remote area as a fundamental part of their territory, with deep historical links to their own civilizations. Tensions have been fanned on both sides by the rhetoric of nationalist politicians determined to advocate for their own version of history and heritage. The meanings and values ascribed to the site and ownership over it go beyond the stones that make up the ruined temple. The ideology of national identity is shaped by these sites through their role in the guiding narratives advanced by Thais and Cambodians.

### Heritage Tourism and Identity

As the world's largest and fastest-growing industry, tourism represents a powerful force across the globe. According to the World Tourism Organization's Tourism Highlights in 2009, there were 922 million tourists who spent over \$944 billion. Every country receives tourists, although Europe and North America account for nine of the top ten destinations and earners (see table 3.1). Places of all sorts inspire visitors to travel – sometimes very great distances – to see or otherwise experience them. As such a large generator of development, investment, and revenue, most countries aim to attract an increasing number of tourists. Tourism bureaus are created at all political scales to promote attractions both internally and externally.

Although economic gain is often the primary stated rationale for promotion of cultural tourism, it also provides a platform to explain a place's past, and therefore its

present. “Heritage is the principal instrument for shaping distinctive local representation of place, which can be exploited for external promotion as well as in strengthening the identification of inhabitants with their localities” (Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge 2000, 204). Visiting sites of national importance helps build the links and sense of commonality that bind the imagined community. Visiting the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island in New York Harbor evokes the founding mythos of the United States as a country of immigrants from many different cultures who made the long journey in hopes of a better life across the ocean. As Joanne Maddern (2004) observes, Ellis Island is presented as emblematic of the whole experience of immigration to the United States, despite processing primarily Eastern European, Italian, and Jewish immigrants over its 62 year history. It represents an important, although selective and limited, image of immigration.

In an analytic study of Helsinki from 1954 to 1963, Salla Jokela (forthcoming) shows how tourism images served as a political identity project creating a sense of

Rank		Arrivals
1	France	79.3
2	United States	58.0
3	Spain	57.3
4	China	53.0
5	Italy	42.7
6	United Kingdom	30.2
7	Ukraine	25.4
8	Turkey	25.0
9	Germany	24.9
10	Mexico	22.6

**Table 3.1** Top tourist destinations, 2008 (UNWTO)


Finnish national solidarity. Promotion of place, whether for touristic, heritage, or other purposes, is inevitably selective. Jokela argues that tourism images create and maintain the “imagined community” that comprises a nation. In the particular case of Finland, the images mirror and have

been used to define the geopolitical position of Finland in the post-World War II period as a country between the East and the West.

Michael Urry contends that identity almost everywhere has to be produced partly out of the images constructed or reproduced for tourists, including the image of being a place which is on the global tourist map (Palmer 1999). By packaging select symbols as “our heritage,” the tourist industry’s images of nationhood provide individuals with a means by which they can understand who they are and where they have come from. As Palmer (1999, 315) attests, “The way in which we see ourselves is substantially determined by the way in which we are seen by others.” An imagined community is not created out of nothing – it must be produced and reproduced throughout subsequent generations. National education and media systems are key instruments in the dissemination of a particular “image of the nation,” with its symbols and rituals, values, principles, traditions, ways of life and notions of citizenship (Guibernau i Berdún 2007). Tourism can act as a form of education by providing a group with a medium through which to broadcast a message about itself, its history and its culture (Pitchford 1995; Molina and Esteban 2006).

In Catalonia as in much of Europe, “knowledge of the geographical space of the country was considered necessary in order to grasp the idea of being a nation, the idea of the motherland” (García Ramon and Nogué Font 1994, 207). The brochures, websites, and other publications of Turisme de Catalunya are intended as educational tools to enlighten visitors both from within Catalonia and from without. Each publication is offered in multiple languages, including Catalan, Castilian, French, German and English,

with no discernable differences between them. A minister from the Generalitat smiles and welcomes the potential visitor to Catalonia, encouraging him or her to explore the region, which offers apparently nearly everything anyone could ever want (see figure 3.1). The following pages give a brief outline of the history and identity of the region before moving on to describe Catalonia's World Heritage Sites and a myriad of other "unforgettable" tourist opportunities. The Generalitat and Turisme de Catalunya, like most government tourist bureaus, feel that it is important for potential visitors to understand the wider historical and cultural context (at least as they see it) in order to fully experience the various sites at hand.



*Catalonia, a land with a thousand years of history.* Catalonia is a country with an open mentality which is proud of its identity and keen to make itself known abroad. Its distinct language and culture reflect the strong personality which makes it unique in our increasingly globalized world. It is a land steeped in culture, with traditions and festivals dating back a thousand years and offering the ideal combination of feeling and culture. But it is also part and parcel of contemporary Europe and outstandingly permeable to the latest ideas and trends on the international cultural scene. It was in just this way that Modernism a current that was establishing itself throughout 20th century Europe entered Catalonia and won worldwide renown for Catalan artists including Gaudí, Domènech i Montaner, and Puig i Cadafalch.

It only remains for me to invite you to discover Catalonia's rich natural and cultural heritage, enjoy its plentiful leisure facilities, and get to know our people. Once again, welcome to Catalonia.

Josep Huguet i Biosca  
Minister for Innovation, Universities and Enterprise

**Figure 3.1** Selection from the first page of *Catalonia: the Seal of Quality* brochure.

### Territorial Themes of Cultural Heritage

Promoters of national heritage frequently draw on specific conceptions of territorial legitimation to portray their country. For a nation to survive it must promote the practices and discourses that define the nation and national identity (Paasi 1997).

These practices and discourses frequently invoke heritage and use the past to explain and justify the present. In presenting such sites to both domestic and foreign audiences, producers and marketers of heritage frequently draw on common ideas of what a nation or state is and what it should be. These legitimations not only consolidate territorial claims but also provide points of commonality for those within the imagined community of the nation.

The modern state system describes the dominant political-territorial model of roughly the last two centuries. Murphy (2002, 199) describes several norms that characterize the modern state system:

- that the entire land surface of the earth should be divided up among states,
- that states should occupy discrete territories,
- that states should reflect the pattern of cultural-historical nations,
- that state boundaries should be seen as legitimate once established, and,
- that state governments should have the right to control territory within their boundaries (i.e. sovereignty).

Working off of those norms, Murphy articulates his regimes of territorial legitimation, or rather, “the institutions, practices and discourses that are designed to legitimate a particular territorial conception of a state” (Murphy 2005, 281). While he focused specifically on the impact of these regimes on borders and the potential for interstate conflict, Murphy’s framework explains how they serve to validate and justify the particular territorial foundation underlying state nationalism in other contexts as well.



Building off the regimes of territorial legitimation as well as empirical evidence gathered in 2008 and 2009, I argue that there are three common territorial themes used in the promotion of cultural heritage:

- 1) that the land is home to a distinctive cultural group,
- 2) that the land has a long history as a political-territorial unit, and,
- 3) that the land has a history of autonomy or sovereignty.

These three themes shape the nation-building process around common narratives of what a nation and state are and what they should be. As with Murphy's framework, they are generalized tendencies that can be found in many places around the world. Promotion of national cultural heritage presents an opportunity to disseminate official political-territorial claims. Monuments take on significance greater than simply their artistic or historical value; they become representative of greater processes and discourses that have helped shaped national identity. The construction of national histories are driven by a need to develop uncomplicated, linear cultural-political histories of a people, which inevitably involves ignoring much of the complex historical messiness out of which all nations emerge (Murphy 2002, 195).

As the nation-state is the ideal of the modern state system and the basis of participation in international affairs, it helps to demonstrate that a land is home to a distinctive cultural group. Woodrow Wilson, in his Fourteen Points speech, trumpeted the concept of self-determination of national groups, a policy that translated into the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire along mostly ethnic lines at the end of World War I. Since then, the idea that each nation has the right to determine its own laws and

destiny has remained strong. Linguistic and religious traits are some of the most common markers used to distinguish one group from another. In the case of Catalonia, the Catalans follow the same Catholic faith as their Castilian and French neighbors; what really marks them out as a different people is the Catalan language. Other traits are also used to mark cultural distinctiveness, such as music, art and architecture. In the past, national characteristics were assumed to have a firm basis in the physical environment. Trinitat Monegal supposed in 1904 that “If it were possible today to exterminate all the Catalans and to populate our land with people from other countries, after a more or less lengthy term the Catalan people would exist once again” (Marfany 1993, 81). While this environmentally deterministic claim is no longer proposed with any seriousness, it illustrates the strong sense of place that a national group can have with a particular territory. The historical construction of ‘peoplehood’ lies at the heart of many ideological claims to territory.

Second, legitimacy in the modern state system often involves proving links to the past. Many countries draw on historic states or empires to establish their place in the world. Modern Italy draws on the Roman Empire much in the same way that Mongolia draws on the expansive realm established by Genghis Khan and his successors as an era of wealth and power. “In one way or another membership of a historic (or actual) state present or past, can act directly upon the consciousness of the common people” to produce nationalism (Hobsbawm 1990, 75). An ancient past is seen as bestowing prestige, with a lengthier history as evidence of cultural superiority. If borders, once

established, are to remain legitimate forevermore, a prior political-geographic entity provides a useful form of justification for its reestablishment or continuation.

Beyond being the modern incarnation of a long-standing territorial entity, the third common theme in cultural heritage promotion is the assertion of historical autonomy. Not only is it important that the borders are well established, but also that the territory in question has a history of some degree of self-governance. Historical sovereignty is frequently used to justify modern autonomy or self-rule, although the term sovereignty can be used in an anachronistic fashion as it only really developed after the 1648 Peace of Westphalia. In practice, this theme is frequently associated with a palace or some other sort of government building, such as the Palace of the Şirvanşahlar in Baku which evokes the medieval dynasty that ruled what is now Azerbaijan from the ninth to the sixteenth century until it was conquered by the Safavids. Numerous World Heritage Sites in India attest to the grandeur and power of the Mughals (the Agra Fort, the Taj Mahal, Fatehpur Sikri, and the Red Fort of Delhi) who ruled the subcontinent before the arrival of the Europeans. Historical autonomy within another state also lends legitimacy to the claims of local leaders that they speak for a recognized group. A key legacy of the Peace of Westphalia is the notion of territorial integrity – once sovereignty is established, it cannot be legitimately revoked. Regardless of the current situation and how it came to be, nationalists in a region with a history of autonomy or independence can always draw on those powerful claims. Again, as national claims do not have to be strictly based on fact or history, ideas of heritage can draw on a more romanticized version of the past when the unit in question was self-governing.

### UNESCO and Universal Heritage

The UNESCO World Heritage Programme, based around the concept of “universal heritage,” seeks to subsume the nationalistic impulses surrounding many heritage sites and to promote the idea that certain heritage “belong[s] to all peoples of the world, irregardless of the territory on which they are located” (UNESCO 2010b). The claim of universal significance is meant to transcend national identities, but in reality it is difficult to portray and can be self-contradictory (Lowenthal 1979; Beck 2006). Through the World Heritage Programme, UNESCO seeks to foster world peace and understanding though a reappropriation of monuments to create what Michael DiGiovine (2009), building off Anderson’s definition of the nation, calls a worldwide imagined community.

In its Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972), UNESCO outlines what it considers cultural heritage to be:

**Monuments:** architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;

**Groups of buildings:** groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;

**Sites:** works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view.

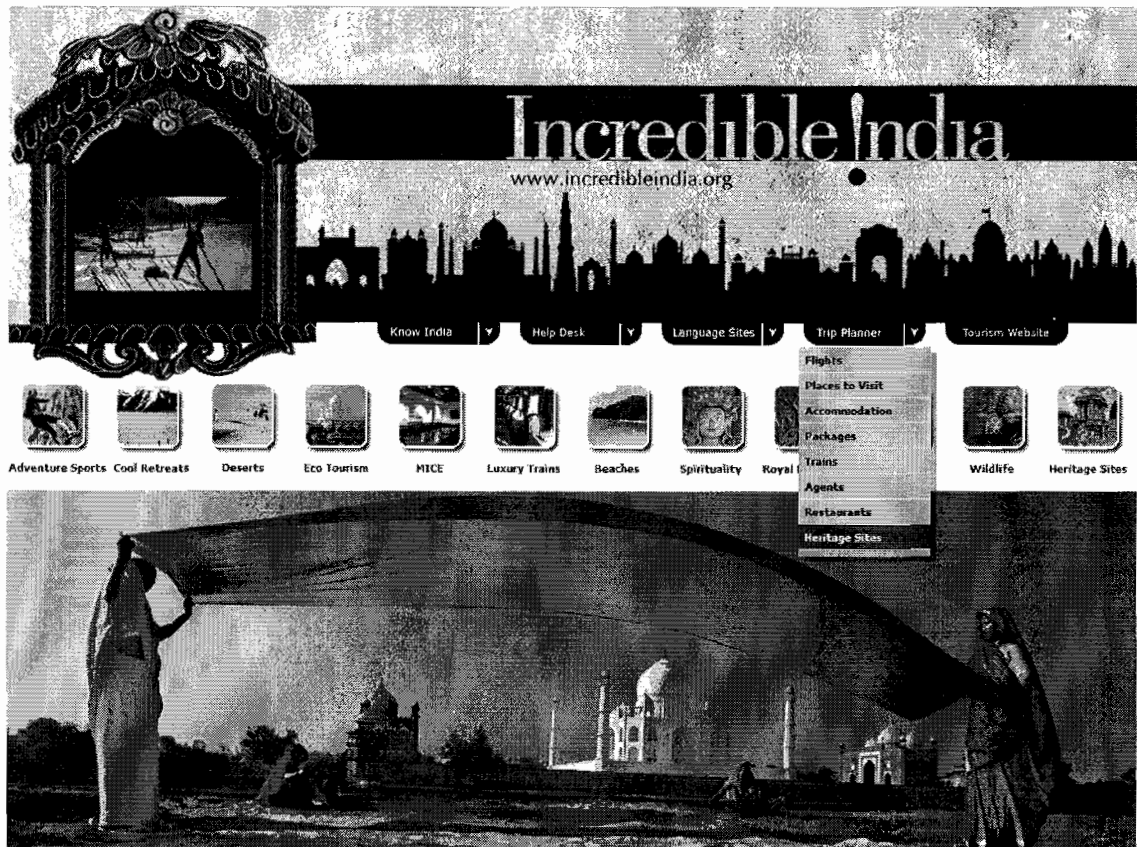
The overarching theme of ‘outstanding universal value’ connects these cultural sites with the natural sites that were also defined in the Convention, although there is no explanation of what exactly constitutes ‘universal’ value. Nonetheless, World Heritage

designation is a powerful global brand. Attaching the World Heritage label and logo to a site immediately changes how people view it. DiGiovine (2009, 277) suggests that even if one is unaware of UNESCO's mission, the "very title is suggestive enough to express a valorizing sense of shared heritage." Not surprisingly, then, World Heritage designations are featured prominently in the promotional material of many tourism bureaus as the flagship attractions of the particular area. The homepage of the Indian Ministry of Tourism ([www.incredibleindia.org](http://www.incredibleindia.org)) has an icon prominently placed under the title banner linking to a list of the country's 26 inscribed World Heritage Sites (see figure 3.2). Mexico advertises its "distinction of being the American country with the most places (25) registered on the World Heritage List" (Consejo de Promoción Turística de México 2008).

While UNESCO insists upon an apolitical approach to World Heritage, a seemingly idealistic quest for a peace-instilling universal significance that transcends divisive questions of national identity, it is widely recognized that the process unavoidably comes into contact with politics, national and otherwise (Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge 2000; Beck 2006; Di Giovine 2009). In particular, the inscription process involves confirming the particular wording of a narrative claim, which can be subject to politicking. Conversely, the official narrative approved by ICOMOS and UNESCO can take even the most ideologically bound site and repackage it and inject it with universal meaning (Di Giovine 2009). The idea of a "world heritage" is meant to give new meaning to these sites as markers of collective human, rather than national, achievement.

Nonetheless, the concept of a universal heritage is challenged by the more immediate and

well-established national and local scales of identity. Many of the sites that obtain designation were already highly valorized in their particular nations and states. Historical, natural, and aesthetic values were in many cases previously ascribed to them long before UNESCO's recognition. In the case of cultural heritage monuments, often they were long-standing icons of national pride and were prized for the ways in which they represented key aspects of a particular history or histories.



**Figure 3.2** World Heritage Sites highlighted in several places at [www.incredibleindia.org](http://www.incredibleindia.org).

The Israeli site of Masada is primarily valued for its origins as a fortified Roman villa, according to its World Heritage submission file (ICOMOS 2000b). But identifying Masada in purely archaeological terms underplays the modern significance of the site –

one of great importance in the modern Israeli psyche as the location of the last holdout of the Hebrew Sicarii and their eventual mass suicide while besieged during the First Jewish-Roman War. ICOMOS describes Masada's significance as follows:

The Palace complex built by King Herod the Great, King of Judaea, on the summit of the dramatic mountain site of Masada in the first century BCE consists of an exceptional group of classical Roman Imperial buildings. When this natural defensive site, further strengthened by massive walls, was occupied by survivors of the Jewish Revolt against Roman rule, it was successfully besieged by a massive Roman army. The group of military camps and siegeworks at Masada are the most complete anywhere in the Roman world. Masada is a poignant symbol of the continuing human struggle between oppression and liberty. (ICOMOS 2000b, 141)

Michael Di Giovine writes that UNESCO injects a "universal" applicability to Masada's nationalist symbolism by portraying the ruins as a symbol of history rather than of contemporary life. By referencing it as a palace and as a fortress, UNESCO allows for a wider range of interpretations, including those of a wider pan-Mediterranean Roman heritage. Nominated by the state of Israel, it would be difficult to completely ignore Masada's deep significance to modern Israelis. Nonetheless, it is marked as a symbol of Jewish cultural, rather than Israeli national, identity. The nomination file references the Biblical kingdom of Israel, its destruction, and the subsequent Diaspora, but it does not directly tie these to modern Israel. An unspecific homage to the broader struggle against "oppression" is given, but World Heritage Sites are inherently potent monuments, "intended to invoke subjective remembrances and provoke individual imagination, despite any previous practical usage they may have had before their nomination" (Di Giovine 2009, 85).

Rediscovered and rehabilitated by nineteenth century nascent Zionists attempting to unite a disparate nation, Masada is now a popular destination on excursions, known as *tiyulim*, designed to promote emotional attachments to the land of Israel through the cultivation and knowledge of its landscapes and its history (ibid., 83). Moshe Dayan, head of the Israeli Defense Force, even began the practice of swearing in new recruits at a dawn ceremony at the fortress, explicitly tying the twentieth-century soldiers to the narratives embodied by the ancient monument (Lomsky-Feder and Ben-Ari 1999).

### Conclusion

Each of the three territorial claims draws on the past to justify claims made by nationalists. Regardless of the veracity of these claims, they are given to explain the *raison d'être* of the nation and/or state. Heritage, as the use of the past for present purposes, is inextricably implicated in the process of nation-building. The nation is imagined as a community with, among other attributes, a distinct cultural identity and, with the exception certain of groups such as the Roma, a particular homeland. This identity and homeland are represented in the form of monuments, which are valorized by the people and promoted by elites who aim to perpetuate the idea of the nation in one way or another. The promotion of heritage often goes beyond the telling of simple historical facts and encompasses wider narratives of belonging and origin. The past becomes nationalized in a way that does not always fit with the historical reality, but which plays an important role in how people see themselves.



The UNESCO World Heritage Sites are meant to convey a universalizing message of human achievement and to eventually subsume the nationalistic impulses that have so often caused death and destruction around the world. The high-minded ideals behind the World Heritage Program contrast with its practical application as a highly-effective tourist brand. Few consider the World Heritage process to be entirely devoid of politics, though many see it primarily as a marketing tool and not a propaganda-laden contest. Nonetheless, many cultural heritage sites are deeply implicated one way or another in nationalist ideologies. This importance predates inscription on the World Heritage List, but nationalist significance rarely ends there. As a prime icon of tourist branding, the World Heritage logo (see figure 3.3) attracts the attention of potential visitors and creates an opportunity for nations and states to explain their own history, their heritage and their identity to a wider audience. Paasi (1997, 43) calls for greater investigation into how discourses and representations of national identity are created and whose ideas dominate the narratives through which the nation is represented. In the following chapter, I explore how the Generalitat, through Turisme de Catalunya, shapes perceptions of its own heritage through particular narratives invoking the three territorial themes outlined here.



**Figure 3.3** World Heritage logo (UNESCO 2010c)

## CHAPTER IV

### CATALONIA: A UNIVERSAL HERITAGE

“Catalonia is a country with an open mentality which is proud of its identity and keen to make itself known abroad.” Josep Huguet i Biosca, the Generalitat’s Minister for Innovation, Universities and Enterprise, welcomes visitors to Catalonia with this statement in several publications put out by Turisme de Catalunya. He continues, “Its distinct language and culture reflect the strong personality which makes it unique in our increasingly globalized world.” Right from the start, the Generalitat makes it clear that it wants to increase awareness of the region’s history and identity alongside its status as a major tourist destination. The 2008 expenditure budget of Turisme de Catalunya was €24.6 million, with nearly €17.5 million of that devoted to marketing and promotion (Turisme de Catalunya 2009, 63), as compared to the €76.8 million spent by the Spanish Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Commerce on promoting all of Spain in that year (Turespaña 2010). According to the Deputy Director of Turisme de Catalunya, the region received over 25 million tourists in 2008 (Torrent i Queralt 2009), which would place Catalonia eighth on the World Tourism Organization’s list of most-visited countries, trailing only France, the US, Spain as a whole, China, Italy, the UK, and Ukraine (UNWTO 2009, 6) (see table 4.1).

Catalonia has the second highest number of designated World Heritage Sites (six) of any region in Spain, after Castilla y León. Indeed, it has more designated sites than

most of UNESCO's States Parties. Using a broader definition of World Heritage Sites, a 2007 Turisme de Catalunya brochure even declares that "Catalonia has the highest number of listed properties in Spain and is one of the leading places as regards heritage in Europe." The Works of Gaudí were among the five first Spanish sites to be inscribed on the list in 1984 (alongside the Alhambra, the historic center of Córdoba, the cathedral of Burgos, and the royal monastery of El Escorial). The Sagrada Família has become an iconic symbol of not only Barcelona and Catalonia, but for many tourists even of Spain as a whole. Located in Spain's most visited city, it is the second most popular monument in the country after the Alhambra of Granada (Valverde 2010).

Rank		Arrivals
1	France	79.3
2	United States	58.0
3	Spain	57.3
4	China	53.0
5	Italy	42.7
6	United Kingdom	30.2
7	Ukraine	25.4
	<i>Catalonia</i>	25.0
8	Turkey	25.0
9	Germany	24.9
10	Mexico	22.6

**Table 4.1** Catalonia as a top destination (UNWTO, Turisme de Catalunya)

Five of Catalonia's World Heritage sites are linked to each other in intriguing ways. The *moderniste* architects famously drew inspiration from a medieval past, with special emphasis on the Vall de Boí and Poblet, to recreate a myth of national identity, although in a "thoroughly modern" manner (Hughes 1992, 454).

Gaudí spent his youth exploring the ruins of Poblet and planning a comprehensive, although ultimately unrealized, refurbishment of the monastery. Domènech i Montaner was responsible for the rediscovery of the isolated village churches of the Vall de Boí and saw them as an important source of inspiration for his work. Gaudí saw Catalonia as the

historical center of Spain, stemming from Tàrraco's status as the capital of Hispania Citerior (Hughes 1992, 507). These two most important *moderniste* architects, whose own designs would later be inscribed on the World Heritage List, drew inspiration from the other future-World Heritage Sites. Often the explicit reasoning was those sites' connections to ideas of what constituted Catalan history and identity (i.e. heritage). A patriotic framing of these places is nothing new – it is a well-documented phenomenon that came into full force during the nineteenth century *Renaixença*. Each of these sites is officially listed according to its artistic and historical value, but the Generalitat, through Turisme de Catalunya, goes further and constructs a broader political-historical narrative.

This chapter examines each of the World Heritage Sites in Catalonia and considers how they are presented as representative of the Catalan nation and identity. In each case, there is an official statement that conforms to UNESCO's mission, but there is something to be learned by looking beyond the nomination files. These cases figure into how Catalonia is trying to position itself in the contemporary world. Heritage is important to Catalan nationalism, as with all nationalisms, because it affirms how Catalans see themselves. Each section of this chapter looks at the site's application but goes on to examine other dimensions of the case that reflect the modern state system and Catalonia's positioning itself within that framework.

### World Heritage Designation

Each World Heritage Site receives a justification in its nomination file which identifies the criteria under which the monument(s) are to be listed. UNESCO (2010a)

identifies the following criteria for the States Parties to classify their cultural World

Heritage properties:

- i) That the site represents a masterpiece of human creative genius;
- ii) That the site exhibits an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;
- iii) That the site bears a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;
- iv) That the site is an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;
- v) That the site is directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance (preferably to be used in conjunction with other criteria).

There are an additional five criteria that are used to evaluate natural sites, although none of the designated sites in Catalonia have yet used the natural criteria.<sup>13</sup> As seen in table 4.2, the Catalan sites draw primarily on criteria *ii* (four sites), *iv* (four sites), and *i* (three sites). Two of the sites are selected under criterion *iii*, and none under criterion *v*. The State Party's suggested criteria are not always adopted by UNESCO. With the expansion of the Works of Gaudí in 2004, the nomination file proposed selection under criterion *iii*, stating that as Gaudí was "the twentieth century's most creative architect," his creations stand as a "testimony to the architectural heritage of the 1900s" (ICOMOS 2004, 171).

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<sup>13</sup> According to the 2007 Turisme de Catalunya *World Heritage* brochure, "Catalonia has the highest number of listed properties in Spain." This includes the Patum de Berga and the Montseny Biosphere Reserve, both of which are recognized by UNESCO, although not as World Heritage Sites. The Patum de Berga, a four-day festival around Corpus Christi was named a masterpiece of World Oral and Intangible Heritage in 2005. Torrent i Queralt (2009) insists that, although it is much more difficult to maintain intangible heritage, it is important to disseminate those elements which form part of Catalans' identity. The Parc Nacional de Montseny was incorporated into UNESCO's network of biosphere reserves in 1978, six years before the first World Heritage Sites. Although directors in the Ministry of Culture and Turisme de Catalunya both stressed the significance of these additional UNESCO designations, they remain beyond the scope of this project.

<u>Site</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Criteria</u>				
		<u>i</u>	<u>ii</u>	<u>iii</u>	<u>iv</u>	<u>v</u>
Works of Gaudí	1984, 2004	X	X		X	
Santa Maria de Poblet	1991	X			X	
Palau de la Música & Hospital Sant Pau	1997	X	X		X	
Rock Art of the Mediterranean Basin	1998			X		
Tárraco	2000		X	X		
Churches of the Vall de Boí	2000		X		X	

**Table 4.2** Criteria for World Heritage Sites in Catalonia (UNESCO)

ICOMOS rejected this classification, arguing that a testimony to the architectural heritage of the early 1900s was better covered in other criteria. For other sites, such as the Hospital de Sant Pau, the Palau de la Música Catalana, the ruins of Tárraco, and the rock art, the state party did not suggest criteria under which the buildings should be selected, leaving ICOMOS to form its own recommendation.

These justifications, while setting forth official reasons for the site's World Heritage designation, are not necessarily the sole, or even primary, narrative(s) promoted by Turisme de Catalunya or at the site itself. UNESCO does not ignore the Catalanist symbolism present on several of the buildings such as the Palau de la Música Catalana, but as shown with the example of Masada presented in the previous chapter, a site can be repackaged as a symbol of history by injecting universal applicability into nationalistic symbolism. By focusing on universalistic themes, a site's present value and living history can be overlooked. In reality, few tourists look up the nomination files on UNESCO's website and read its descriptions of the monuments. Once inscribed on the List, it is the responsibility of the State Party, or the autonomous community in the case

of Spain, to promote the site. This is not to imply that the official justifications are ignored at any level in Spain or elsewhere. The artistic and historical values of the sites, as acknowledged by UNESCO, are important elements of their cultural worth. However, by presenting the sites together, the Generalitat is able to weave them into a wider historical narrative, with each site serving as a representative keystone of Catalan heritage and identity.

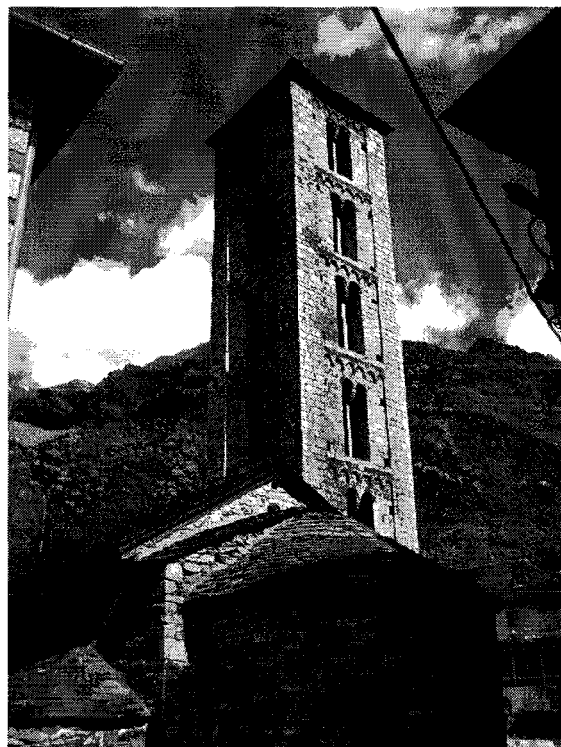
A European Country: The Catalan Romanesque Churches of the Vall de Boí

“The unity of our national artistic ideal was embodied in severe naturalism, simple and well-proportioned Romanesque art, which is the art of our people.” Enric Prat de la Riba, first president of the Mancomunitat. (Ganau Casas 1997, 137)

The Vall de Boí is located in the comarca of Alta Ribagorça in the Pyrenees, next to the stunning Aigüestortes i Estany Sant Maurici National Park. The eight tiny villages have a population of barely one thousand and no less than fifteen churches built between the eleventh and twelfth centuries, nine of which carry World Heritage designation. The steep, narrow valley’s isolation not only protected its inhabitants from the Moors during the Middle Ages, but also preserved their medieval buildings for nearly a millennium. There does not appear to be a satisfactory answer as to why there is such a high concentration of churches constructed in the same time period; the village of Taüll even has two churches – Santa Maria and Sant Climent – which were consecrated on consecutive days in December of 1123. The churches all show strong Lombard Romanesque influences in their layout, design and decoration (see figure 4.1). What particularly set these churches apart from the many that dot the Pyrenean landscape were

the astonishingly well-preserved frescoes that were ‘rediscovered’ by Catalanist excursionists in the late 1800s.

Hiking excursions in Catalonia have long had nationalistic undertones (García Ramon and Nogué Font 1994; Alexander Alland and Sonia Alland 2006; Payne 2004). Many excursionist societies were set up in the nineteenth century, dedicated to studying the riches of Catalonia “from the scientific, artistic and literary viewpoints” (Granell and Ramon 2005, 321). Much like other Romantic hiking associations across Europe at the time, as well as the modern Israeli *tiyulim*



**Figure 4.1** Santa Eulàlia d'Erill la Vall (M. Landers 2009)

mentioned in the previous chapter, the excursions were aimed at discovering the history and geography of Catalonia in order to produce a detailed compilation of the country’s past as a contribution to establishing a national identity (Castiñeras and Ylla-Català 2005, 304). The knowledge of the geographical space of the country was considered necessary in order to grasp the idea of being a nation (García Ramon and Nogué Font 1994). The top political and cultural figures of the era were all members of these societies, including the leading *moderniste* architects. Lluís Domènech i Montaner, designer of the Palau de la Música Catalana and



the Hospital de Sant Pau, was a founding member of what would become the Centre Excursionista de Catalunya. In 1904, Domènech i Montaner and his son visited the Vall de Boí and documented the extraordinarily well-preserved murals, followed three years later by a scientific excursion of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans to fully document the site (Granell and Ramon 2005). With the excuse of saving the 700-year old paintings from the elements and art-hungry American industrialists, the Institut d'Estudis Catalans removed the best of the paintings from the stone walls and transported them to what is now the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya in Barcelona.

ICOMOS (2000a) touts the churches as some of the most “pure and consistent” examples of the Romanesque, listing them under criterion *iv*. The singular importance of these churches, in comparison with other Romanesque around Europe, lies in their group value as a unique cluster of churches from the same relatively brief time period. A universalizing element is seen in their preservation of “the quality of daily life in medieval rural communities.” Importantly, the nomination file recognizes that the churches have considerable significance in the creation of Catalan cultural identity, stating that “the art of the Pyrenean village churches played a vital role in the movement for the re-establishment of Catalan nationality in the early years of the twentieth century.” As with the Masada example, the nationalist importance of the Vall de Boí is difficult to avoid, even in a theoretically apolitical venture. Finally, they are inscribed under criterion *ii*, which attributes their cultural significance to the representation of the transmission of artistic and cultural movements across medieval Europe, and in particular across the mountain barrier of the Pyrenees. ICOMOS proposed a slight modification of

the proposed name for the site, from “the Romanesque Catalan Ensemble of the Vall de Boí” to “the Catalan Romanesque Churches of the Vall de Boí” so as to better represent its exact nature.

The ideological connections between the medieval Romanesque and nineteenth century Catalonia were strong and undeniable:

In Catalonia more than perhaps anywhere else in Europe, the history of art, architecture and politics are frequently intertwined in the historiography of the Romanesque at the end of the 1880s and the early 1900s. Here we are faced with a paradox and one that is rarely demonstrable in the context of the turn of the century in Europe: the leading lights in the study of the Romanesque were also the protagonists of a political ideology. Thus, their scientific studies, their works of art, their cultural events in which they took part and the political ideas of the institutions they defended were simply different aspects of the selfsame concern. (Castiñeras and Ylla-Català 2005, 304)

Evoking the origins of Catalonia, the churches of the Vall de Boí are used to demonstrate the historical depth of the Catalan nation, as well as the long-standing existence of a self-governing Catalonia. The medieval religious buildings and paintings have nothing intrinsically political about them. They were small village parishes in a valley that was contested between the bishop of Roda and the counts of Ribagorça, Pallars Jussà and Pallars Sobirà (CRVB, 1), who likely did not see themselves as part of some entity called Catalonia. Turisme de Catalunya places these monuments in a historical context that positions them in relation to other significant events in the region’s story. The Romanesque, so splendidly embodied in these seven churches, becomes “the art form which coincided with Catalonia’s birth and early development and the formation of the Catalan language” (*The Seal of Quality*, 6). The *Cultura Viva* brochure states that

“Romanesque art emerged at the time of the foundation and the incipient political development of Catalonia and is also the first fully Catalan style” (Roma).

As acknowledged by UNESCO in its description of the churches as evoking the transmission of an artistic style across the Pyrenees, the art and architecture of the churches of the Vall de Boí exhibit strong influences from northern Europe, namely Lombardy and Flanders (Payne 2004; Granell and Ramon 2005). Linking their traditions to the European mainstream is characteristic of many forms of Catalan nationalism (Conversi 1997; Hargreaves 2000; Keating 2002; Payne 2004; Guibernau i Berdún 1997); drawing parallels with Europe often serves a dual purpose of bringing the region closer to northern Europe as well as setting it apart from the rest of Iberia.

Catalan art assimilated [European] influences and then invented something of its own... They instill pride in Catalan visitors since they represent a unique moment, showing Catalonia to be distinct in its artistic legacy from Spain, but closely linked to Europe. (Holo 1999, 175)

This idea of a European connection as a marker of identity is found throughout Turisme de Catalunya's publications: “In the age of Romanesque art... Catalonia was in full harmony with the European cultural and artistic mainstream” (Roma, 67). Another publication on the Romanesque in Catalonia by Turisme de Catalunya states:

Romanesque was the first great style to be shared by the whole of Western Europe. It appeared during the Middle Ages... as the Carolingian Empire was breaking up and the various European nationalities taking shape. (Pladevall i Font and Gurri i Serra, 1)

However, while Turisme de Catalunya says that the style unified all of Western Europe, the Romanesque is not very prevalent in the rest of Iberia. While this may not be an intentional rejection of Spain as part of Western Europe, it does evoke the sentiment that

Catalonia is more connected to Western and Northern Europe than the rest of the peninsula. While Catalonia and “the whole of Western Europe” were in the Romanesque era, the majority of Spain was under firm Moorish control. At a time when Africa was said to start at the Pyrenees, this firmly places Catalonia, at least culturally, on the European side of that divide..

Turisme de Catalunya recognizes that the churches of the Vall de Boí need to be differentiated as potential tourist destinations to distinguish them from other similar sites all around Europe. Patrick Torrent i Queralt, Deputy Director of Turisme de Catalunya, explains that while the Vall de Boí churches are exceptionally well-preserved,

we cannot sell them as Romanesque. Because there is Romanesque in Lombardy, and the Romanesque in Lombardy is more original. There is Romanesque in France; there is Romanesque in many parts of Europe. We have to sell our Romanesque as something different, by explaining the experiences, the lives, what happened in our spaces during the Romanesque era. We do not have to talk only of the stones; we have to also talk about life, the society, the social movements that were occurring as the churches of the Vall de Boí were being built. (Torrent i Queralt 2009)

The local museum, el Centre del Romànic de la Vall de Boí, is full of exhibits detailing the daily lives of the peasants, the clergy, and the nobility of the valley in the twelfth century. However, Turisme de Catalunya focuses several of its brochures on the historical era itself, explaining how during this time period, the Catalan people were consolidating their language and culture. A wider social context resonating with the present is offered. David Lowenthal (1994, 15) argues that “ancient credentials and links with sacred terrain buttress the sovereignty of peoples the world over.” Catalonia has identified the Middle Ages as the era of its cultural and political inception, with the

Romanesque style in general, and the Vall de Boí churches specifically, as the physical reminder of that era.

In 1988, the newly reestablished Generalitat announced the year's theme of *Catalunya: Mil Anys*, a celebration of one thousand years of Catalan history since the Count of Barcelona was said to have ended his vassalage to the Carolingian Franks. Jordi Pujol (1996, 253) argues that Catalonia is the “only Carolingian country of Spain” and that “When we celebrate the millennium of the birth of our nation, what we want to underline is this particular aspect of our identity.” Many CiU politicians in power at the time stressed the medieval origins of Catalonia, its language, and its democratic institutions such as the Corts and the Generalitat. (Payne 2004). That mentality is still visible in several of Turisme de Catalunya's publications:

Catalonia is a small country, in terms of size. But its personality, shaped by over a thousand years of history, and its distinct culture and language, have made it both rich and great. Catalonia's origins as a geographical, territorial and linguistic unit date back to the high Middle Ages. (Anon. 2007)

Catalanists can point to the medieval era as a time when a nascent Catalonia was consolidating and distinguishing itself from its Frankish, Castilian and Moorish neighbors. At the same time, it was inextricably linked to wider European trends, further setting it apart from Castilla and Al-Andalus. The Romanesque churches of the Vall de Boí offer Catalonia a convenient representative of a true national starting point. The Catalan counties were taking shape and beginning to come together under the Counts of Barcelona, who themselves would soon create a dynastic union with the Kingdom of Aragon.

### Empire in the Mediterranean: The Royal Monastery of Santa Maria de Poblet

Founded in 1150 roughly halfway between Tarragona and Lleida, the monastery of Santa Maria de Poblet has long been an important monument in Catalonia. It is the grandest of the three monasteries that make up the *Ruta del Cister* (Route of the Cistercians), which showcases the renaissance of monastic movements that began in the eleventh century. Ramon Berenguer IV granted control over large tracts of farmland to the abbeys of Poblet, Santes Creus, and Vallbona de les Monges to encourage the resettlement and economic redevelopment of the *Catalunya Nova* area, which had been reconquered from the Moors south of the historic Spanish March. King Pere IV the Ceremonious transformed the monastery into a fortified royal residence in the middle of the fourteenth century and was the first of fourteen Aragonese kings and queens to be buried there. Josep Pla (1980, 30) writes that “The monastery of Poblet is inseparable from our country [Catalonia] and from the Iberian Peninsula.” This bond of kinship extends to both the good and the bad; the monks fled in 1835 just before the monastery was sacked and burned by an anticlerical mob during the Carlist Wars. As with the majority of church property, it was seized by the government during Prime Minister Juan Alvarez Mendizábal’s *desamortización* of 1837 and was left to ruin. During his childhood, Gaudí and his friends drew up thorough plans to rehabilitate the complex and bring it back to self-sufficiency (van Hensenbergen 2001, 15-22). While Gaudí’s plan was never realized, the Cistercians returned in 1940 following the Spanish Civil War and the monastery was rebuilt.

The monastic complex is inscribed on the World Heritage list under criteria *i* and *iv*, with ICOMOS (1989) calling it a masterpiece of Cistercian and Gothic styles. It is remarkable “first and foremost,” for being one of the largest and most complete Cistercian abbeys anywhere. Additionally, it is distinguished for the massive fortifications surrounding it. Finally, its status as a royal residence is described, linking it to the dynasties of Barcelona, Aragon, and Castile. It is presented as representing the history of Spain as a whole, with specific mention of King Alfonso IV the Magnanimous of Aragon’s projects celebrating the conquest of Naples, a visit by the Catholic Monarchs, and a visit by Alfonso XIII of Spain in 1926.

As with the Romanesque churches of the Vall de Boí, Cistercian monasteries are far from unique to Catalonia. Torrent i Queralt (2009) argues that the presence of the royal pantheon is the defining and distinguishing feature of Poblet: “You cannot simply discuss the architecture; the social usefulness of the monastery must be explained, and why the principal Catalan royal dynasties were buried there.” Once again, a wider historical-social context is used to give one place a unique meaning – to make it stand out from other potentially similar places.

As the centerpiece of the *Ruta del Cister*, Poblet’s architectural values as laid out by ICOMOS are widely promoted by Turisme de Catalunya. However, by explicitly tying the monastery to the history of Spain as a whole, UNESCO’s inscription of Poblet differs significantly from the approach taken by Turisme de Catalunya, where the historical importance of the site is entirely wrapped up in its ties to the Crown of Aragon. No mention is given to the kings of united Spain. Going beyond the architectural value

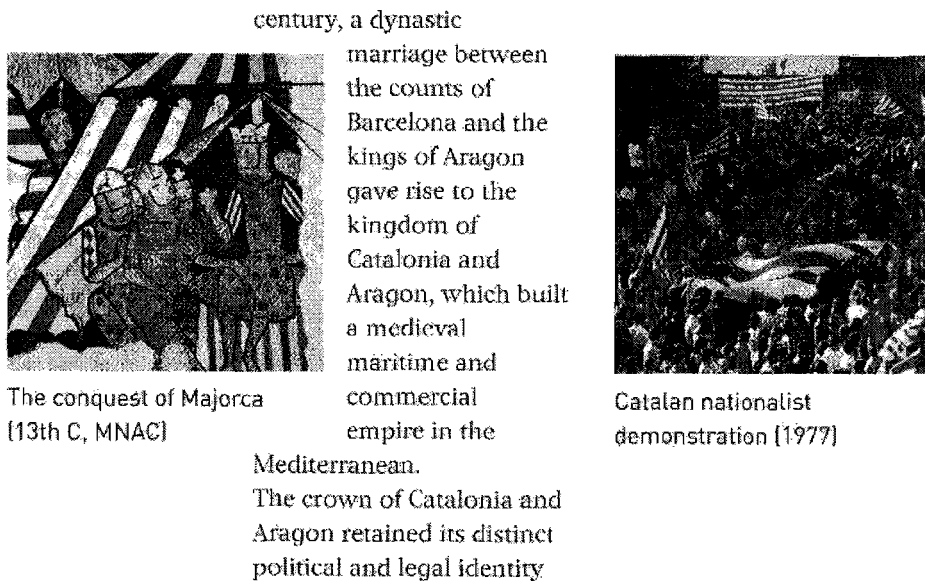
of the Cistercian monastery as an example of the Gothic style, Poblet is positioned as representing a glorified medieval past when Catalonia was both self-governing and powerful. In the 'Universal Heritage' section of *Welcome to Catalonia*, the Gothic was not only the architectural style of the monastery, but also "the age of the great chroniclers (King Jaume I, Muntaner and Desclot), of great poets (such as Ausiàs March from Valencia), and of novels such as *Curial e Güelfa* and *Tirant lo Blanc*" which all together constituted "the Golden Age of Catalan literature" (*Welcome to Catalonia*, 13).

The Crown of Aragon is repeatedly described in the brochures as the height of Catalan power and prestige across the Mediterranean. John Agnew argues that European places and states are often defined through a process in which blocks of space become labeled with essential attributes derived from some "Golden Age" (Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge 2000). Additionally, Catalonia's status in the Crown of Aragon is positioned as the foundation upon which the Generalitat and Catalan self-government are built. Even in the limited space of a tourist brochure, Turisme de Catalunya clearly communicates the idea that the rights and freedoms of Catalans were firmly established and therefore any attempt to restrict them is unjust. The booklet *Catalonia: Seal of Quality* offers the following as part of its telling of history:

The crown of Catalonia and Aragon retained its distinct political and legal identity until Philip V became king of Spain in 1714. Since then the Catalan people have been engaged in a peaceful struggle to win back their rights and freedoms. One of the most significant episodes was the recovery of self-government in 1979, when the Spanish parliament approved the current Statute of Autonomy, which was subsequently endorsed by the Catalan people in a referendum.



This paragraph closely mirrors the wording and the sentiment of the preamble of the *Estatut*. As seen in figure 4.2, this block of text is flanked by a pair of small images whose visual similarities are striking despite the wide differences in time and context. To the left is a thirteenth century painting of King Jaume I and his armies, decked out in the red and yellow stripes of the Catalan flag, conquering the island of Mallorca. To the right is a photograph of the September 11, 1977, demonstrations where over one million Catalans took to the streets of Barcelona to demand autonomy after the death of Franco, with several large yellow and red Catalan flags prominently waving above the crowds. The visual congruence of the two images is telling. The memory of autonomy before 1714 pervades descriptions of Poblet and the Crown of Aragon. The past, with a self-governing Kingdom of Catalonia within the Crown of Aragon, is used to justify the modern situation of the region as a self-governing country within a Spain of the Autonomies.



**Figure 4.2** Juxtaposition of medieval Catalan knights and a nationalist demonstration

Poblet retains important cultural relevance and significance. An article in *La Vanguardia* (March 30, 2008) describes how, for the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Jaume I, the presidents of Aragon, the Balearic Islands and Catalonia met at Poblet and defended the respect for difference and the intrinsic personalities of each autonomous community. As a symbol of a former realm, Poblet becomes a symbol of Catalonia's long-standing existence as a distinct political-territorial unit. It is presented not only as representative of the Crown of Aragon, but also as a marker of the origins of Catalonia as a political-territorial unit. Its size and splendor evokes a Golden Age when much of the western Mediterranean was controlled from Barcelona and Catalan was a language of international trade and commerce.

A Catalan National Art: the Palau de la Música Catalana & the Hospital de Sant Pau

Lluís Domènech i Montaner (1850-1923) was one of the leading figures of Catalan society in the late 1800s and early 1900s. His 1878 work, *En Busca d'una Arquitectura Nacional* ("In Search of a National Architecture"), was centered on articulating a Catalan national style, with the medieval traditions of the *patria* serving as the primary inspiration (Granell and Ramon 2005). He served as the president of the *Unió Catalanista* during the writing of the *Bases de Manresa*, the foundational document of the Mancomunitat. (Hughes 1992). Domènech i Montaner was a frequent contributor to several of the largest periodicals of the time, including *La Renaixença*, *La Veu de Catalunya*, *Revista de Catalunya*, and *El Poble Català*. He is widely known for his role

in the planning and construction of several pavilions for the 1888 Barcelona Universal Exhibition, considered the starting point of the *moderniste* movement.

The State Party justification in the nomination file proclaims that the Palau de la Música Catalana, “through its uniqueness, its authenticity, and its beauty, it is an unparalleled testimony, in the Modernist style, to a public concert hall whose symbolic, artistic, and historical value is universal” (ICOMOS 1997a, 106). The Palau also was one of the first buildings to be constructed with a steel framework, allowing a relatively open floor plan and non-load-bearing outer walls that looked like curtains of stained glass. Similarly, the Hospital de Sant Pau is “an outstanding example of its type, it is of exceptional interest because of its beauty, its size, and its unique architectural design, and is therefore of undeniable universal value” (ICOMOS 1997a, 106). Both structures are seen as some of the earliest and finest examples of *moderniste* art and architecture. They each are given the title *gesamtkunstwerk* (total work of art) and the Hospital is “unquestionably the largest and most ambitious manifestation” of this concept.

The Hospital de Sant Pau i la Santa Creu, as it is officially named, is located in the Eixample district of Barcelona. It is regarded as the largest of all the architectural projects of *modernisme*, taking up nine full city blocks. It was funded almost entirely by the banker Pau Gil and represents an innovative approach to the modern hospital complex. Forty-eight free-standing pavilions (see figure 4.3) were planned, although only twenty were actually completed as designed, amidst seasonal gardens which would grow the herbs and medicinal plants for the pharmacy. A two-kilometer network of tunnels connected each of the pavilions and the surgery. The complex was a fully

functioning hospital through September 2009, when all medical functions were moved to a modern multistory building in an undeveloped corner of the plot. The pavilions are in the process of being converted into fashionable conference halls and the seat of the Union for the Mediterranean (Hernández Herrero 2009).

The Palau de la Música Catalana is unquestionably the most overtly nationalistic World Heritage Site in Catalonia (see figure 4.4). It was conceived and still serves as the headquarters of the Orfeó Català, the most famous of traditional Catalan choral groups. These groups, which rose to prominence after the *Renaixença*, embodied widespread participation in a shared musical tradition and served to foster community pride (Alexander Alland and Sonia Alland 2006, 60). As the home of a society founded on the principles of preserving and promoting national culture, the architecture of the Palau itself “has always defiantly proclaimed Catalonia’s pretensions to nationhood” (Payne 2004, 144). Conflictingly, Payne also argues that it is now hard to see a particular political statement in Catalan *modernisme* architecture. “The politics move on, the buildings remain, largely detached from the particular social and economic circumstances that gave them their original sense and meaning” (Payne 2004, 153). But by listening to any tour guide, reading any brochure or even just approaching the Palau de la Música and noticing the abundant sculptural use of the *senyera*, this building unquestionably has an intensely political meaning.

Turisme de Catalunya echoes this sentiment, declaring in the pamphlet on Domènech i Montaner that it is “an eloquent expression of the objective of national revival proper to the *moderniste* movement” and that



**Figure 4.3** Pavilion of the Hospital de Sant Pau (M. Landers 2009)



**Figure 4.4** Cultural symbolism of the Palau de la Música Catalana (Turisme de Catalunya)

This unique building, with strong political connotations, is considered one of the masterpieces of Modernism and in its symbolic sculptural friezes the intense Catalan nationalist feelings of the period alternate with allusions to the international cultural scene. (Roma, 27)

A publication devoted to *modernisme* around Catalonia reads:

Catalan modernism has its own distinct flavor and covers a vast range which places it, in many respects, at the forefront of the era. At the same time it defines itself as a national art form linked to a political objective: Catalan nationalism... Because of its nationalistic connotations, Modernism contains many signs and symbols relating to the personality of Catalonia: architectural shapes and motifs derived from historical styles and popular art, the ubiquitous Catalan coat of arms and the legend of the country's patron, Saint George, with its militant overtones. But Modernism also aimed at creating an up-to-date culture in harmony with Europe. (Barjau, 1)

The emblems of Saint George, including the red cross, the rose, and the dragon, abound in Domènech i Montaner's buildings. Catalan *senyeras* decorate the entrances, stained-

glass windows, floor tiles, and doorways. The main entrance to the Palau de la Música Catalana is topped with an enormous sculpture of dense cultural symbolism, including Saint George, roses, the *senyera*, and stereotypical Catalan peasants wearing the traditional *barretina* cap. The towers and domes of the Hospital Sant Pau are adorned with alternating roundels of the P and G monograms of Pau Gil, the cross of Saint George, and the *senyera*. The administration building is almost entirely circled by an immense mosaic, which relates the story of the founding of the hospital as well as the history of Catalonia itself. The abundant nationalistic symbolism on the buildings is hard to avoid. During the Franco regime, many of these symbols were covered up and the Palau de la Música Catalana was rechristened in Castilian the *Palacio de la Música*. Even with its cultural connotations, the Palau was designated a national monument in 1971. The attempt to hide the Catalan origins of the building was fruitless though, and in a notable act of cultural resistance, a packed audience sang *Els Segadors*, the Catalan national anthem, and unfurled a large Catalan flag in the presence of several of Franco's officials. Jordi Pujol, future president of the Generalitat, was one of the participants arrested and he has since cited the event as providing his nationalist *bona fides*.

Similar to the narratives surrounding the Romanesque churches of the Vall de Boí, the Palau de la Música and the Hospital Sant Pau are presented as not only distinctly Catalan, but also as intimately European.

Catalonia is and always has been receptive to the various art styles that have succeeded one another in Europe. Two were perhaps more thoroughly assimilated than others: Romanesque art, which emerged while Catalonia's historical personality was taking shape, and Modernisme (Art Nouveau style) born in the heyday of the Renaixença when Catalonia was

recovering the sense of her own identity. (Pladevall i Font and Gurri i Serra, 1)

The main stage of the Palau de la Música's concert hall is flanked by two allegorical pillars – one of a marble representation of Anselm Clavé (the founder of the Orfeó Català) and his poem *Flors de Maig*, and the other of a bust of Beethoven under Wagner's Valkyries. Traditional Catalan music is juxtaposed with the international music of the time. Wider European trends in music – now referred to as classical, but then thought of as modern – and in particular to Wagnerian notions of *gesamtkunstwerk*, were seen as important sources of inspiration. As one brochure states,

Many of the signs of identity of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Catalan bourgeoisie are contained within the Palau de la Música Catalana. A unique building, with its strong political connotations, is considered one of the masterpieces of Modernism and in its symbolic sculptural friezes the intense Catalan nationalist feelings of the period alternate with allusion to the international cultural scene. (Roma, 27)

As Catalan society was industrializing and experiencing its cultural rebirth, a fair number of the bourgeoisie saw Catalonia's role within Spain as a modernizing one – signifying simultaneous Europeanization and Catalanization (Guibernau i Berdún 1997; Giordano and Roller 2002).

As with the Romanesque, *modernisme* was linked to other European styles and ideas, but has few parallels elsewhere in Spain. Along with language, *modernisme* is one of the largest and best known visible expressions of Catalan distinctiveness. Intimately wound up in the cultural and political landscape of the era, it cannot easily be disassociated from its original context. Even if, as Payne asserts, its meanings are

obscured with time, the Generalitat exerts considerable effort making sure that the average tourist is aware of its cultural background.

### The Works of Gaudí

*Modernisme* was the apotheosis of the dream of nationhood, and the apotheosis of *modernisme* was to be Antoni Gaudí. (Payne 2004, 138)

That two *moderniste* architects each had multiple buildings inscribed on the World Heritage List is a testament to the importance of the style both to the image as well as the tourist industry of Barcelona and Catalonia. Seen as outdated after the advent of the *noucentiste* style, *modernisme* lost its place in the national consciousness for the first three quarters of the twentieth century. John Payne (2004) attributes the World Heritage status of the Palau de la Música, as with all *moderniste* sites, to a significant reassessment of the style in the last quarter century.

The fantastical creations of Antoni Gaudí i Cornet (1852-1926) are without a doubt the most famous sites of Catalonia. The original 1984 listing included the Barcelona landmarks of the Casa Milà, the Park Güell and the Palau Güell. The designation was expanded in 2004 with the inclusion of the Casa Batlló, the Nativity façade and crypt of the Sagrada Família, the Casa Vicens, and the crypt of the unfinished church of the Colònia Güell. All are found within the city of Barcelona except for Colònia Güell, which is located in the industrial garden suburb of Santa Coloma de Cervelló. While Gaudí was by all accounts a fervent Catalanist, famously having dared to respond to King Alfonso XIII's questions only in Catalan during a visit to the Sagrada



Família, he is the only major *moderniste* architect to have steered clear of politics (van Hensenbergen 2001). His designs are rife with national symbolism, but he himself was never a political player in the way that Domènech i Montaner or Puig i Cadafalch were.

If Lluís Domènech i Montaner represents the public expression of *modernisme*, Antoni Gaudí's many mansions and town houses clearly exemplify the style's private patronage. Of his private commissions, the best known are those sponsored by the family of the wealthy industrialist Eusebi Güell i Bacigalupi. In 1886, the Güell family, already familiar with the unique architect, commissioned him to build them a palace off the Ramblas in Barcelona. Several other commissions were made, although not all of them were built. When Eusebi Güell established a workers colony in Santa Coloma de Cervelló, he asked Gaudí to design a church that would be grand enough to fit his vision of the community, which the benevolent patron had named Colònia Güell after himself.<sup>14</sup> Gaudí's innovative use of an inverted model to create a network of catenary arches is still widely heralded, although the time and money spent on his plans meant that when Eusebi died and construction was halted, only the crypt had been completed. The industrialist family likewise had grand designs for the Park Güell, which in contrast to the workers' colony was to be a garden suburb for the wealthy on the hilly outskirts of Barcelona. While only two of the sixty residential plots were ever sold<sup>15</sup>, the park's pavilions and gardens quickly became a very popular picnic spot with Barcelonins.

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<sup>14</sup> Just south of Barcelona, Colònia Güell was one of the earliest Catalan attempts to re-create the English model of factory towns removed from the corrupting influence of the city, such as Saltaire (van Hensenbergen 2001).

<sup>15</sup> Gaudí built his own home on the grounds, which has since been turned into a museum of his life and his works.

Casa Vicens was built in 1883 for the tile manufacturer Vicens Montaner. A “clever piece of marketing” (van Hensenbergen 2001, 75), the mansion’s exterior is almost entirely covered with a rich display of ceramic tiles. According to van Hensenbergen (2001, 82), the Casa Vicens was the “first and the last time that Gaudí produced a building that was not firmly rooted in either the Catholic faith or Catalan myth.” Gaudí was becoming known for his unique and fashionable homes, so at the start of the 1900s textile magnate Josep Batlló Casanovas turned to him to design a home on the Passeig de Gràcia that could compete with his neighbors who had sought out the *moderniste* geniuses of Josep Puig i Cadafalch, Enric Sagnier, and Lluís Domènech i Montaner. This stretch of the Passeig de Gràcia is still known as the *manzana de discordia*<sup>16</sup> due to the wildly conflicting façades of the palatial homes that occupy it. Without a doubt, Gaudí’s Casa Batlló is the most striking of the bunch. The organic shapes of the roof and balconies gave rise to the nickname “the house of bones.” By 1906, Gaudí’s reputation was well established, and Pere Milà i Camps commissioned him to construct a massive apartment building on the Passeig de Gràcia. The Casa Milà, popularly referred to as *la Pedrera* (“the quarry”), became one of his signature buildings.

The most famous of all Gaudí’s buildings, and one of the most emblematic structures in the world, is the Temple Expiatori de la Sagrada Família. Gaudí took over the design of the church in 1883, one year after the foundation stone had been laid. In 1926, when Gaudí died after being run down by a tram, only the crypt and four towers of the Nativity façade had been completed. During the tumult of the Civil War, the crypt

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<sup>16</sup> The name is a pun on *manzana*, the Castilian word for apple as well as city block, and the mythological prize in the Judgment of Paris.

was sacked by a mob in 1936, destroying not only all of Gaudí's notes and models but also his tomb. Work on the church was halted throughout the dictatorship, with the towers coming close to demolition at times. The huge upswing in tourist arrivals following the return to democracy led to a reevaluation of the Sagrada Família and of the entire *moderniste* movement itself. In 1987 Josep Maria Subirachs i Sitjar took up the task of completing the church, constructing the controversial Passion façade with virtually no reference to Gaudí's designs. Construction is still ongoing, although a much stronger effort has been made to follow what has been reconstructed of the original plans. UNESCO pointedly recognized only the portions of the building that had been completed by Gaudí himself as worthy of World Heritage designation.

The nomination file describes the selected buildings as being “truly universal in view of the diverse cultural sources that inspired them. They represent an eclectic as well as a very personal style which was given free reign not only in the field of architecture but also in gardens, sculpture and all forms of decorative art” (ICOMOS 2004, 169). Gaudí's drawing of inspiration from cultures and traditions in Catalonia and indeed from across the Mediterranean in general is therefore, along with his particular genius and unique style, the explicit rationale for the valorization of these monuments. His place within the *moderniste* movement is also fully acknowledged:

While there were several other distinguished architects in Catalonia, such as Lluís Doménec [sic] i Montaner (Palau de la Música), the work of Antoni Gaudí had been recognized as the most outstanding, reflecting all the various facets of Catalonian *modernisme*. (ICOMOS 2004, 172)

The whole *moderniste* movement is described by ICOMOS as “distinguished by its patriotic and traditional leaning,” as well as its incorporation of the social and economic

ideas of the period. The 2004 inclusion of additional buildings in the designation was seen as more fully taking into account the creative contribution that Gaudí made to twentieth century architecture.

The 2004 expansion proposal included seven sites that were proposed but rejected by ICOMOS: the Pavellons Güell, the Col·legi de les Teresianas, Casa Calvet, and Casa Bellesguard in Barcelona; El Capricho in the town of Comillas in Cantabria; the Cathedral of Mallorca; the bishop's palace of Astorga; and the Casa de Botines in León. ICOMOS' explanation was that the World Heritage Convention was "not intended to ensure the protection of all properties of great interest, but only for a select list of the most outstanding of these from an international viewpoint" (ICOMOS 2004, 172). None of the proposed properties outside of Catalonia proper were included. As this decision was taken by the advisory board, and not any member of the Generalitat or the Spanish Ministry of Culture, it would be a mistake to attribute this omission to any conscious decision to cast Gaudí's architectural heritage as solely Catalan. Nonetheless, all of the accepted inscribed Gaudí sites are found within the *Principat* proper; Catalonia is able to more easily stake its claim than if the designation had been spread across multiple regions.

Turisme de Catalunya's depictions and descriptions of Gaudí's architecture closely mirror the nomination file. Above all, Gaudí's unique genius is lauded and his innovative architecture remains the focal point of all promotional materials. As in the nomination files, the patriotic undertones of *modernisme* are not ignored in the brochures. In fact, it becomes in one booklet "the style of Gaudí, of the rising bourgeoisie, the

industrial revolution, the political and cultural rebirth of Catalonia” (Roma, 5). Gaudí’s “intense Catalan nationalist feelings” are listed as some of his most powerful sources of inspiration.

The *Catalunya és Cultura* brochure describes its mission as helping visitors “to understand the world of Gaudí and the historical and cultural context in which his work was fulfilled.” In the Generalitat’s historical and cultural context of Catalonia, the *modernisme* of Gaudí epitomizes “the time of Catalonia’s national rebirth” (*The Seal of Quality*, 4) much as the Romanesque represents the birth of the Catalan nation. The individual buildings themselves may not have overt nationalist value, but they can be taken as emblematic of a particular era when *Catalanisme* was surfacing as a powerful artistic, cultural, and political force. By evoking a time of national revival and wealth, Turisme de Catalunya emphasizes that the people of Catalonia are a distinct group. *Modernisme* is something unique to Catalonia, or at least to the Països Catalans.<sup>17</sup> Its exuberance reflects its sponsors’ status as Spain’s first industrialists at a time when most of the Spanish economy was still agrarian. Despite plentiful linkages to contemporary European movements, the uniqueness of *modernisme* is presented as stemming from its cultural context as a particularly Catalan phenomenon.

The Catalan symbolism found throughout *moderniste* works is equally present in Gaudí’s works. Gijs van Hensebergen (2001, 143) describes Park Güell as “designed to provide the dweller with a living essay in Catalan nationhood and Catholic piety.” He further explains Eusebi Güell’s choice of the English word *park* as opposed to the

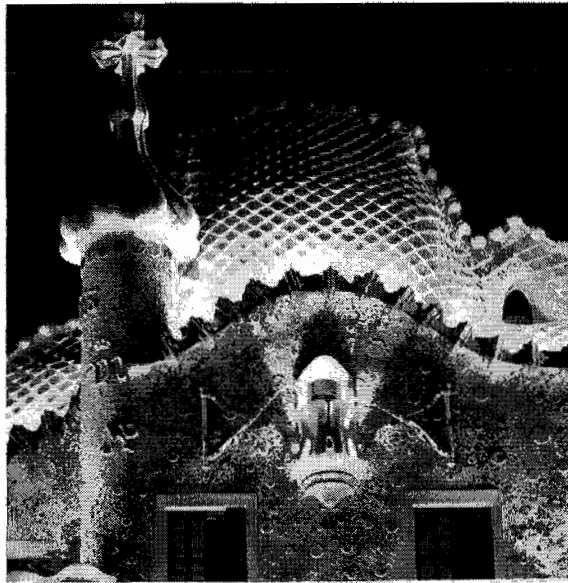
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<sup>17</sup> *Moderniste* buildings can be found in Valencia and the Balearic Islands, as well as sporadically throughout other cities in Spain where Catalan architects found commissions.

Catalan *parc* or Castilian *parque* as a deliberate action to tie the development to contemporary English utopian community planning. As van Hensenbergen sees it, the industrialist (and staunch Catalanist) was deliberately comparing Catalonia to England and Germany at the expense of Castile. The mosaic lizard fountain of Park Güell is sometimes interpreted the dragon slain by Saint George, Catalonia's patron saint. Images of the fountain are some of the most common visual depictions of the park, and often include the Catalan coat of arms above the statute. There is mention of "traditional Catalan brick vaults" throughout the publications dealing with Gaudí, as well as Domènech i Montaner. Most frequently portrayed by Turisme de Catalunya is Casa Batlló, which serves as another architectural allegory of Saint George and the dragon. The arching, scaly back of the dragon can be seen in the brightly colored tiled roof, with the slender tower topped with a cross as the lance plunging into the beast (see figure 4.5). According to several brochures, the bony balconies and bay windows represent the remains of the victims of the dragon. Turisme de Catalunya makes sure to point out that the main entrance to the Palau Güell is dominated by a massive, three-dimensional Catalan coat of arms topped with a wrought-iron dragon.

Not all scholars agree that Gaudí represents the "apotheosis of *modernisme*." Some, such as Payne (2004, 394), speculate about whether Gaudí too unique to be classified into any specific style; he stands out from his contemporaries in religious obsessions and search for the past rather than the future. The staunchly conservative architect himself was said to loathe the style, which the Catholic church regarded as a sort of heresy (van Hensenbergen 2001, 157). Regardless of his place within the Catalan

classified into any specific style; he stands out from his contemporaries in religious obsessions and search for the past rather than the future. The staunchly conservative architect himself was said to loathe the style, which the Catholic church regarded as a sort of heresy (van Hensenbergen 2001, 157). Regardless of his place within the Catalan cultural movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Gaudí is consistently portrayed as the emblematic and quintessential *moderniste* artist by Turisme de Catalunya, as well as other tourist agencies. For expressing “the strength of identity,” a phrase found throughout the brochures, there is evidently nothing better than Catalan *modernisme*.



**Figure 4.5** Casa Batlló

Thousands of Years of History: the Archaeological Ensemble of Tàrraco

Many scholars have noted that for a state to prove that it was modern and deserved a place amongst other modern states, it had to produce a past, preferably an ancient one (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Lowenthal 1998; Cresswell 2004; Pretes

bestowed the title *Colonia Iulia Urbs Triumphalis Tarraconensis* upon the city in 45 BCE and established it as the capital of Hispania Citerior (later Hispania Tarraconensis), which covered the majority of the Iberian Peninsula (Hughes 1992, 57). Gradually, much of the Roman city disappeared under Tarragona. During the *Renaixença*, the cultural value of the Roman ruins was reestablished – resulting in a surge of nationalistic excavations and preservation efforts. Tarragona was among the first destinations for many of the Catalan *excursioniste* societies; Gaudí himself accompanied the *Associació d'Excursions Catalana* to the ruins in 1882 (van Hensenbergen 2001, 63).

The reevaluation of Tarragona's Roman heritage occurred toward the end of the nineteenth century. City walls, seen as constricting the rapidly expanding cities of the time, were being torn down all over Spain. Barcelona's despised walls, erected by Felipe V in order to contain the city after the siege of 1714, were torn down to make way for the *Eixample* in 1854. But at the same time, as ancient walls were falling in the name of progress, certain cities<sup>18</sup> began to see their walls in a new light. Tarragona, too, realized that its Roman walls, which did not encircle or constrict the town, had a certain symbolic value. In 1884, the walls of Tàrraco were some of the first in Catalonia to be recognized as National Monuments (Ganau Casas 1997; 1998). Other remains, such as the aqueduct, amphitheater, praetorium, triumphal arch, and a few villas were quickly added to the list.

This newfound esteem for Roman monuments eclipsed that for other forms of architectural and cultural heritage. The Romanesque church of Santa Maria del Miracle is a case in point. The small, cruciform Romanesque church was erected in the center of the

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<sup>18</sup> Notably Ávila, Lugo, and Toledo



amphitheater in the seventh century in memory of Christians who died in the arena (see figure 4.6). Over the centuries it became a convent, and later a prison, before gradually falling into a state of disrepair and subsequent seizure by the city in 1911. Several cultural and preservationist organizations, such as the Societat Arqueològica Tarraconense, called for the preservation of the structure. Jeroni Martorell, the president of the Centre Excursionista de Catalunya recalled the words of John Ruskin by imploring Tarragonins that

the conservation of monuments from the past is not a simple question of convenience or sentiment. We do not have the right to touch them. They do not belong to us. They belong in part to those who built them, in part to the generations that will follow us (Ganau Casas 1997, 504).

Martorell's appeal to his fellow citizens was futile, however. In May of 1915 another wall of the church collapsed, leaving mostly a ruined foundation. Santa Maria del Miracle was finally declared an architectural-artistic monument in 1923, a year after the city fire brigade dynamited most of what remained of the ruins. While medieval monuments in other parts of Catalonia were the focus of conservation movements, in Tarragona it was the rich Roman past which was most valued (Ganau Casas 1997, 506). The Romanesque and the Gothic are the first national styles of Catalonia, although they are anything but rare. The Roman ruins are a distinguishing feature of Tarragona that has no parallel within Catalonia and few in the rest of Spain. The grandeur of classical Tàrraco is reflected in the quality and quantity of its remains.

no parallel within Catalonia and few in the rest of Spain. The grandeur of classical Tàrraco is reflected in the quality and quantity of its remains.

The nomination file for the Archaeological Ensemble of Tàrraco describes the city as one of the most important provincial capitals in the Western Roman Empire, with extant ruins that are rivaled only by Rome itself. It was inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria *ii* and *iii* due to its “exceptional importance in the development of Roman urban planning” and as an “unparalleled testimony to a significant stage in the history of the Mediterranean” (ICOMOS 1997c). Interestingly, the State Party submission included a “Comparative Analysis” section that compared the Tàrraco site to the Roman ruins of Emerita Augusta, which had been inscribed on the List in 1993. To justify its designation, Tàrraco is described as deserving priority for its



**Figure 4.6** Roman amphitheater of Tàrraco, with the remains of the church of Santa Maria del Miracle. (M. Landers 2009)

Roman cities in Iberia are hardly unique to Catalonia, with major ruins found, for example, in Sevilla (Hispalis, Itálica), Bolonia (Baelo Claudia), Mérida (Emerita Augusta) and Las Médulas. Itálica produced two emperors - Trajan and Hadrian. The rich gold and silver mines prized by the Romans were located in Hispania Baetica (modern Andalusia) and at Las Médulas in the Leonese Mountains. Nonetheless, Turisme de Catalunya promotes the remains of Tàrraco as those of one of the foremost cities of the whole Empire. Tàrraco is perceived as a larger complex of monuments with greater historical value than any other in Spain. Roman power originated in what would become Catalonia long before the Meseta Central of Castilla. Toletum (Toledo) was an important Roman trading center, but it ultimately answered to Tàrraco.

Recalling an ancient, classical past strengthens Catalan claims to civilization within the framework of the modern state system. Catalonia establishes an ideological comparison for its modern position as the richest and most developed region of Spain by pointing to a long historical period of political power and dominance. Gaudí viewed the name Spain itself as a part of Catalonia's Roman heritage: "We cannot say 'Death to Spain' because we *are* Spain (Hispania Citerior, Tarraconense); those of the Center are outside of Spain, they are of the Ulterior. The name is *ours*" (Hughes 1992, 507). During the period when many of the ruins in Tarragona were being excavated and protected by the government, Catalan culture was rapidly shifting away from the exuberant organic architectural forms of *modernisme* to the more restrained *noucentisme*, a sort of neoclassical revival as Catalans increasingly identified themselves with the history and values of the Mediterranean (Payne 2004).

There is a risk of overstating the political messages found in Tàrraco. Joan Ganau Casas (2009) attributes the UNESCO designation primarily as a marketing effort to increase the relatively small number of tourists visiting Tarragona. As with all the sites, officials in the Generalitat's Ministry of Culture have denied any and all political motivations behind the designation processes. The head of the Archaeology and Paleontology Service of the Generalitat's Ministry of Culture insists that, from the view of archaeological heritage, nationalist discourse makes little sense and is "totally absurd" (Hernández Herrero 2009). She argues that World Heritage designation is a "façade," and agrees with Ganau Casas' assertion that it serves as little more than a marketing effort. To be sure, it is an important bit of marketing, but it is above all a brand like the five-J marking of the best salt-cured Iberian hams. Nonetheless, despite the assertions from the Ministry of Culture, it is difficult to pass the brochures off as simply explaining historical fact to an ignorant visitor.

#### When Catalonia Was Not Yet Catalonia: the Rock Art of the Mediterranean Basin

By far the oldest of Catalan World Heritage, the Rock Art of the Mediterranean Basin stands apart from the other sites, both in regard to the nature of the site itself as well as its inscription. ICOMOS recommended that the site be inscribed under criterion *iii* as "the largest group of rock-art sites anywhere in Europe," which "provides an exceptional picture of human life in a seminal period of human cultural evolution" (ICOMOS 1997b). Gemma Hernández-Herrero, the head of the Archaeology and Paleontology Service of the Generalitat's Ministry of Culture points out that there is

nothing political about the Paleolithic rock art found throughout Catalonia and much of eastern Spain. As a multi-region inscription, it is difficult for Catalonia to call upon them as any kind of particular signifier of identity, even in relation to Castilla. Additionally, the rock art is so old that it is all but useless in establishing any sort of practical claim of national descent. This example is therefore an exception to the territorial themes seen in other sites, and it supports the assertion that the designation of cultural World Heritage is not motivated by politics. In this case, there is hardly any additional description of the Paleolithic art that can take a different approach from the text found in the nomination file.

### Conclusion

The Catalan Ministry of Culture insists that there are little or no nationalist or revanchist motivations behind the promotion of its World Heritage Sites. Officials claim that the values presented in the sites “are exclusively those of heritage” (Tosas 2009). First and foremost their mission is to promote Catalonia as a tourist brand “recognized, identified, and valued for its singularity and for its identity, of the highest order” (Torrent i Queralt 2009). By using identity as a mark of distinction, the Generalitat sets itself up for a nationalist presentation of its heritage. The term nationalist, though, does not imply any one vision of Catalonia over others, and by no means does it imply an implicitly separatist message. As the Generalitat’s Head of Archaeology and Paleontology Service remarks,

Catalonia is a small country – it must fight for its identity. What happens is that people come from wherever and they suddenly do not understand

why someone is speaking to them in a different language, this is a means to introduce them to it. This is how it is. A tourist brochure is very condensed though it can be surprising, right, but it cannot give you all the keys to understand something. (Hernández Herrero 2009)

The publications of Turisme de Catalunya manage to include a significant amount of historical and cultural background, giving any visitor reading the material at least a basic understanding only of the importance of the selected monuments, but also of the Catalan *voluntat de ser*.<sup>19</sup>

The Deputy Director of Turisme de Catalunya explains that their heritage is used “to understand the future. We want to give life to this architectural heritage, to explain histories or history around this heritage” (Torrent i Queralt 2009). Yi-Fu Tuan (1974, 100) writes that

Since the birth of the modern state in Europe, patriotism as an emotion is rarely tied to any specific loyalty; it is evoked by abstract categories of pride and power, on the one hand, and by certain symbols, such as the flag, on the other.

In explaining history and giving life to many of these sites, the Generalitat consciously or unconsciously emphasizes patriotic symbols represented in or by these structures. It evokes particular themes of cultural heritage which can be seen as legitimizing its place as a political-territorial unit. First, the Romanesque and *moderniste* styles set Catalans apart from the rest of Spain as a unique cultural group, one which is also closely tied to the rest of Europe. In the modern state system, the nation-state is the ideal political-cultural division of territory, so positioning Catalonia as a distinct political territory solidifies its claims as an autonomous community. Second, an ancient past, embodied in

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<sup>19</sup> This politically loaded term literally means a “will to exist” but has deeper connotations of national pride and a desire to express that identity without interference.

the Roman ruins of Tàrraco, the churches of the Vall de Boí, and the monastery of Poblet, establishes Catalonia as a modern continuation of a long-standing unit. An ancient past provides evidence of supposed prestige and cultural longevity. Finally, the Vall de Boí and Poblet point not only to Catalonia's deep past, but also to its historical status as a self-governing territory. Oftentimes in the modern state system, sovereignty is taken as eternal – once granted, it cannot be taken away. Regardless of the anachronistic use of the term “sovereignty”, Catalonia bases its current form of self-government on its historical legal status within the Crown of Aragon, as the Mancomunitat, and autonomy under the Second Republic.

In response to a question about the territorial terminology used in respect to Catalonia, Torrent i Queralt said

The term we never use is nation, but neither do we use region nor autonomous community. Autonomous community is an administrative term which is very recent. Region explains very poorly our history as a people; it is insufficient to explain our differentiation as a people. The term nation appears in the Preamble to the new *Estatut*, but often people confuse the term nation with the state. So, for this destination we use country.

The Generalitat and its departments are well aware of the politics surrounding territorial terminology in Spain. With the debate over the *Estatut* still unresolved, it remains difficult to refer to Catalonia officially as a nation, regardless of whether or not it meets the academic definition of the term. Nonetheless, administrative terms like “autonomous community” and rather vague geographical conceptions such as “region” are equally unappealing. Catalonia, therefore, is a country in the way that Scotland and Wales are

countries. Much like the constituent countries within Great Britain, Catalonia continuously asserts its territorial identity within the framework of the Spanish state.



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

A particular sequence of page pairs from the *País de Qualitat* booklet is illustrative of each of the points that have been discussed in previous chapters. Entitled *La Força de Identitat* (The Force of Identity, see figure 5.1) and *Catalunya, Patrimoni Universal* (Catalonia, a Universal Heritage, see figure 5.2), these pages serve as an introduction to Catalonia. Opposite each of these brightly colored title pages is a simpler page with columns dedicated to explaining more specific topics, such as Catalan language as a symbol of identity and descriptions of each of the major styles of Catalan heritage. The photos include the central skylight of the Palau de la Música Catalana, the palace of the Generalitat, and the Christ in Majesty fresco of Sant Climent de Taüll.

In presenting its identity, Catalonia is described as a “small country with a history of over one thousand years and with its own culture and language which have shaped its personality.” Its current geographical, linguistic, and territorial position is traced back to the Middle Ages. Catalonia is a country of Europe, comparable in size to Belgium, the Netherlands or Switzerland. Turisme de Catalunya explains that Catalonia has experienced “a variety of degrees of sovereignty,” as well as its own political institutions and forms of government. Several of these institutions are listed, including the Catalan parliament, “one of the oldest of Europe.” Finally, after declaring Catalonia’s deep cultural and political distinction, the *Estatut* is described as the framework through which

these institutions are established and a document that ensures that Catalonia “shares political power with the institutions of the Spanish state.” Regarding Catalonia’s universal heritage, the major Catalan art forms are each associated with their particular artistic movements. Roman Classicism thrived when Hispania Tarraconensis was one of the foremost provinces of the Empire. The Romanesque corresponds with Catalonia’s birth as a nation, as the Gothic does with an era of Catalan hegemony in the Mediterranean. Catalan rebirth in the nineteenth century cannot be understood without knowledge of the *moderniste* movement.

The three territorial themes of cultural heritage promotion are seen in the Generalitat’s presentation of its World Heritage Sites. By exhibiting the various distinguishing feature of the Romanesque of the Vall de Boí, the monastery of Santa Maria de Poblet, and the *moderniste* buildings of Gaudi and Domènech i Montaner, Catalonia is shown as the home to a distinct cultural group (i.e. a nation). The region’s long history as a geographical unit is represented by the thousand-year old Romanesque churches, the monastery of Poblet, and to a certain extent, the Roman ruins of Tàrraco. Regardless of the actual appropriateness of the term sovereignty, the two medieval sites are reminders of Catalonia’s historical self-government. While UNESCO insists on an apolitical approach to World Heritage, these themes closely mirror the language of the *Estatut* as well many of the leading Catalan political figures of the last thirty years.

Former President of the Generalitat Jordi Pujol (1996) insists that Catalonia has its own *voluntat de projecció*, or the will to make itself known. Perceived as a matter of survival, many Catalans feel that they must inform others about Catalan identity,

language, culture, collective conscience, and will to exist. “Catalonia, as a country, as a people, has an absolutely distinct origin from the rest of the other peoples of Spain” (Pujol i Soley 1991, 12). This idea is stressed as one of the distinguishing features of the region, and as the Deputy Director of Turisme de Catalunya remarked, it is a significant element in the marketing of Catalonia. Even after Pujol’s retirement and the end of the center-right CiU’s dominance of the Generalitat, this sentiment lives on. Current President of the Generalitat, José Montilla Aguilera of the Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya, remarked in *La Vanguardia* (April 9, 2004) that “For me, Catalonia is a nation, which forms part of the nation of nations which is Spain”

Officials involved in the nomination and promotion processes denied any particular political motivations behind Catalan World Heritage initiatives. World Heritage is described primarily as an important marketing brand to attract more visitors and investment from outside groups. But nonetheless, officials from both the Catalan Ministry of Culture and Turisme de Catalunya recognize that the region has a comparatively large number of designated sites and that they are a particular point of pride. And regardless of any conscious attempt, or lack thereof, on the part of the Generalitat to politicize its World Heritage, the manner in which Catalonia is presented to the world by Turisme de Catalunya cannot be easily separated from the idea that the region has its *hecho diferencial* that sets it apart from other parts of Spain.

All heritage is by necessity limited; it cannot be everything to everyone. Many scholars argue the heritage of one person is, by definition, not the heritage of someone

else. But at the same time, people are capable of holding multiple identities<sup>20</sup> and describing Catalonia as a distinct entity does not explicitly imply support for independence. Turisme de Catalunya does not provide significant distortions in its version of history. Its explanation of individual sites is generally similar to that of other touristic publications.

However, when presented together, the Generalitat can use the World Heritage Sites within its borders to frame and bolster a particular story of the region, with each site serving as a benchmark of an important era of Catalan history. As the Generalitat promotes what it sees as the historical underpinnings of the nation of Catalonia, it simultaneously uses the geographical vocabulary of the modern state system to justify and legitimate its position within an evolving Spain of the Autonomies. Even as Catalonia is involved in carving out a unique position for itself and does not yet claim to be a sovereign state, it remains constrained by what John Agnew (1994) calls the “territorial trap,” where a state-like territory and its associated terminology are privileged above all other scales.

Catalonia remains engaged in a process of establishing its place within a Spain of the Autonomies and a Europe of the Regions. Enric Fossas (1998) calls Catalonia “the most presentable face of nationalism in Europe.”

We are a nation without a state. We belong to the Spanish state, but we have no ambitions of secession. This must be stated clearly. On the contrary, we intend to be as active as possible in Spanish politics and in

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<sup>20</sup> In general, see Urry 1995; Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge 2000; Graham and Howard 2008; McDowell 2008; and Di Giovine 2009. Regarding the particular multiple identification of Catalans, see Guibernau i Berdún 1997a, 1997b, 2006, 2007; Keating 2000, 2002; and Giordano and Roller 2002.

the construction of the Spanish state, from the economic, political, and social points of view. (Pujol i Soley 1996, 251)

How comparable are these results to other regional minorities in Spain and elsewhere? The Generalitat, as spelled out in Article 198 of the *Estatut*, has always seen participation in UNESCO as a particularly important activity. Officials in the Catalan Ministry of Culture conceded that they have been more active than other regions in seeking out the World Heritage brand. Galicia and the Basque Country, the other two autonomous communities recognized for their *hecho diferencial*, have three and two World Heritage Sites, respectively. Most of those, such as the Route of Santiago de Compostela and the Paleolithic Cave Art of Northern Spain, are spread across multiple regions. The other realms of the former Crown of Aragon likewise have little ability to assemble any sort of narrative of their history with the few sites within their borders, and the regional tourism offices of Aragon, the Balearic Islands, and Valencia do not have promotional materials specifically dedicated to World Heritage.

Andalucía and Castilla y León, with six and seven sites respectively, are the only regions with a World Heritage inventory comparable to Catalonia. Castilian-speaking Andalucía is notable for its declaration of “historical nationality” in its own Statute of Autonomy (Junta de Andalucía, 2006), a term that was revised to “historical reality” in the 2006 reform, which was passed soon after that of the Catalan *Estatut*. Sites carrying World Heritage designation in Andalucía include extravagant Moorish buildings,

Renaissance cities, the Casa de la Contratación in Sevilla,<sup>21</sup> the Rock Art of the Mediterranean Basin, and Doñana National Park. There is potential for the regional tourist office of Andalucía to use its World Heritage to promote its own narrative along the lines of Turisme de Catalunya, although similar claims of distinct nationhood are more difficult to make.

Other regions around the world with significant levels of self-government and with similar regional nationalist movements, such as Québec and Scotland, do not have nearly as many World Heritage Sites as Catalonia. Hence, while they can make comparable claims in general, their ability to do so through the lens of World Heritage is limited. As seen with the dispute between Cambodia and Thailand over the Preah Vihear temple (Mydans 2008; Di Giovine 2009), states often hold World Heritage status as a point of national pride. Bulgaria, with seven cultural sites and two natural sites, appears to promote a similar style of national narrative in a preliminary analysis of World Heritage pamphlets available in the national tourist center in Sofia. In the end, it is really a question of having enough cultural sites inscribed on the List to formulate a coherent narrative. Few countries around the world, let alone sub-state units, have enough sites or autonomy to carry out a nation-building project equivalent to the one examined in this project.

There are elements of this project that deserve further investigation. Even if Catalonia's presentation of World Heritage Sites fits in with common ideas of what a

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<sup>21</sup> The Casa de la Contratación embodies the Spanish role in the colonization of the Americas, as all commerce that passed between Spain and its colonies, as well as between the colonies themselves, had to be registered and recorded there.

nation is or should be, how much of a difference does this make in the eyes of the Catalan and Spanish peoples? The publications of Turisme de Catalunya were rarely found outside of official tourism offices, such as those in Barcelona and London. Regional, provincial, and municipal offices carried some, but not all, of the selections available at the central locations. Each region, town, and site seemed to have its own pamphlets available on-site, further complicating the picture. In October 2009, after all the field work for this project had been completed, the consortium of Turisme de Catalunya was remodeled as a public-private enterprise called the Agència Catalana de Turisme. It remains to be seen if or how this organizational change may shift the messages included in the regional promotional publications.

With a multiplicity of interpretations available on site, which ones dominate? Which ones resonate more with tourists and better communicate their versions of place-based identity? Many tourist experiences are carried out with the assistance of an outside touring company or are self-guided. An official tourism bureau is just one of many potential actors contributing to a site's interpretation. While scholars such as Michael Urry (1995), Michael Pretes (2003), and Catherine Palmer (1999; 2005) argue that tourism plays a part in the construction of the imagined community of the nation, are the official interpretations visible enough to change many peoples' perceptions of place?

As this study has made clear, taking tangible cultural representations, such as tourism brochures, seriously can offer important insights into the nation-building process. The publications of Turisme de Catalunya are not simply glossy pamphlets to entice tourists to spend their time and money in Catalonia. They are a medium through which

ideas of place and identity are communicated to a potentially wide audience. The Generalitat, with legal competency over its own cultural and tourist promotion, is given significant leverage over the projection of Catalonia not only to the outside world but within Spain as well. For a knowledgeable visitor, the cultural and historical introductions to Catalonia can reinforce or challenge previously-held conceptions of the region. For the casual tourist with little background knowledge beyond an image of Spain as destination of sun, beaches, *siesta* and *fiesta*, Turisme de Catalunya can begin to educate the visitor in some of what are commonly seen as the most important foundations of Catalonia.

This project builds on and complements other studies focused on the role of other cultural projects in the construction of territorial identities. Catalonia's identity politics has been observed in a wide variety of spheres, including sport (Hargreaves 2000, Shobe 2005, 2008) and the European Union (Giordano and Roller 2002; Keating 2000; Guibernau i Berdún 1997), but the region's self-promotion to its twenty-five million annual visitors is under-examined. The personal experiences of the many tourists who come to Catalonia shape how it is perceived; they hear the Catalan language, see the omnipresent *senyera*, and experience the various other forms of cultural differentiation that are acted out on a daily basis. Since the 1992 Olympic Games, the Generalitat has recognized the importance of such a large audience and has worked to challenge tourists' notions of Spain and Catalonia. As one of the most visible touristic brands, World Heritage designation provides a visible, effective vehicle through which Catalonia can be explained.



Catalunya és un país petit en dimensions, però gran i valuós per la seva història de més de mil anys, amb una cultura i una llengua pròpies que n'han anat configurant la personalitat. Els orígens de Catalunya com a unitat geogràfica, lingüística i territorial remunten a l'alta edat mitjana.

# LA FORÇA DE LA IDENTITAT



Catalunya, un país d'Europa

Situada al nord-est de la península Ibèrica, Catalunya té més de set milions d'habitants i ocupa una superfície de 31.980 km<sup>2</sup>, una extensió semblant a la de Bèlgica, els Països Baixos o Suïssa. Al llarg dels segles, la nació catalana ha tingut diversos graus de sobirania emparats per les institucions polítiques i les formes de govern pròpies de cada època.

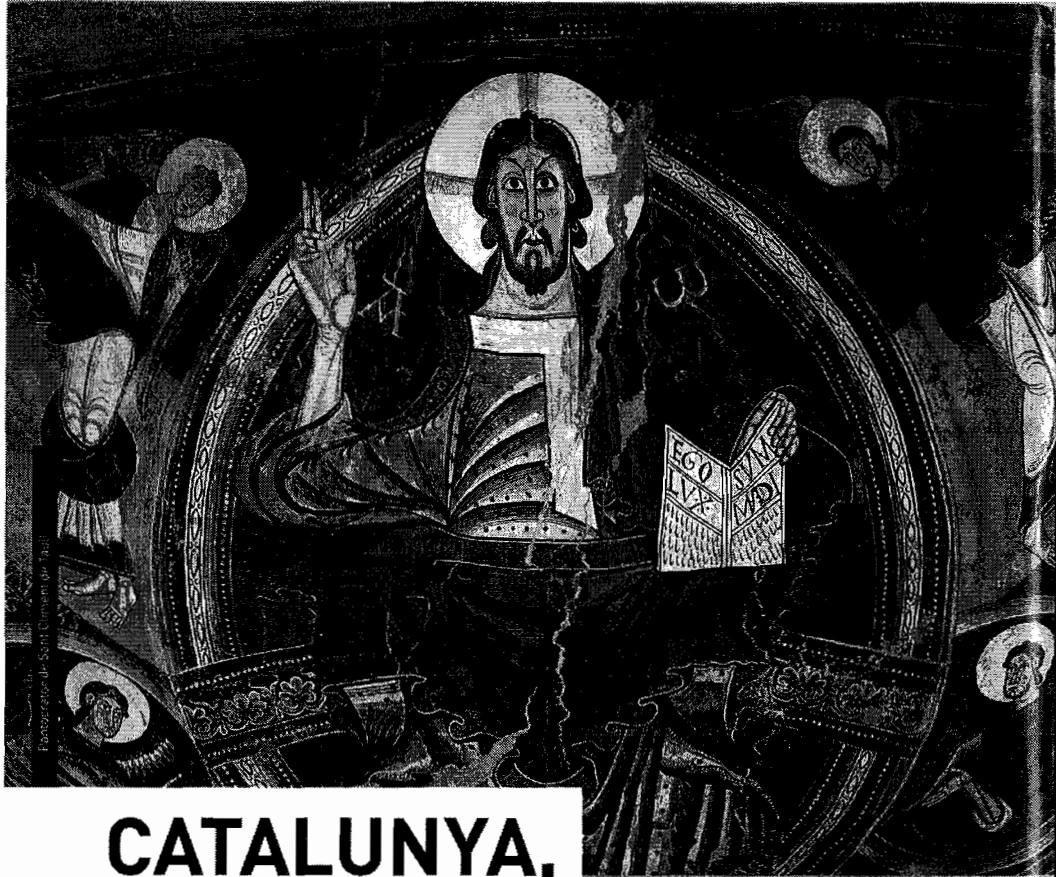
Avui, les institucions de poder de Catalunya són la Generalitat, institució d'autogovern de Catalunya, que inclou el President, el Govern i el Parlament, un dels més antics d'Europa. Aquestes institucions són regides per un Estatut d'Autonomia i comparteixen el poder polític amb les institucions de l'Estat espanyol.



Palau de la Generalitat de Catalunya



Figure 5.1 *La Força de la Identitat*



## CATALUNYA, PATRIMONI UNIVERSAL

A Catalunya hi ha un clar paral·lelisme entre els moments de més projecció del país i la proximitat de les formes artístiques a les dominants a la resta d'Europa: l'art clàssic, quan la Tarraconense va esdevenir una de les províncies més importants de l'imperi; l'art romànic, quan Catalunya neix com a nació; el gòtic i la gran literatura medieval i prerenaixentista, coincidint amb el moment d'hegemonia catalana a la Mediterrània occidental; la coincidència entre el Modernisme i el renaixement nacional i l'ascens de la burgesia industrial al final del segle XIX començament del XX; la impossibilitat d'explicar les avantguardes europees del primer terç i la segona meitat del segle XX sense les aportacions dels artistes plàstics catalans o formats a Catalunya, o l'eclosió de Barcelona com a referència de l'urbanisme i el disseny d'ençà de la recuperació de la democràcia.



Del patrimoni prehistòric antic del país català s'han trobat les nombroses pintures rupestres de l'art mediterrani, declarades:

nombrosos testimonis a recollits als museus arqueològics, el més important dels quals és el Museu Nacional.

### Quan Catalunya encara no era Catalunya

per la UNESCO Patrimoni de la Humanitat, i afortí l'impremta de les cultures ibèrica - amb el poblament d'Ullastret - grecoromana - amb el jaciment grecoromà d'Empúries a la Tarraconense romana, declarada Patrimoni de la Humanitat per la UNESCO.

Arqueològic de Tarraconense. Més ocultat és el jaciment visigòtic, conegut com a Terrassa, mentre que la presència musulmana es fa notar sobretot a Tortosa i les Terres de l'Ebre i a Lleida i la seva zona d'influència.

Figure 5.2 Catalunya, Patrimoni Universal

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