SEPARATISM AND REGIONALISM IN MODERN EUROPE

Edited by Chris Kostov

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Separatism and regionalism have always been serious issues in Europe. Yet, most of the separatist movements were kept frozen during the Cold War, with some notable exceptions, such as the Basque Country and Northern Ireland, where the powerful terrorist organizations, ETA and IRA, kept the idea of independence of their respective regions alive; or Cyprus, where two states were de facto formed to divide the Greek Cypriots from their Turkish counterparts. The end of the Cold War opened Pandora's box of regionalism and separatism across Europe, and various regionalist movements and parties started to discuss autonomy and, in some cases, independence of their regions. Regionalism and separatism pose once again a significant threat to the territorial and political integrity of the traditional nation-states. The established democracies of Western Europe are trying to tackle the regionalist challenge via a political dialogue, using their democratic institutions and procedures in order to avoid armed conflicts. Yet, in Eastern Europe, where, on the one hand, democratic institutions are very young and fragile and, on the other hand, strong regional players such as Russia and Turkey get involved, separatist movements have led to armed conflicts and permanent military presence.

We also need to define clearly what we understand by cultural and regional identities that are used as a justification for the establishment and existence of a large number of separatist and regionalist movements in Europe. Cultural and regional identities are sub-national identities that make people conscious of their distinctiveness from the dominant mainstream culture of the particular nation-state, due to a different language or dialect, religion, historical development, economy, political factors, administrative division, or varying combinations of some or all of the above. Thus, if we follow the definition of Athena Leoussi, we may refer to regionalism as a "set of movements demanding the economic, political and cultural autonomy of certain areas or 'regions', which form part of one or more states" (Leoussi, 2001, p. 263).

Regional identities might be genuinely based on cultural attributes, such as religion, language/dialect, but they can also be based on non-cultural geographic and economic territories. There are numerous culturally based regional identities: Flanders, Catalonia, Ticino, Scotland, Corsica, the Basque Country, Kosovo, Brittany, and Transylvania are a few examples. In all these cases, a different language, religion, customs, culture, and history, as well as in some cases a level of political and economic autonomy (Flanders and Kosovo), are strong factors that reinforce the local cultural identity. In the case of Transnistria, which is covered in this volume, or the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics and Crimea, which are not

covered in this volume, besides the Russian language and culture, non-cultural political and geographic factors as well as the military intervention and aggression of a third party, Russia, have also played a significant role in the triggering of violent separatist conflicts.

Thus, it is quite clear that regardless of the strong desire of virtually all nation-states to present their countries as unified by a single strong mainstream culture and language, regional sub-national identities are alive and kicking across Europe. These sub-national groups might cause conflicts and crises but their existence is inevitable in democratic states. The scope of separatism and regionalism in Europe is quite wide, and it includes *de facto states*, such as Kosovo, Transnistria, and North Cyprus; *strong separatist movements aimed at achieving independence*, for example, Catalonia, Basque Country, Scotland, Flanders, and Faroe Islands; *strong movements aimed at more regional autonomy*, for example, Lombardy and Veneto; and weaker regional movements, which could potentially escalate in the future, for example, Transylvania in Romania or Vojvodina in Serbia. This edited volume is designed to shed light on the revival of regionalism and separatism via a thorough evaluation and analysis of some of the most important current separatist and regionalist/autonomist movements in modern Europe.

Yılmaz Kaplan's study "The EU's MLG system as a catalyst for separatism: A case study on the Albanian and Hungarian minority groups" compares the Albanian minorities in Kosovo and North Macedonia and the Hungarian minorities in Romania's Transylvania, Serbia's Vojvodina, Slovakia, and Transcarpathian Ukraine to examine how these groups take advantage of the EU structure and the multi-level governance (MLG) system of the EU to boost their claims for further autonomy.

Onintza Odriozola, Iker Iraola, and Julen Zabalo wrote "A rolling stone gathers no moss: Evolution and current trends of Basque nationalism" to analyze the evolution of Basque nationalism in both Spain and France from its origins to its current transformation.

In the third chapter "Separatism in Catalonia: Legal, political, and linguistic aspects," Fernando de Vicente, Chris Kostov, and María Dolores Romero Lesmes employ a multidisciplinary approach in order to analyze how the local separatists use law, politics, diplomacy, and language to achieve full independence as well as the potential legal and political consequences for Catalonia.

Hans Andrias Sølvará provides a detailed overview and analysis of Faroese nationalism in "Faroese nationalism: To be and not to be a sovereign state, that is the question." He concludes that the Faroese case is an example of a semi-independent entity with a long complex history of foreign domination.

Catherine Xhardez focuses on the case of Flemish nationalism in her paper "Divided Belgium: Flemish nationalism and the rise of pro-separatist politics" and offers a detailed political analysis of the Belgian political system, arguing that the

future of Flemish nationalism strongly depends on the relationship between the two dominant pro-separatist political parties in Flanders: the right-wing *Nieuwe Vlaamse Alliantie* (New Flemish Alliance, N-VA) and the far-right *Vlaams Belang* (Flemish Interest, the VB).

Ellen A. Ahlness goes beyond the geographic borders of Europe to a territory that is politically closely connected to our continent—Greenland. In her paper "Nunatta Qitornai: A party analysis of the rhetoric and future of Greenlandic separatism," Dr. Ahlness reveals how indigenous self-determination is used by local activists to achieve Greenlandic independence after 300-year-old Danish colonial rule.

Andrea Carrera and Hazel Donegan make a tremendous effort to track the historical and economic evolution as well as the legal aspects of all regional autonomies and separatist movements in Italy. Their study "Italy's separatist and autonomous spots: Historical and economic overview" includes an analysis of the Italian regions Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Sardinia, Sicily, Veneto, Lombardy, Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol, and Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste to cover the most active regionalist groups in contemporary Italy.

In "The Turkish Cypriot quest for statehood: From a religious minority to a de facto state," Tufan Ekici and Sertaç Sonan follow the roots of Turkish Cypriot nationalism from Ottoman and British colonial times to the current dilemma that Turkish Cypriots have to face, to reunify with the Greek Cypriots or join Turkey.

In "The Scottish independence movement in the 21st century," Nathalie Duclos analyzes in detail how Scottish regionalism or "unionist nationalism" turned into Scottish separatism/independentism during the inter-war years of the 20th century. She also points out the central role of the Scottish National Party (SNP) in this process.

The last chapter "Moldova's Transnistria question: Is the term 'frozen conflict' still applicable?" by Wilder Alejandro Sánchez and Lucia Scripcari is dedicated to Moldova's separatist region of Transnistria, which also includes a brief overview of the situation of Gagauzia—another autonomous region of Moldova. Sànchez and Scripcari point out the key role of the Russian troops and interference in this conflict and argue that this conflict could not be resolved without the participation of Russia.

The active Russian involvement and even encouragement of separatist conflicts as a way to prevent the Euro-Atlantic integration of former Soviet republics such as Moldova, Ukraine, and Georgia is a very curious issue, and one of the limitations of this volume is that it does not offer case studies on the separatist movements in Eastern Ukraine (Donetsk and Luhansk), the Russian occupation of the Ukrainian Crimean peninsula, and the Georgian territories of Abkhazia and Ossetia, which also have claimed independence with the support of Russian troops. French regionalism in Corsica, Brittany, and elsewhere has also been omitted. Yet, even

without the inclusion of these important separatist conflicts, the present volume offers quite a comprehensive overview and analysis of some of the most visible nationalist movements and conflicts across Europe. Thus, it may be a valuable source for academics, students, and members of the general public specializing or interested in contemporary nationalist and separatist groups and movements in Europe.

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The EU's MLG system as a catalyst for separatism: A case study on the Albanian and Hungarian minority groups 1

Yilmaz Kaplan

1 Introduction

Political stability has been one of the main goals of the European integration project since it was initiated in the 1950s. However, the integration cannot ensure it even after 60 years. The increasing separatist movements in the EU, in particular, have become a significant factor threatening the political stability of the EU. At first glance, the flame of far right or populist leaders might be seen as the primary reason behind this increasing trend, but we need to develop a better understanding of it. Specifically, a structural analysis originating from the institutionalist school of thought might provide further knowledge. To this end, this study takes both the EU and the nation-state as the unit of analyses and scrutinizes whether any structural interaction between the two plays a role in increasing separatism in the EU through a case study focusing on the Albanian and Hungarian minority groups.

The pluralist nation-states in West Europe might have the capacity to absorb separatist movements and deal with them through democratic means. Yet, the ethnocentric nation-states in Eastern Europe lack this capacity. They historically push for endogenous homogeneity (e.g., bureaucratic unity and creation of a single nationhood) and exogenous heterogeneity (differentiation from other). This institutional structure might be interpreted as an automatic pressure on minority groups in these countries. In the post-Cold War era, the EU's eastward enlargement managed to freeze potential ethnic clashes but has not eliminated them. Its multi-level governance (MLG) system also has the capacity to aggravate the situation. Contrary to the ethno-centric nation-state's abovementioned motivation, the EU's MLG system forces the member states to gain an endogenous heterogeneity (e.g., sub-national governance and greater autonomy for minor groups) and an exogenous homogeneity (Brussels-centered governance), and this structural pressure might be perceived by minority groups as leverage against their host nation-state. In Eastern Europe, nationhood as a collective identity encourages minority groups to develop an external homeland perception toward neighboring kin countries, and almost every nation-state has a tendency to follow kin-state policies to access their external kin communities in their neighboring countries. For instance, Slovenia, Slovakia, Romania, Poland, Bulgaria, and Hungary have adopted laws to protect

their kin communities in their neighboring countries. As a result, the EU's MLG system emerges as a means for ethnic unification, and this encourages minority groups for the bid for further irredentism. To make this complex institutional relationship more concrete, this study focuses on the Albanian and Hungarian minority groups in Central and Eastern Europe and Balkans. To illustrate, the recognition of Kosovo as an independent country by the EU has revived the ambition of Albanian irredentists in Kosovo and North Macedonia to achieve the Great Albania in the EU. In the same vein, Hungarian minorities in Transylvania try to benefit from the EU's structure to gain further autonomy and develop a closer relationship with their kin state (i.e., Hungary). As a reaction to these attempts, nationalist sentiments against the EU are also growing in the host nation-states (e.g., Romania). All in all, the increasing irredentism as an outcome of the structural relationship between the EU's MLG system and the nation-state in Eastern Europe has the capacity to destabilize the political stability on the continent in a dialectical way.

To make these arguments clearer, the first part carries out an institutionalist analysis of the relationship between the nation-state and the EU's MLG system. Later on, by using the theoretical knowledge extracted from this analysis, the study explains how the EU's MLG system might play a catalyst role in the Hungarian and Albanian separatist movements.

2 Post-territorial statehood and trans-territorial nationhood within the EU's MLG system

The MLG approach literature strongly associates territoriality with the survival of a nation-state. As borders are becoming less and less relevant to the governance of the new global system, this approach perceives nation-state as a transient political structure that would face definitive decline in the new system (Axford & Huggins, 2000; Borghini, 2018). For example, Jessop (2004b, p. 64) points out a "trend towards the de-nationalization of territorial statehood" and "new state capacities being reorganized territorially on subnational, national, supranational, and translocal levels" within the EU structure. To put it differently, the EU's multi-level framework operates as a state-building process in practice and produces "transnationally regulated spaces of governance" (Hameiri, 2010, p. 4). The production of new governance spaces will automatically limit nation-state to provide sufficient "political goods" (i.e., services) for its citizens, and social actors would look for alternative governance spaces to maximize their interests (see also Rotberg, 2003). As a result, the redistribution of sovereign competency toward supra-national and sub-national level would hollow nation-state out (Jessop, 2004a). In this sense, Marks, Hooghe, and Blank (1996, p. 346) argue that nation-state is no longer a monopoly of power as "subnational actors operate in both national and supranational arenas" and cre-

ates "transnational associations in the process" (see also Liesbet & Gary, 2003). On the other hand, according to this approach, hierarchical structure of the nation-state has no obvious economic rationale in the new global system, and new global forces oppose the nation-state dominated world system (Casella & Weingast, 1995, p. 13).

From this point of view, this research agrees on the point that the EU's MLG system produces "transnationally regulated spaces of governance," and they might limit the nation-state's territoriality to some extent. However, the nation-state as a deliberative actor is also aware of these alternative governance spaces and tends to exploit them in favor of its national interests. This case study shows that the Hungarian state performs as a post-territorial statehood within the EU's MLG framework in order to provide political goods and services to the Hungarian minority groups in its neighboring countries. Moreover, the Albanian state is also aware of this opportunity, and it tends to use its expected EU-membership to access the Albanians in Kosovo and North Macedonia. On the other hand, this case study also observed that the new governance spaces have also resulted in trans-territorial nationhood entanglement within the EU's MLG system, through which minority groups might endogenously connect themselves to their kin state thanks to the limited power of the host-state's sovereign power on them.

Before giving detailed analysis on these findings, this section needs to explain how post-territorial statehood and trans-territorial nationhood entanglement triggering secessionist sentiments might be possible within the EU's MLG system.

The MLG's functionalist understanding perceives the nation-state as a structure in which real actors seek their interests, but not a deliberative actor (Jeffery, 2011, p. 137). However, "the nation-state is the prime vehicle of political organization in the contemporary world" (Giddens, 1985, p. 254), and as intergovernmentalist scholars argue, considering the nation-state as a deliberative actor in the EU studies might reveal new knowledge on the integration process (e.g., see Milward, Brennan, & Romero, 2000; Moravcsik, 1993/1998; Moravcsik & Schimmelfennig, 2009). In this regard, the nation-state has two institutional segments: statehood and nationhood, and the entangled relationship between these plays an important role in making nation-state a deliberative and adaptive actor within the European integration process. Particularly, statehood can be conceptualized as an "infrastructural power" which represents the capacity of the state to penetrate a society (Mann, 1984, p. 189), and nationhood as a political/ethno-cultural collective identity makes this society willingly loyal to the power of the statehood. From a Weberian perspective, this relationship gives a unique nature to the nation-state compared to other political institutions, namely "monopoly of the legitimate use of force" (Zürn & Leibfried, 2005), and thanks to this power, the nation-state has a great capacity of institutionalization/bureaucratization which makes it a deliberative/rational actor (Bendix, 1977; Weber, 1978). The high bureaucratization

capacity also strengthens the nation-state's immunity to exogenous pressures (e.g., globalization).

Moreover, this entangled relationship is also dialectic (one might create another one). If we analyze the historical evaluation of nation-state, we can easily see that an initial institutionalization of statehood might create a political nationhood or a nationhood that has emerged as an ethno-cultural collective identity might create a statehood (Gellner, 1983, p. 6). For instance, Brubaker (1992) gives France as an example to the first scenario and Germany to the latter one.

In this sense, the dialectic entanglement between statehood (kin state) and nationhood (kin communities) creates a strong national consciousness in Eastern Europe, which aims to use the new governmental spaces created by the EU's MLG system. Historically, as the emergence of nationhood occurred before statehood in Eastern Europe, nationalism constituted a gravitational core for the future institutionalization of statehood in Eastern Europe (see Gellner, 1983). In the region, nationhood was initially institutionalized through the expansion of nationalism from Western Europe, and then, the emerging national groups sought to establish their nation-state by campaigning revolts against the imperial powers. The lack of statehood resulted in the ideological transfer of nationalism "without implementing the rule of law that had been constructed in Western Europe alongside state-building since the advent of the French and English revolutions" (Lukic, 2010, p. 40). Thus, ethnic nationalism became highly influential in the institutionalization of the nation-state in Eastern Europe (Kriegel, 1995). According to this nationalism understanding, "state is identified with a particular national group with a strong reference to ethnic, linguistic, cultural, or religious factors" (Pogany, 1999, p. 155). Despite this ethno-centric institutionalism, the nation-states could not form a homogenous territorial space, and "national minorities, even if tolerated, remain at least potentially suspect" (Pogany, 1999, p. 155). The other side of the coin is that this exclusionist structure encourages national minorities to develop loyalty toward their kin state but not their host state. Moreover, frequent shifts in boundaries have increased irredentist feelings among the ethnic groups in East Europe (White, 2007, p. 111). As a result, the historical institutionalization of the ethno-centric nation-states in an ethnically diversified region has created a complicated dilemma in Eastern Europe. Therefore, the Eastern European countries are in a fragile interactive nexus. Brubaker (1996, p. 44) formulates this dilemma by arguing that the region has "(1) incipient national- and nationalizing states; (2) the national minorities in the new states; and (3) the external 'homeland' states to which the minorities 'belong' by ethnonational affiliation but not legal citizenship," and it is hardly possible to achieve congruence between these dichotomous elements.

As a result, when the Cold War ended, the mentioned dialectic entanglement kept those countries' national consciousness highly awake, and a civil war similar

to what the ex-Yugoslavian nations witnessed was eminent across Eastern Europe. The minority issue particularly became inflammable in Romania (the Hungarian minorities: 7% of the total population), Slovakia (the Hungarian minorities: 10% of the total population), and Bulgaria (the Turkish minority group: 10% of the total population) (Pridham, 2000, p. 18; Vachudova, 2005, p. 53). As a response, the Western countries perceived a pluralist statehood and the institutionalization of rule of law as a sine qua non in order to solve any potential ethnic tension in the region, and they designed the EU's conditionality through the Copenhagen criteria, which would deeply transform the nation-state in the region (Vachudova, 2005). Although the EU's enlargement conditionality (diffusion of the norms: political pluralism and the rule of law) was successful in the accession process, it lost its effect after the accession of the Central and Eastern European countries (Kochenov, 2008). Especially, the Eastern European states as deliberative actors perceive new governance spaces created by the EU's MLG system as a chance to implement post-territorial statehood to access their kin communities in their neighboring countries, and this space also enable national minorities to develop trans-territorial nationhood (instead of a supranational identity) connecting them to their kin state. Furthermore, these governance spaces provide a legal framework in which a nation-state could represent its post-territorial statehood policies and a kin community could represent its trans-territorial activities as strategically appropriate to the EU's norms/rule despite their deeper nationalistic agenda. In this way, the EU's MLG system might play a catalyst role in the separatist movements in Eastern Europe. To empirically support this theoretical argument, the following sections will firstly focus on the Hungarian case and secondly focus on the Albanian case, respectively.

3 The Hungarian Case

Hungarian nationhood gradually evolved in the wake of the French Revolution, and the idea of a unified nation-state became a primary goal for Hungarians (Benda, 1988). In the following era, the Habsburg Monarchy tried to appease a strong nationalist bid through the 1867 Settlement, but the ambition to establish a nation-state overrode this project (Péter, 2012, p. 279). The dual Monarchy achieved through the 1867 Settlement became a cornerstone for the institutionalization of the Hungarian state. As noted above, once the Hungarian nationhood emerged, ethnic nationalism became an influential ideology in the institutionalization of the new Hungarian statehood. For example, "ethnic Magyars were not a majority of the population in the territory of Hungary" (Waterbury, 2010, p. 28) and other nationals constituted 53.4% of the population in 1880 (Pogány, 2007, p. 98). Therefore, even though this fact made the declaration of the National Minorities Act in 1868 guaranteeing equal rights to other national minorities a necessity, the

growing influence of nationalism in the institutionalization of new statehood triggered the implementation of a systemic Magyarization over almost every sphere of life (Frank, 1996; Vambery, 1944). In time, Magyarization was converted into the suppression of national minorities and non-Magyar minorities were antagonized (e.g., Rumanians, Slovaks, and Serbs) (Vambery, 1941). Therefore, those attempts aroused antagonism among the ethnic groups in the region and when the Treaty of Trianon (1920) transferred "two-thirds of Hungary's lands and one-third of its Hungarian-speaking population to neighboring Romania, newly created Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia and Austria" (Waterbury, 2010, p. 30), the ethno-national problems in the region were degenerated. From Hungary's perspective, losing one-third of its nationals became a severe trauma, and ethno-national policies were further deepened by the state elites. Moreover, the Hungarian state needed to expand its definition of nationhood beyond its borders to access its kin (Barkey, 2000, p. 518). As a result, the revision of the "unfair" situation and the support for the irredentism became a state policy in the post-Trianon era. The revisionist foreign policy also pushed the country toward Nazi Germany in the inter-war period and during the Second World War. The Treaty of Trianon gave Transylvania to Romania, the southern Hungary (Vojvodina) to Serbia, and the northern Hungary (Ruthenia) to Czechoslovakia. Through developing an alliance with Nazi Germany, Hungary achieved to claim some parts of its former lands from Slovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia during the Second World War; however, the 1946 Paris Peace Conference restored the borders drawn by the Treaty of Trianon, and this revisionist experiment only incited the neighboring nations' hatred against Hungary (Binnendijk & Simon, 1996). "In light of the country's Soviet occupation and communist control between 1945 and 1990, the whole Trianon question was placed on ice" (Vardy, 1997, p. 74).

The unexpected collapse of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe melted this frozen problem. However, the collapse of the Soviet bloc and the rise of globalization resulted in a "paradigm shift" in the early 1990s, and the new Hungarian state had a capacity to conceive this shift. Therefore, the reaction of Hungary's to the mentioned historical problem was in accordance with the "new paradigm." "Soft power," "dialogue," and "cooperation" were important keywords of the new paradigm, and Hungary developed a new "ethno-politics" accordingly. Upon the collapse of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe, Hungary tried to develop bilateral relationships with its neighbors, supported a micro-regional initiative (Visegrad), and determined EU membership as a major foreign policy goal (Cottey, 1995). In this regard, Hungary perceived the expansion of democracy toward the Central and East European countries as a panacea for the minority-right problems (Waterbury, 2010, p. 58). In other words, Hungary's renewed national policy perceived the EU's enlargement toward East Europe as a reunification of Hungarian nation in the EU (Butler, 2007, p. 1130; Case, 2009). Just before the EU's eastward

enlargement, the-then President of Hungary argued that "the re-unification of Europe also holds out the promise of a chance for the reunification of [Hungarian] nation" (cited in Weaver, 2006, p. 190). In addition to the-then Prime Minister Peter Medgyessy who repeated this argument at the EU accession ceremonies in Prague 2003, Victor Orban also supported the reasoning that the unification of Europe would pave the way for the reunification of the Hungarian nation (Weaver, 2006, p. 191). In June 2003, when he visited Transylvania, Orbán publicly declared that "our home, Hungaria Magna—our lost paradise" could be recovered within the framework of an enlarged European Union (quoted in Case, 2013, p. 865). In line with this policy, Hungary does not put the improvement of ethnic Hungarian rights as a condition on the late comers to the EU (e.g., Romania, Croatia, and currently Serbia).

Therefore, this behavior pattern might be considered appropriate to EU norms, but at the same time, it was deliberatively strategic. From a Habermasian logic, nation-state action within the EU framework might be classified into three groups: instrumental, strategic, and communicative action (Habermas, 1984). Within this classification, according to this logic, communicative action is a highly possible outcome of nation-state behavior within the EU framework because member states deliberatively develop a collective reasoning through argumentation/persuasion, and naturally, they will tend to abide by new collective reasoning (Risse, 2000; Risse & Sikkink, 1999). However, this case study has found that the implementation of collective reasoning does not necessarily bring about communicative action, and a collective reasoning might be used for a strategic action. In particular, the historically strong institutionalization of the Hungarian nation-state has created a statehood and nationhood that are closely intertwined with each other, and the strong entanglement between Hungarian statehood and nationhood keeps Hungarian national consciousness awake within the EU's framework; both statehood and nationhood as institutional units try to benefit from the EU's MLG system to adapt a post-territorial national polity (therefore, the implementation of a collective reasoning does not necessarily pave the way for an EU polity). Moreover, as noted above, if argumentation/persuasion among equals is a precondition for a communicative action, the Eastward enlargement including Hungary's accession to the EU was an asymmetrical process due to the EU's enlargement conditionality (see Moravcsik & Vachudova, 2002), and this asymmetrical process did not create a sufficient environment for argumentation/persuasion. Therefore, this fact might also be considered as another reason behind Hungary's strategic action within the EU framework to strengthen its kin-state functions. For example, in the wake of the Copenhagen criteria, which pointed out the importance of the minority rights as a precondition for the EU enlargement, Hungary signed bilateral agreements with Slovakia and Romania to mutually improve minority rights. As another example, Hungary adopted the Status Law in 2001 through getting the approval of 93% of deputies,

and this law gave a set of right to the ethnic Hungarians living in the neighboring countries. However, in addition to "transportation, education, cultural and health benefits and short-term employment eligibility in Hungary", the law offered post-territorial benefits to the ethnic Hungarians in their host countries (e.g., educational benefits/subsidies for students) (Csergo, 2005), and this "trans-border" attempt flamed a discussion (Hungary vs. the EU, Romania, and Slovakia) because it was against the Westphalian territoriality understanding (the infringement of sovereignty) and the EU's supranational identity notion (Stewart, 2003). As this event happened during Hungary's accession process, the EU increased pressure on Hungary, and Hungary needed to amend its "post-territorial" side in 2003 just before its accession to the EU (Agence Europe, 2001; Batory, 2002; BBC, 2003).

After the Eastern Enlargement, the EU's MLG system has weakened the host-member states' power over the ethnic Hungarians (in Slovakia and Romania) through opening new governance spaces; however, this does not provide a "loyalty shift" toward the EU, but the ethnic Hungarians try to use this "power gap" to institutionalize new ways to connect to their kin state (see Strijbis, Baumgartner, & Höhne, 2016; Világi, 2007). Moreover, the Hungarian state deliberatively uses the EU's framework to perform strategic actions which not only would be appropriate to the EU's rules/norms but also deepens its relationship with the ethnic Hungarians in its neighboring countries. Therefore, it could be argued that the strong entanglement between statehood and nationhood has driven the Hungarian state and ethnic Hungarians in the neighboring countries to coordinately behave within the EU's MLG framework to institutionalize a post-territorial national polity.

Hungary and the ethnic Hungarians mainly benefit from the EU's legal framework and institutions (especially European Parliament). First of all, the EU's legal framework is mainly used by the ethnic Hungarians to legitimize their demand for autonomy. In this regard, the principle of subsidiarity is one of the main standing points for autonomy demands. For example, the autonomy demand of Szeklerland in Romania contains clear reference to this principle (Csata & Marácz, 2016). Related to this, the ethnic Hungarians in the Szeklers region has raised their voice to demand territorial autonomy in the wake of Romania's accession to the EU as Romania needed to adapt the acquis (including this principle) into its legal framework (BBC Monitoring Europe, 2006a/2006b; Bucsa, 2009; Mutler, 2006). The political/cultural organizations run by the ethnic Hungarians in Romania systematically struggle for territorial autonomy by putting the principle of subsidiarity at the center [e.g., the Szekler National Council (Balázs, 2017) and the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania (UDMR) (Trencsényi et al., 2018, p. 266)]. The ethnic Hungarians in Slovakia also witness a similar process (Világi, 2007). The ethnic Hungarian parties (the Hungarian Community Party-SMK and Most-Híd) push for territorial and cultural autonomy in Slovakia (Bochsler & Szöcsik, 2014). In line with these attempts, Hungarian state officially states that "the Hungarian

state is a partner of the Hungarian communities abroad [...]" and "Hungary is committed to the idea that all communities have the right to manage their own affairs in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity" (State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad, 2013). Therefore, it acts appropriately to the EU's norms while supporting its kin communities' demand for autonomy. The principle of "free movement" is another important means used by the Hungarian state and the ethnic Hungarians to increase their connectivity with each other. Even though this principle was designed as a post-national measure which would create a European identity across the borders of the sovereign state (a shift from ethnic to civic citizenship paradigm), it is mainly perceived by the ethnic Hungarians as a means to unify with their kin state. For example, a case study carried out in the Košice region (Slovakia) revealed that the EU membership increased the trans-border activities between Slovakia and Hungary, and the ethnic Hungarians in the region started to see the EU membership of Slovakia and Hungary as the unification of the Hungarian nation in the European Union (Világi, 2007). On the other hand, Hungary aims to supersede the neighboring countries' sovereign power with this principle to access its kin communities in the neighboring countries and does not hesitate to use the EU's institutions against its neighbors. Therefore, the implementation of this principle results in severe tensions between Hungary and Slovakia and Romania in the context of sovereignty (Bauböck, 2010; Liebich, 2017). For example, when the-then Hungarian president László Sólyom's plan to visit the Slovak town of Komárno for a ceremony inaugurating a statue of Saint Stephen (the founder and first king of the Hungarian State) in 2012 was prevented by Slovakia, Hungary brought this issue before the European Court of Justice with the claim that Slovakia infringed the principle of free movement (European Commission, 2012). The Slovak–Hungarian relationship also deteriorated through nationalist trans-border activism (Liebich, 2017). To illustrate, a diplomatic tension arose when the Slovak police detained 28 Hungarians who visited the Slovak town of Kráľovský Chlmec to commemorate the 17th anniversary of the First Vienna Award of 1938, through which a part of southern Slovakia was given to Hungary by Nazi Germany. The then-Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico vehemently protested the event by arguing "It is unacceptable for us ... that 28 people dressed in Hungarian fascist uniforms cross the border and march through a Slovak town [...]" (Deutsche Presse-Agentur, 2008; Stabrawa, 2008). As a reaction, Hungary tried to use the EU's means against Slovakia and the Hungarian MEPs raised the issue in the EP (Plus Media Solutions, 2018). The introduction of dual citizenship by Hungary in 2010 also worsened its relationship with Slovakia. In the wake of the adaptation of the policy, a "tit-for-tat" diplomacy war broke out between Hungary and Slovakia, and Slovakia introduced a reactionary amendment in its citizenship rules through which if a Slovakian citizen gets another citizenship, s/he would lose the Slovakian citizenship (Bauböck, 2010; Töttős, 2017). In the same vein,

when Attila Dabis, a Hungarian citizen and commissioner of the Szekler National Council, was prevented from crossing Romania by Romanian police in 2018, the Hungarian Foreign Ministry sent out a diplomatic note to Romania and the Hungarian Foreign Minister argued "Romania had violated a European citizen's right to free movement within the community, and called it 'unacceptable''' (Daily News Hungary, 2018; Hungary Journal, 2018).

Related to the EU's legal framework, Hungary and the ethnic Hungarians also try to benefit from the EU's Cohesion policy to form a post-territorial relationship. Particularly, they tend to interpret this policy as a tool to achieve ethnic re-regionalization across the EU. From an economic rationale, the EU's Cohesion policy is historically arranged to economically homogenize the regions of the EU member states, and as the competence is held by the EU, this policy is expected to strengthen the EU's MLG system. Despite this expectation, Hungary intends to use the Cohesion policy and its cross-bordering cooperation mechanism to improve the connection between the Motherland and the Hungarian communities (Scott, 2018). Hungary also makes an effort to define the Carpathian Basin as a macro-region within the EU's Cohesion policy framework by considering the ethnic Hungarians in the region (Kovács, 2016, p. 313). In line with this approach, the Hungarian communities in Romania and Slovakia perceive the inclusion of ethnic minority territories in the EU's regional and cohesion framework as a great "discursive opportunity to advance their claims for autonomy" as the recognition as a region within this framework would give them direct access to Brussels (Bucsa, 2009, p. 211). To this end, for example, Balázs-Árpád Izsák, an ethnic Hungarians from Romania and Attila Dabis, from Budapest proposed a European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) to the European Commission entitled "Cohesion policy for the equality of the regions and sustainability of the regional cultures" in June 2013. When the Commission refused the registration of this proposal, the initiators applied to the General Court in September 2013, and the Court decided in favor of the Commission. This case was immediately politicized, and the initiators were supported by Hungary and the Commission by Greece, Romania, and Slovakia (Izsák and Dabis v. Commission, 2016; Toggenburg, 2018, pp. 63–64). As a last resort, the Court of Justice of the European Union set aside the General Court's judgment and annulled the Commission's decision (FUEN, 2019). In the same vein, the ethnic Hungarian community in Szeklerland benefited from the EU Funds Program 2010–2011 to produce Szekely products with the registered trade mark: "Product of Szekely EU" (Targeted News Service, 2017). Thanks to its strengthening economy via the EU membership, Hungary also tries to implement economic development programs toward the ethnic Hungarian communities in the neighboring countries in a way similar to the EU's Cohesion policy (i.e., Transylvania, Vojvodina, and Subcarpathia). In this regard, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Minister of State for Economic Diplomacy, Levente Magyar argued that the funding pro-

grams serving "the economic strengthening of Hungarian communities, will be one of the stable pillars of Hungarian national policy" (Website of the Hungarian Government, 2017). Furthermore, Hungary aims to use these economic programs as a soft power tool against Romania and Serbia (e.g., see Hungarian Official News Digest, 2018; TendersInfo, 2019).

The ethnic Hungarians also try to use the EU's political instruments as a leverage against their host countries to gain their autonomy and to deepen their trans-territorial relationship with their kin state (Hungary). On the other hand, Hungary supports these attempts and tries to organize them efficiently. For example, the ethnic Hungarians perceive the European Parliament as a strategic tool that unites all Hungarians in Central and Eastern Europe, and they actively try to affect the EU's ethnic minority agenda in favor of them. A case study analyzing the 2007 and 2009 EP elections revealed that the Hungarian ethnic parties in Romania (the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania-DUHR- and the Hungarian Civic Union-CMP-led by László Tökés) used the EP elections as an opportunity to advance their minority agendas (Spirova & Stefanova, 2012). The Party of the Hungarian Coalition (SMK) in Slovakia also behaved in a similar pattern in the 2007 and 2009 EP elections (Spirova, 2012). All of the ethnic Hungarian MEPs from Slovakia, Romania, and Fidesz (the largest group from Hungary) became members of the EPP (European People's Party) and try to make their ethnic minority priorities to be heard at the EU level (Waterbury, 2017). The ethnic Hungarians also represented this collective behavior in the 2014 and 2019 EP elections, and in time, they have learned to become more organized and effective at the EU level. For example, in the wake of the May 2019 EP election, the Prime Minister Viktor Orban met with the presidents of Hungarian member organizations of the EPP to organize a collective behavior just before the election (Hungarian Official News Digest, 2019). As another example, the Hungarian MEPs have a significant effect on the EP Intergroup on Traditional Minorities, National Communities and Languages which is a cross-party intergroup at the EP to develop sufficient policies on the national and linguistic minority question (Waterbury, 2016/2017). The ethnic Hungarians also use the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) to affect the European Commission's agenda setting power. According to this regulation, if an initiative gathers one million signatures signed by the EU citizens, they might call on the Commission to make a legislative proposal to meet their demands. In addition to the abovementioned ECI related to the Cohesion policy, the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (DUHR) together with the Federal Union of European Minorities (FUEN) and the South Tyrol People's Party (SVP) initiated an ECI called the Minority SafePack by arguing that the Commission should arrange a legislative proposal to protect national minorities, minority languages, and cultural diversity in the EU. Soon after the submission of the initiative to the European Commission in September 2013, the Commission rejected the registration of it arguing

that the subjects of the initiative were outside the framework of the Commission's power to propose legislation. As a reaction, the initiators appealed to the ECJ in 2013 and the General Court annulled the Commission's decision in 2017. As a result of this judicial decision, the Commission decided to register the Initiative as a legally admissible proposal, and the analysis of its substance requires the submission of one million new signatures from seven different countries (Toggenburg, 2018, pp. 67–68). However, in November 2018, the initiators decided to submit the validated signatures (1,128,385) to the new European Commission which will start to work in November 2019 as they believe that the-then Commission biasedly refused the proposal (FUEN, 2018). Therefore, it is highly possible that the ECIs given in this research have a great capacity to significantly affect the EU's policy agenda and legal framework regarding the issue of the national minorities in the following era.

With the support of Hungary, the ethnic Hungarians also lobby different groups within the EU to increase the awareness of the ethnic Hungarians who live in several countries in Central and East Europe. For example, in the wake of Romania's accession to the EU, the Hungarian MEPs tried to make the Transylvanian Hungarians live in Romania much knowable at the EU level and lobbied the European Commission to push Romania to adopt a national minorities' law before its full membership (BBC Monitoring Europe, 2006c). To carry out lobbying at the EU level better, Szeklerland opened an office in Brussels hosted by the House of Hungarian Regions in 2011, and the possible interpretation of this situation as if Szeklerland was one of the Hungarians Regions escalated a political crisis between Hungary and Romania (BBC Monitoring Europe, 2011). Since Hungary's accession in 2004, the Hungarian delegation to the European Council and Hungarian MEPs also lobbied the EU institutions to drive the EU's attention to the problems of the Vojvodina Hungarians in Serbia (Hagan, 2009). The ECIs given above are also good indicators showing that the ethnic Hungarians use the EU structure as a framework to develop allies with other national minority groups across the EU to lobby the EU's Parliament, Commission, and Council.

4 The Albanian Case

As Hungary and its neighboring countries where the ethnic Hungarian lives (Romania and Slovakia) are already EU members, the Hungarian case provides plenty of evidence about how the EU's MLG system plays a catalyst role for separatism in Central and Eastern Europe. To provide further empirical argument, the study also focuses on the Albanian case. Even though Albania, Kosovo, and North Macedonia where an important number of ethnic Albanians live are not EU members, the EU defines them as future members, and an analysis on the EU's (potential) candidates provides further information related to the aim of this research. This case

confirms the argument that dialectic entanglement between statehood and nation-hood beyond national territories keeps national consciousness awake. Therefore, the EU's enlargement conditionality might force the candidates to behave appropriately, but the mentioned consciousness also makes this appropriate behavior strategic within the EU's MLG system.

First of all, this case confirms that the EU's enlargement conditionality has an ultimate power over the candidate countries, and the EU candidates tend to implement the acquis as much as possible. However, this does not lead to an unconscious Europeanization of the candidate state. As the Hungarian case does, this case also shows that Albania's behavior is appropriate to the EU's norms, but at the same time, it is strategic and looking for any chance within the EU framework to perform as a kin state to access its kin communities in the neighboring countries. Historically, a strong Albanian nationhood emerged in the early 20th century; however, the independence of the Albanian nation-state was achieved late, and it failed to cover all the Albanians living in Western Balkans. During the Cold War, the communist Albania chose the isolationism as the main foreign policy, and when the communist regime collapsed in the early 1990s, Albania was structurally weak to perform as an active kin state. Therefore, when the devastating ethnic-nationalism in the ex-Yugoslavia terribly hit the ethnic Albanians, Albania was unable to take measures to protect them as a kin state. In other words, contrary to Hungary, its structural weakness pushed Albania to follow a non-interventionist policy toward its kin communities in the ex-Yugoslavia (Kosovo and North Macedonia) but strategically ally with the EU and the USA to react to the developments there (Gjevori, 2018). To this end, for instance, in 1993, the-then Albanian President proposed "the idea of a 'democratic space' in the Balkans which would facilitate direct integration into Europe, regardless of international borders" (Kola, 2003). After the escalation of the Kosovo War in 1999, the international community started to worry about the revival of sentiment of "Greater Albania" once the region witnessed during the Second World War, when Albania, under the control of the fascist Italy, invaded Kosovo. To appease this international concern, the Albanian leaders tried to alternatively prioritize "Greater Europe" and repeatedly argued that the Albanian unification was only possible within the EU. To illustrate, Fatos Nano, the-then leader of the Socialist Party in Albania; Arben Xhaferi, the-then leader of the Democratic Party of Albanians in North Macedonia; and Abdurrahman Haliti, another Albanian leader in North Macedonia, declared the integration of ethnic Albanians in the Euro-Atlantic institutions (i.e., NATO and EU) as a common strategy (Cota, 1999). Thanks to this strategy, the international situation started to change in the 2000s in favor of the Albanians. In 2001, the Ohrid Agreement ended the armed conflict between the Albanian National Liberation Army and the security forces of North Macedonia, and the Albanians gradually became more apparent and influential in the governance of North Macedonia

(Capussela, 2015, p. 78). In 2008, Kosovo won its independence. Albania got the NATO membership in 2009 and EU candidate status in 2014 (Hilaj, 2013).

However, the increasing entanglement between Albanian's post-territorial statehood capacity and the Albanian communities' trans-territorial activities has revealed that Albanians deliberatively look for new governmental spaces to achieve their national unity. Regarding this argument, it can easily be observed that Albania is gaining further capacity to implement a post-territorial statehood to access its kin communities in Kosovo and North Macedonia. For example, Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama openly protested the North Macedonian President's decision refusing a new government formation proposal due to its inclusion of the Albanian ethnic parties in 2017 (Intellinews, 2017). As another example, Kosovo raised customs tariffs on Serbian goods from 10% to 100% as a retaliation to Serbia's blockade of Kosovo's Interpol membership in 2018. Considering this tension, the Prime Minister Rama declared Albanian's support for Kosovo and ordered his foreign minister "to begin working on a common strategic draft that will unite Albanians by the year 2025" (Gotev, 2018a). Moreover, Albania and Kosovo signed a trade agreement aiming to remove all trade barriers between Albania and Kosovo in November 2018. In line with this purpose, the Kosovo Customs opened an office at Albania's biggest sea port of Durres in January 2019 (Jonuzaj, 2019). There are still five EU countries which do not recognize Kosovo's independence; therefore, Kosovo is the only country in Western Balkans which could not get visa liberalization even though it meets all of the criteria determined by the EU. As a reaction, the Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama also offered the Albanian passports to the Kosovar Albanians (Feilcke, 2018). However, Albania's post-territorial attempts to provide political goods and service for the ethnic Albanians in its neighboring countries were strongly criticized by the EU and the USA, and they put pressure on Albania's attempts to play a kin-state role. For instance, in his speech at Kosovo's parliament on the 10th anniversary of the country's independence, Rama claimed that he dreamt of one president for Albania and Kosovo as "a symbol of national unity," and his rhetoric was immediately and sharply rapped by both the EU and the USA (Gotev, 2018b; Reuters, 2018). To appease these reactions, Rama needed to pull back his argument and underlined the importance of the integration under the umbrella of the EU (Euronews, 2018). Despite Albania's intention to continue its appropriate behavior during its accession negotiation process, Kosovo's uncertain situation in the EU due to the five EU member states' refusal to its independence disturbs the coherence of a common Albanian behavior. For example, a report released by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (2018, p. 17) argues that its blockade by the five EU non-recognizers pushes Kosovo to see the unification with Albania as an attractive alternative to join the union. Moreover, Kosovo's retaliatory actions against this uncertainty irritate the EU. For instance, Kosovo's abovementioned trade war

with Serbia and ambition to convert its security force into a national army were strongly criticized by the EU (Bytyci, 2018; Deutsche Welle, 2018).

On the other hand, several surveys point out a strong post-territorial nationhood entanglement among the Albanians from Albania, Kosovar Albanians, and North Macedonian Albanians. For example, a survey carried out in 2005 found that most of the Albanians in Albania and Kosovo supported a greater Albania (Abrasheva, 2008, p. 85). Another survey also revealed that the support for a greater Albania including Albania, Kosovo, and the parts of North Macedonia inhabited by the Albanians raised from 54% (2008) to 81% (2010) among Kosovar Albanians, from 44% (2008) to 53% (2010) among North Macedonian Albanians, and slightly decreased from 68% (2009) to 63% (2000) among the Albanians from Albania (Gallup and Balkan Monitor, 2010, p. 47). Two other surveys carried out by Albanian Institute for International Studies (2012/2013) confirm that the majority of the Albanians support the unification with Kosovo. Therefore, this strong entanglement hints that the nationalist sentiments might increase among these groups when they capture a "governmental space." Therefore, this finding challenges the MLG assumption that new governmental spaces that emerge through increasing transborder activism would drive for further Europeanization and a stronger supra-national EU identity. The region has actually witnessed a de facto governmental space since the end of the 1990s in which both the NATO and the EU hardly control the increasing nationalistic sentiments among the Albanian people from Albania, Kosovo, and North Macedonia. The increasing trans-territorial activism of the Albanian people inflames the irredentism in the region, and they deliberately aim to exploit the authority gap in the region in favor of themselves. To illustrate, the historical link between Kosovar and North Macedonian Albanians was further deepened after the Kosovo War. During the 1999 war, hundreds of thousands of Kosovar Albanians fled to North Macedonia, and an important number of North Macedonian Albanians fought against the Serbs alongside the KLA (the Kosovo Liberation Army). Later on, the Albanian guerrillas of the KLA fought against North Macedonia to extend the Albanians' cultural and political rights (Cline, 2004; Hislope, 2003).

5 Conclusion

The EU's MLG system was designed to achieve political stability in Europe. However, its institutionalization underestimated the institutional power of the nation-state (Kaplan, 2018). Particularly, by putting the territoriality of the nation-state at its center, the MLG approach assumes that a supra-national polity and a European identity loyal to this supranational-polity might be achieved if transborder activism leads to a shift in the distribution of political goods and services from national polities to a supranational polity. In other words, it is believed that if the EU's MLG

system creates new governance spaces beyond the nation-state, people's activities in these new spaces might trigger a supranational polity and identity.

Despite this expectation, this study shows that new governance spaces created by the EU's MLG system might play a catalyst role in the increasing separatist movements, especially in the Central and Eastern Europe and Balkans. First of all, this study shows that the MLG approach has an ontic fallacy that the nation-state is a platform for real people. Contrary to this assumption, this study shows that the nation-state is a deliberative actor in the international arena, and its deliberativeness mainly originates from the dialectic entanglement between its two important structural components: nationhood and statehood. As Brubaker (1992) argued, one component might create another one under a sufficient condition thanks to this dialectic entanglement. In other words, nationhood and statehood as two entangled structures deliberatively tend to institutionalize their own national polity, and the EU's MLG system provides new governance spaces to them. For example, the Hungarian case confirms that the EU's MLG system creates new governance spaces which make post-territorial statehood and trans-territorial nationhood activities much more possible. Moreover, both the Hungarian and Albanian cases also show that these activities might be appropriate to the EU's norms/rules, but at the same time, they are strategic and increasing the connectivity between the kin states and their kin communities in their neighboring countries. Therefore, the EU's new governance spaces indirectly support separatism across Europe and promise further political instability contrary to the initial stability expectation. As a result, these cases support the argument that the EU's new governance spaces limit host nation-states' sovereign power but both kin state and the ethnic minorities deliberately exploit them to form a post-territorial national polity, and a supranational EU polity/identity remains as a rhetorical tool for this purpose.

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A rolling stone gathers no moss: Evolution and current trends of Basque nationalism

2

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A rolling stone is constantly on the move and ever-changing. It does not gather any moss; it does not fossilize. The metaphor of this proverb serves as an introduction to this chapter in which we shall study a nationalist movement that has undergone major changes throughout its history. We shall present its evolution since its birth, its transformation midway through the 20th century, and the new trends emerging in the 21st century. It is a question of sub-state nationalism, with a solid presence in part of the territory it lays claim to as a nation, the Basque Country, and characterized by a context of political violence. It is here, precisely, where this nationalist movement has undergone a major transformation in recent years, as witnessed by the end of ETA's activity in 2011 and its self-dissolution in 2018.

First of all, we shall provide an introduction to the Basque Country, while highlighting its territorial complexity (with three administrative areas divided into two states, Spain and France) along with the main characteristics that need to be taken into account in order to understand Basque nationalism. In the following two sections, we shall study the origin and evolution of this movement. To start with, Chapter 2 outlines the initial context and its emergence, led by Sabino Arana Goiri. Chapter 3 follows with its renewal, in the context of the second half of the 20th century, driven by ETA and left-wing Basque nationalism. In both points, we shall analyze the reasons for its upsurge, as well as the factors that helped weaken its practice and discourse. To conclude, in the fourth point, we shall analyze the changes occurring in the 21st century and the new trends that can be appreciated in Basque nationalism. Inevitably, we shall refer to a large array of diverse organizations, given its clear nature as a *movement*, as shall be seen below.

1 The Basque Country: A complex national reality

The very concept of the Basque Country and its demarcation is a matter of dispute by the nationalisms operating in said geographical space (apart from the Basque one, there are also the Spanish and French nationalisms, in their respective spheres of influence). Basque nationalism understands the Basque Country as a political, cultural, and social space covering a territory divided between Spain and France, made up of seven provinces and three institutional areas, as can be appreciated in Figure 1, and as will be used in this article, to best translate the original concept

in Basque, *Euskal Herria* (Basque Country). On the other hand, particularly from the point of view of Spanish nationalism, this reality is not acknowledged, and the Basque Country is limited to the territory making up the Basque Autonomous Community.

Fig. 1: Provinces and institutional distribution of the Basque Country.

The provinces of Araba, Bizkaia, and Gipuzkoa make up the Basque Autonomous Community (CAV, its initials in Spanish), which is often confused (in the name, flag, and other symbols) with the whole of the Basque Country, as has been mentioned. It is here where Basque nationalism has the greatest social and electoral strength. Since its restoration in 1979, it has been governed by the Basque Nationalist Party (EAJ-PNV), often in coalition with the Socialist Party of Euskadi (PSE-EE), except in the period from 2009 to 2012 during which the latter party was in government[1].

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[1]The illegalization of the Nationalist Left during that time had a profound effect on the majorities in the Basque Parliament, which made a Spanish nationalist coalition of the PSE and Popular Party possible.

In the center is the Foral Community of Navarre (CFN in Spanish), whose diversity, as regards nationalism and identity, is worthy of mention. Whereas Basque national identity is dominant in the north, it is undoubtedly a minority force in the south. Unlike in the Basque Autonomous Community, Navarrese regionalism, as represented by the Union of the Navarrese People, UPN (which can be understood as a variant of Spanish nationalism[2]), and the Socialist Party of Navarre (PSN) governed the Foral Community, at different times, in clear opposition to Basque nationalism. However, since 2015, two center-left coalition governments have been formed with the participation of Basque nationalists, which could indicate that the scenario has changed to one in which right-wing Spanish nationalism fails to reach an absolute majority.

These two communities and their four provinces are called the Southern Basque Country by Basque nationalism (as opposed to the Northern Basque Country, in French territory). The relation between these four provinces was intense from the 19th century onward but has since become the subject of fierce political debate, particularly since the creation of the two communities, in 1979 and 1982. Basque nationalism has always tried to unite both communities to form just one, something strongly opposed by Spanish nationalism. It is worth pointing out that, despite the unequal influence of Basque nationalism in Navarre, said territory plays a central role in its vision. Thus, for example, Basque nationalism sees Pamplona/Iruñea, the capital of Navarre, as the historical capital of the Basque Country. And the Navarrese symbols (like the flag) have acquired the status of national symbols—of the whole of the Basque Country—for significant sectors of Basque nationalism, as a consequence of the historical importance attached to Navarre[3].

Over and above this vision, in legal terms, the CAV's own Statute of Autonomy[4], as well as the Spanish Constitution of 1978[5], includes the option of joining the four Basque territories into one Autonomous Community. Moreover, despite the fact that they have been on opposite sides of the political spectrum, above all, due to the influence of Navarrese regionalist politics and state-wide political forces, both these communities making up the Southern Basque Country share common features within the Spanish legal system, such as *foral laws* (the acknowledgement of the so-called *historical rights* for the *foral territories*[6]). This peculiarity is reflected in taxation, with the four Basque tax offices (one in Navarre and the three, one for each province, in the CAV) solely in charge of tax collection. Furthermore, as can be appreciated in the CAV's institutional network, and in keeping with this *foral*

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[2]In line with the important role traditionally played by regionalism in Spanish nationalism (Archilés, 2006).

[3]This view is elaborated further in Martínez and Rekalde (2012).

[4]Article 2 of the Statute of the CAV: "Araba, Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia, together with Navarre, have the right to be part of the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country."

[5]Fourth transitional provision of the Spanish Constitution of 1978.

[6]First additional provision of the Spanish Constitution of 1978.

standpoint, the provinces (officially called *historical territories*) have broad powers in areas like taxation, transport, and social services.

The territory under French administration, the Northern Basque Country, is made up of the traditional provinces of Lapurdi, Lower Navarre, and Zuberoa, although they form a single territory due to their size and population. In this part of the Basque Country, institutionalization is very recent and much weaker than in the Southern Basque Country. The *Basque Country Community* (CPB in French), as the institution covering the Basque territories is called, was set up in 2017, and its competences are limited to matters like mobility or waste management, among others. From Basque nationalism's point of view, more than the institution's real power, its importance lies in the acknowledgement of the territory of the Northern Basque Country, which had until then been considerably diluted and unrecognized within the Department of the Atlantic Pyrenees and the region of New Aquitaine, to which it belongs.

This division into two states, three different kinds of community, and five main administrative entities (each of the three territories making up the CAV has a number of competences, among them, fiscal policy) is reflected in the sociological reality of the Basque Country. It is a complex reality, with its own dynamics in accordance with the administrative area.

In all, the Basque Country has a population of 3,152,200 inhabitants, of whom the majority—over 2,100,000—live in the Basque Autonomous Community, almost 650,000 in Navarre, and the remainder—approximately 320,000—in the Northern Basque Country. The most populated areas are along the coast. A feature of the Basque population is that it is aging, with 21.6% of the population over 65 years (above the European average and steadily increasing) (Gaindegia, 2019a).

From the point of view of nationalism studies, worthy of particular mention of the available sociodemographic data is the migratory question, key to the evolution of Basque nationalism. In the case of the Southern Basque Country, following the first migration flows to Bizkaia between the 19th and 20th centuries, there was major migration from Spanish regions in the 1960s and 1970s. Each one of these two migratory moments—the first flow at the end of the 19th century and the second half of the 20th century—coincided, in the first place, with the emergence of Basque nationalism and, then, with the new reformulation (cfr. Iraola & Odriozola, 2017). The so-called international migration began in the Northern Basque Country, in the early 21st century, in line with French migratory patterns.

Therefore, nowadays, the population of immigrant origin (not taking into account the people born in Spain) is 10% in the CAV and 15.1% in the CFN (Ikuspegi, 2019b). In general, considering both migratory flows, the international one and the intra-state one (despite their major differences in terms of legal status, social perception, etc.), currently, 29% of the Basque population was born outside the Basque Country, the highest percentage being in the Northern Basque Country, where

43% was born outside the region, practically all of them in France (Gaindegia, 2019b).

A totally different matter is the Basque language, Euskara, a core issue for nationalism, as shall be seen later on. Euskara, a minoritized language and unique to the country, is unevenly spread and has unequal legal status in Basque territory. For example, in the CAV, it is the official language together with Spanish, just like in the northern part of the CFN. The fact of the matter is that, in Navarre, Basque has three different kinds of legal status: co-official in the north, with no official recognition in the south, and an intermediate situation in the center, which takes in the capital, Pamplona. In the Northern Basque Country, the Basque language is granted no effective legal recognition. Together with this unevenness regarding the legal standing, the language's situation is ambivalent depending on the administrative area and social space one is referring to. Thus, in the territories where it is official (mainly the CAV), it plays an important role in a large part of the educational system, far removed from other minoritized European languages. Yet, on the other hand, its knowledge and use are not predominant in society, and its situation is particularly weak in certain social environments.

Generally speaking, 28.4% of the population are Basque speakers (with another 16.4% having some knowledge of it), but its presence is not evenly spread throughout the territories. Whereas, in Gipuzkoa or the hinterland of the Northern Basque Country, Basque speakers account for approximately 50% of the population, in Navarre, as a whole, the figure is 12% (Gobierno Vasco, Gobierno de Navarra, Office Public de la Langue Basque, 2016). Nonetheless, dynamics differ greatly on either side of the border: in the Southern Basque Country, the number of Basque speakers has been growing in recent decades and is greater among the younger population, whereas in the Northern Basque Country, the trend is the opposite. The Basque language is used by 12.6% in the whole of Basque territory, although this use is likewise unequal and varies according to the territories (greater, 31%, in Gipuzkoa) and age (greater in the case of young people), in line with the trends mentioned earlier (Soziolinguistika Klusterra, 2017).

This division by territory and the varying degrees of prevalence of the Basque language is interrelated with the different rates of entrenchment of Basque national identity and Basque nationalism's electoral results. It means that the territories with the greatest number of Basque speakers have been, at least in the case of the Southern Basque Country and with significant variations, those in which Basque national identity is more dominant, and Basque nationalism has traditionally obtained better electoral results.

The question of how to measure national identity is complex, as is well known. In the Basque case (particularly in the Southern Basque Country), the so-called Moreno scale (1988) is commonly used. This method allows you to choose between different combinations of being Basque and Spanish. Despite its widespread use,

this type of categorization is problematic when studying national identity, as it can include different types of affinities and identities (regional sentiment, emotional affinity toward a particular territory, etc.), apart from the national identity itself (Blas, 2012). Even so, if we apply this scale, we can see that the solely Basque identity accounts for 31.5%, which rises to 50.14% if we add those who feel more Basque[7] than Spanish or French; on the other hand, the solely Spanish or French sentiment is a minority, less than 5% (Zabalo et al., 2016, p. 24). In this respect, it is interesting to note that state sentiment is much greater in the Northern Basque Country than in the Southern Basque Country, as the percentage of those who feel only French is 24.2% in this territory, far above the 2.5% or 4.6% who feel only Spanish in the CAV and the CFN, respectively (Zabalo et al., 2016, p. 25).

This complexity regarding national sentiment correlates with the opinions on the independence of the Basque Country. Although the percentages differ according to the studies, all of them reveal the following reality: the existence of a significant base in favor of independence (which could vary between 20% or 40% according to the study[8]), another opposing block, which seems to have been strengthened in recent years (approximately 30–35% in the abovementioned studies), and a third space for the undecided, which is in favor or against depending on the context. When it comes to what people think about independence, there appear to be three, more or less equal, thirds which change depending on the circumstances (particularly in the case of the Southern Basque Country, as, in the Northern Basque Country, apart from the fact that there are far fewer studies in this respect, support for independence is lower).

These blocks of opinion on independence are related, but they should not be confused with the support for Basque nationalist forces. As we shall see, and because of the influence of other secessionist movements, like the Scottish or Catalan ones, in recent years, the pro-independence and nationalism have tended to diverge in the discourse (as a political strategy) and in the theory (which seeks new approaches in order to address the national question). If we focus on nationalism and analyze its support in electoral results, we can see that the Basque nationalist forces—PNV and EH Bildu—are supported by almost 60% in the CAV[9] and 32% in Navarre[10], and that the main Basque nationalist force in the Northern Basque

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[7]In the referred study, the term "Navarrese" was used interchangeably with the "Basque" term. In any case, the percentage is similar in studies limited to the CAV.

[8]By way of example, in the CAV, 20% of the population supports independence according to the *Sociómetro Vasco* (Gabinete de Prospección Sociológica, 2019). It is important to emphasize that, in this study, a further 31% affirm that they would be "in favour or opposed depending on the circumstances," which is why the abovementioned 20% must be understood as the support base of independence. Moreover, throughout the Basque Country, when offered a dichotomous option in relation to an independent state, another study gave a result of 40.7% support for a Basque or Navarrese State (Zabalo et al., 2016, p. 33).

[9]Results of the elections to the Autonomous Parliament in 2016.

[10]Results of the elections to the Parliament of Navarre in 2019.

Country—EH Bai[11]—obtained 16%[12] of the vote. As a consequence of this reality, both the practice and characteristics of Basque nationalism differ, to a certain extent, according to the territory. We shall now go on to analyze the aforesaid.

2 The emergence of Basque nationalism

Like all social phenomena, the objectivation of the nation must, in most cases, be examined over the *longue durée* perspective. Said objectivation occurs when the community or part of it become aware of its existence. History and myth on the Vascones and the Basques, oral as well as written, have existed since Roman times. However, it is in the 16th century when the first Basque writers mention "the Basque nation" and write about the language spoken by the Basques and the territory where they live. They have left a record of a collective imagination which, subsequently, took hold in a movement of literary and scientific renaissance in favor of the Basque culture and historical institutions. This ethnohistory has been stoked by reflection on the part of many Basque writers and politicians that paved the way for Sabino Arana Goiri, who, in the 1890s, established the language and symbols of the first Basque nationalist movement. Arana's political awareness, which went beyond the literary, cultural, and scientific framework of his predecessors, must be understood in a period of great political, social, and cultural changes at the end of the 19th century.

2.1 The Basque Country at the end of the 19th century: Identity crisis of Basque society

The first nationalist movement came into being in a context of a surge in peripheral nationalist movements, a phenomenon that responded to a particular generalized situation of alarm (moral, social, cultural, and political)[13]. At least three interrelated factors explain the reasons that led to the crisis of Basque identity at the end of the 19th century. The economic and demographic factor was fundamental. The process of industrialization that had got underway in the 18th century implied new ways of thinking and understanding life, which clashed with the traditional mentality of the peasantry (Mann, 1993). Thus, in the Basque Country, mining production and the shipbuilding industry grew considerably during the 19th century, particularly around the city of Bilbao, and this led to the shift of a large number

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[11]Euskal Herria Bildu (EH Bildu, Unite the Basque Country) and Euskal Herria Bai (EH Bai, Yes to the Basque Country) are two left-wing coalitions, formed in part by the same parties. The former operates in the Southern Basque Country, and the latter operates in the Northern Basque Country.

[12]In the cantonal elections in 2015.

[13]In this point, we shall speak, for the most part, of Basque nationalism in the Southern Basque Country and in its origins, particularly of Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa. Although it holds a far more minority position in the Northern Basque Country, we shall take the whole of the Basque Country as a reference in order to have an overall view of Basque nationalism.

of workers in the primary sector to industrial centers, some of whom came from the north of Spain. This led to a radical change in the landscape of Bizkaia, in its social structures and way of life: new customs, often less related to religion; new ideologies, such as socialism; and new linguistic habits (Larronde, 2005; Solozabal, 1975).

The loss of political sovereignty of the Basque Country was another factor with a decisive impact on the political awareness raising of the Basque nation by Arana and his generation. By the end of the 19th century, the Southern Basque Country had experienced two internal wars, the so-called *Carlist Wars,* for succession to the Spanish throne, which entailed a clear break between the liberalism of the city bourgeoisie and the conservatism of rural nobility, the church, and the peasantry. Within the historical process of the construction of the modern nation-state, the Spanish state embraced centralist politics, and this led to the abolition of the *Fueros*, the system of local laws that had governed each of the Basque territories. The definitive dissolution of the Basque *foral* system was considered an attack from outside by the majority of Basques, as it implied the loss of their own laws, institutions, customs, and values (Corcuera, 1991; Elorza, 1978).

The identity crisis resulting from the loss of the *Fueros* was aggravated when significant immigration brought with it a process of acculturation, leading to an intensification of the decline of the Basque language by this influx of immigrants. In addition, Spanish centralist politics meant that schooling in the Southern Basque Country was in the hands of non-Basque teachers in order to ensure uniformity, in both content and language, throughout Spanish territory. The number of Basque speakers continued to drop at an unprecedented rate. This third linguistic and cultural factor, interrelated with the incipient process of industrialization and the loss of political sovereignty, caused a deep identity crisis in traditional Basque society. It is in this changing context that the need arose to afford the Basque nation a political projection (Gezala, 1995; Tejerina 1999).

2.2 Discourse and practice of Sabino Arana and the Basque Nationalist Party (1893–1936)

A context of total transformation in Europe saw the emergence of predominantly conservative stateless nationalist movements (Fusi, 2003, p. 83). In the Basque case, Arana formulated the discourse of the first Basque nationalism and defined five fundamental elements or characters of the Basque nation: race, language, government and laws, character and customs, and historical personality (1978, p. 52). In this hierarchy of values, race is the element that agglutinates "Basque essence"[14]. In this respect, he made use of a concept—that of *Basque race*—created precisely in the

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[14]It would appear that, up till then, there had not been any racial theorization in Basque tradition. The concepts of *Euskal Herria* and *Euskalduna* used by predecessors referred to the language (Jáuregui, 1981, pp. 16–17; Larronde, 1977, p. 124).

European scientific sphere in the 19th century, when racism was common. It is a concept calling for no biological or physical characteristic (Conversi, 1997, p. 68); in fact, distancing himself from the many racist authors of the time, Arana based his *race* on surnames (Larronde, 1977, p. 187). As explained by Douglass, Arana's singularity does not lie in his using race as a political and defining argument for the nation, but rather in making such an assertion with respect to a stateless nationality (2004, p. 106).

Although the racial dimension is fundamental to his discourse, it would seem that, in Arana's scale of values, the nation itself is subject to a higher value, religion (Apalategi, 1985, p. 86). In Arana's imaginary, *Euzkadi* (the name coined and used by Arana to refer to the political Basque Country) is in itself of no worth unless it is dedicated to God. His primitive slogan, which could be translated as "we for Euzkadi and Euzkadi for God" (our translation), represents this subordination of the political ideology and objectives to the will of God. In this respect, for Arana, independence is the way to safeguard the Basque race (Apalategi, 1985, p. 246).

The remaining national elements played a complementary role in Arana's social values and were subordinate to the racial element. The Basque language held the essence of the Basque soul and was a mechanism of integration, social cohesion, and the differentiation of the ethnic group. It was its connection to the race that made the language interesting. From this standpoint, it was therefore logical for Arana to try to ensure by all means that the language was not affected by any kind of "external interference" (Jáuregui, 1981, p. 17).

Above and beyond the discourse, Arana was also a person of action. Shortly after formulating his theoretical principles, he carried out major outreach work, by creating and running his own reviews which played a vital role in the renaissance of Basque culture. At the same time, he opened up a social center and founded a political party: the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) in 1895. Accordingly as the party defined its social base, a series of nationalist institutions and associations were created from it. Similarly, it enjoyed considerable support from a large part of the Basquephile movement and one advocating the *Fueros* which preceded Arana's discourse (Apalategi, 1985; Gezala, 1995).

After 1901, different associations were set up by the community that was being created around the PNV. These associations built the structures of the nationalist movement during the first three decades of the 20th century: in addition to their activities involved in spreading propaganda and information as well as culture, worthy of mention is everything they did to promote the creation of other nationalist organizations. Of note is the trade union Euzko Langileen Alkartasuna-Solidaridad de Trabajadores Vascos, ELA-STV (Solidarity of Basque Workers), because of its long tradition right up to the present day. However, there were also associations for women, students and trekkers, or associations in the sphere of education and research (Camino & Gezala, 1991).

The PNV defined itself as a "supra-partisan movement for national salvation" (Mees, 1992, pp. 341–342, our translation) and tried to agglutinate and win over the greatest number of sectors of Basque society, gradually increasing its social base[15]. As pointed out by Larronde (1977), traditional nationalism built its own world, separate from the Spanish one. Elorza defined it as "a 'micro-society' within Basque society" (1978, p. 6, our translation). To this end, an entire range of symbols were created, similar to those of a state (a flag, coat of arms, anthem, etc.), a slogan for its community (God and the Fueros), and venues for frequent encounters to celebrate the nationalist ceremony, both religious and secular. Affiliation to one of the many "bodies close to the PNV" (Larronde, 1977, p. 322, our translation) and the use of its symbols created, as pointed out by Mees, "a system of identification and self-esteem that helped integrate the nationalists in the new capitalist industrial society" (1992, pp. 341–342, our translation).

2.3 A traumatic end for the discourse and practice of the first Basque nationalism

The first three decades of the 20th century implied no substantial change in the previous trend: the process of industrial growth continued and, with it, the consequent socio-cultural changes. Likewise, Arana's nationalist doctrine predominated as far as theory was concerned until the 1930s. However, in practice, Basque nationalism was much more lax than in the abovementioned theory. By 1906, within the party, the upper hand was gained by the moderate line of the liberal bourgeoisie, which, while upholding Arana's theoretical principles, significantly tempered the PNV's political practice. Consequently, the core of Basque nationalism was subject to great tension and rifts in the first decades of the 20th century, between the orthodox wing loyal to Arana's principles and another of a more possibilist nature (Elorza, 1978, pp. 331–343).

Race was becoming a more symbolic than practical element,[16] and the goal of independence was less clear (Jáuregui, 1981, p. 17). Evidence of its evolution is that the PNV became temporarily known as the *Basque Nationalist Communion* in December 1916 and took on a more conservative nature. However, following the First World War in 1921, the more pro-independence sector created a new PNV (generally known as PNV-Aberri). One of its members, its leader Eli Gallastegi *Gudari*, revealed, at first in public for this nationalist movement, its solidarity with communists and acknowledged the existence of a class struggle (Lorenzo Espinosa, 1992). Despite their differences, both currents joined in 1930 under the name EAJ-PNV.

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[15]The PNV became the first political force in Araba, Bizkaia, and Gipuzkoa in 1936.

[16]According to Corcuera, once the PNV started to hold a relevant position in elections, the practical importance of race receded, and, too, the obligation to have Basque surnames in order to become a member of the party was no longer applied after 1899 (2001, p. 430).

That same year also saw the forging of a liberal nationalist project. Following other unsuccessful experiences, Acción Nacionalista Vasca (ANV, Basque Nationalist Action) was created. It enjoyed greater success than previous attempts, but it failed to outstrip the PNV (De la Granja, 2008). The novelties of ANV's discourses included understanding race as yet another theoretical element of Basque nationalism but rejected race as a requisite for taking part in the movement; what's more, it came out clearly against Arana's *racism* (Díez Medrano, 1999, p. 104). It likewise laid claim to the unity of the Basque Country, it showed an interest in closer collaboration with left-wing Republican parties, while supporting their secular stance (Elorza, 1978, p. 418; Jáuregui, 1981, p. 20). Shortly after, in 1934, it would be the *mendigoizales* (members of Basque nationalism's trekker society) of the *Jagi-Jagi* who took over *Aberri's* social and national activity, in the middle of another more serious crisis. By means of their weekly newsletter and political rallies, the *mendigoizales* reaffirmed the anti-capitalist stance and social solidarity of young nationalists (López Adán, 1974; Lorenzo Espinosa, 1992).

The Francoists' coup d'état and the subsequent war of 1936–1939 interrupted this debate and the political, cultural, and social movement associated with it. Basque nationalism went through a period of political inaction which lasted practically two decades. Said inaction was based in part on the fact that the Basque Government in exile as well as the PNV was hoping for a military intervention by the Allies in the Second World War, particularly the USA and the UK, which would put an end to the dictatorship and restore the political system of Spain's second Republic and, with it, the Statute of Autonomy of the Basque Country. However, the so-called *Pact of Madrid of 1953,* allowing the USA to avail of four military bases in Spanish territory in exchange for financial and military aid for the Francoist regime, together with the signing of *Concordat between the Spanish State and the Holy See* a few weeks earlier, destroyed the Basque Government's hope that an international intervention in Spain could have a positive effect on their demands (Apalategi, 1979, p. 145).

3 Renewal of Basque nationalism

The war of 1936–1939 was followed by an impasse of some years for Basque nationalism. It would be the generation of the 1950s who would react to the disappointment felt among nationalists and the deplorable situation of the Basque language during the Franco dictatorship. Awareness of the decline of the Basque nation had a great impact on the founders of Ekin and ETA.[17] This new generation set them-

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[17]Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (The Basque Country and Freedom), ETA, was created in 1958 (1959 according to other sources, as it does not have a fixed date of foundation). Its predecessor, the Ekin (*Do or undertake,* in Basque) group was created in Bilbao in the academic year 1951–1952 by a group of university students with Basque nationalist ideology with an aim to learning about politics (cfr. Apalategi, 1985; Casanova, 2007; Elorza, 1978; Jáuregui, 1981; Letamendia, 1994).

selves two urgent goals: to break with the passivity of their leaders and to rethink and redefine the bases of a new Basque nationalism (Tejerina, 1999, p. 122). To better understand the why and how of the renewal of nationalist tradition and its evolution toward a new left-wing nationalism, we shall first analyze the series of factors defining the post-war context.

3.1 The Basque Country midway through the 20th century: The post-war identity crisis

The period of the mid-20th century is particularly active in Europe. The Second World War had a contradictory effect: it helped strengthen solidarity between social classes and reinforced the sense of nation of the states, but likewise implied the new division of the world into two blocks, capitalism versus socialism. In addition, the union of national solidarity with socialist movements gave rise to a powerful and influential anti-colonial movement, particularly active in that period. As far as nationalism is concerned, two of the ideas are noteworthy. On the one hand, being as it is incompatible with the concepts of democracy or socialism, the nationalist movements need to shy away from the use of race if they seek approval in the international community. On the other hand, a new wave of nationalism was enjoying a boom during those years, the one linked to the colonies, as opposed to the mother countries. This wave began with China in 1949 and, in a short space of time, spread to most of Asia and Africa (Núñez Seixas, 1998).

   In this context, we are once again faced with a fresh industrial upturn in the Southern Basque Country and with a major migratory flow, from the different regions of Spain, which spread first through Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa and then through Araba and Navarre (Ruiz Olabuénaga & Blanco, 1994). By contrast, the Northern Basque Country continued to lose population. This second migratory flow, considerably larger than the previous one, had a major impact on how the new Basque social structure was shaped and gave rise to the growth and redevelopment of cities, a rise in environmental pollution, etc.

   As regards politics, two phenomena stand out. On the one hand, political repression and fear were the norm, and this fear gripped nationalist leaders (some in the Southern Basque Country, many in exile), still frustrated by the loss of the war. As a result, traditional nationalism proved incapable of responding (Conversi, 1997, p. 267). On the other hand, the younger generations were unhappy with the response being given by the older generations. They were impatient to shake off the fear and, moreover, were more permeable to the new European tendencies (Letamendia, 1994, p. 214). In this respect, Pérez-Agote states that Franco's political repression not only helped spread Basque nationalism to new social sectors but also helped radicalize it, leading it toward left-wing ideological currents as well as the use of violence (2008, p. 82).

Following the repression to which the Basque language and culture were subjected during Franco's dictatorship, the language, which had been losing ground (use and knowledge) as a means of communications for several decades, continued to decline. However, paradoxically, the decline in the use of Basque led to heightened awareness of its loss. Self-awareness of this traumatic loss helped reinforce the symbolic dimension in the new left-wing nationalist (Tejerina, 1999).

3.2 Discourse and practice of left-wing nationalism: ETA and the Nationalist Left (1958–1998)

Although at first it embraced some aspects of Arana's nationalism, ETA quickly distanced itself, specifically in relation to two of the most important aspects of said ideology (Elorza, Garmendia, Jáuregui, & Domínguez, 2000, pp. 201–202). On the one hand, ETA replaced the concept of race by the linguistic and cultural concept of ethnic group as a defining element of the Basque nation. It turned Basque into the *raison d'être* of the nation and of Basque nationalism. Therefore, just as, for Arana, the independence of the Basque Country was the way to safeguard the Basque race, for ETA, it was the only way to save the language from extinction (Apalategi, 1985, p. 246). On the other hand, it rejected confessionalism: ETA strongly criticized the Catholic Church, especially church hierarchy (Elorza et al., 2000, pp. 201–202).

As regards the social question, it quickly evolved to actually state that socialism is the preliminary step toward a classless society or communism and started a debate on Marxism and the national question (Apalategi, 1985, p. 252). As a political movement, and with anti-colonialist movements and socialism as a reference, ETA immediately went on to define itself as a *Basque Revolutionary Movement of National Liberation* (see its *Principles* document from 1962; quoted in De Hordago, 1979, vol. 1, pp. 528–531) and *socialist* at its V Assembly [see the *V. Asamblea Nacional de ETA 2. Sesión (Actas)*; quoted in De Hordago, 1979, vol. 7, pp. 84–97].

Under the influence of the work of Fanon, Mao, Che Guevara, etc. and the success of third-world national liberation movements as a reference, ETA embraced the model of the revolutionary war of colonized countries and tried to adapt it to Basque reality in order to deal with the double contradiction that the Basque revolution entailed in its view: national liberation and social liberation (Jáuregui, 1981, pp. 196–203; Saratxo, 2013). Thus, from the very beginning, it defended direct action against the Franco dictatorship and was organized in six branches, including the *military* wing (Jáuregui, 1981, p. 136). With respect to its ideology, following long and intense debate processes, not without the emergence of differences, expulsions, and splits, after holding its V assembly (1966–1967), ETA began to call its ideological stance *revolutionary nationalism*. Broadly speaking, this political

line was upheld over the following decades by ETAm[18] and the Nationalist Left[19] (Casanova, 2007, p. 84).

Above and beyond the discourse, in practice, ETA sought to afford a wide-ranging meaning to its ideological formula of revolutionary nationalism and to articulate the concept of *Basque Working People* as the political subject of the Basque nation, something completely new in the Basque case. Self-styled as a movement, and not as a party, it defended patriotic activity and strove to base its political strategy on the creation of an associated popular movement. By the end of the nineteen sixties, ETA already had internal structures that went beyond those typical of a mere organization of its characteristics, as it had created a network of collaborators and supporters among members of Basque civil society which, though they did not become structured activists, provided help for logistic or other needs[20] (Odriozola, 2016).

In a context of intense movement in the social sphere both in Europe and in its colonies, there was likewise a surge in neighbors', cultural, sports, etc. associations in the Basque Country, and, among them, of particular note was the strong *euskaltzale*[21] movement in defense of the Basque language. People began to gradually take part in all kinds of cultural measures (such as the setting up of *ikastolas*[22], centers for adult literacy and Basque language learning, dance and theatre groups, Basque festivals, etc.) and social activities (the workers' movement was revived at the beginning of the 1960s). This entire cultural, political, and social movement caused the nationalist world, hidden during the first years of the dictatorship, to resurface in the 1960s: history, language, and culture became especially relevant. This is when mass nationalism re-emerged in the Southern Basque Country, after almost three decades of silence (Jáuregui, 1981, p. 275). Although Basque nationalism was still a minority movement in the Northern Basque Country, the aforementioned context and the joint activity between ETA and certain local nationalist sectors helped stoke the revival of the political and cultural movement in

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[18]Following the most important split in ETA history, ETA was divided into ETA *militar* (ETAm) and ETA *político-militar* (ETApm) in November 1974.

[19]Since the1970s, the Nationalist Left (*Ezker Abertzalea* or *Izquierda Abertzale*) has been equated with the term "Basque Movement for National Liberation." We shall explain in more detail later in the text.

[20]These networks of support for ETA included members and followers of other social and political parties and groups such as the PNV or Enbata, the Nationalist Party of the Northern Basque Country founded in 1963, a major promoter of Basque culture and language in this region of the Basque Country (Jáuregui, 1981, p. 273) and deep interaction between the rebellion on the part of the clergy and that of Basque youth was likewise established (Jáuregui, 1981, p. 131). Women actively took part in ETA's network of logistics and infrastructure and, above all, were organized in and around ETA's cultural front (Odriozola, 2016).

[21]The movement in favor of the recovery and normalization of the Basque language and culture.

[22]*The ikastola* is the school whose function is to provide an education to new generations and enable them to socialize in Basque.

the Northern Basque Country and new organizations and movements, like, for example, Enbata, were set up.

By means of the comprehensive strategy it strove to apply, ETA's activists and network of supporters took part in parallel in the activities specific to its organization, as well as in other activities of different movements, including the workers' movement, to which it was clearly moving closer (Odriozola, 2016). Obviously, ETA was not the only driving force of the cultural and social dynamics to resurface on the Basque scene in the 1960s, but it could be said that it acted as a *condition*, as the majority of the socio-political and cultural initiatives of the time developed around ETA's discourse and nationalist practice (Odriozola, 2016).

Following Franco's death (1975), the Spanish Constitution of 1978 was signed into law, and the following year, a statute of autonomy was passed for the Basque Autonomous Community, and for Navarre in 1982. As opposed to the previous stage, when Basque nationalism suffered many years of silence, exile, and repression after losing the war of 1936, it now emerged with force. The PNV took center stage after reorganizing itself within the new political context and began to gain significant ground in elections.[23]

ETA, on the other hand, continued its armed activity. At that time, several of the more dynamic groups of the Basque popular movement coincided with the ideology of the Nationalist Left (represented by the Herri Batasuna coalition[24] from 1978 onward, together with other minor groups). This close relationship between both spaces gave rise to the term "Basque National Liberation Movement (MLNV)" from the 1970s onward, when referring to the series of political and sectorial bodies working along the lines of left-wing nationalism (Casanova, 2007, p. 283). During the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, numerous organizations revolved around the MLNV: in the feminist sphere, trade unions (Langile Abertzaleen Batzordeak—LAB, Patriotic Workers Committees—was created, subsequently, with a strong tradition), youth, social and anti-repression, environmental (anti-nuclear) organizations, or *euskaltzale* associations. In the Northern Basque Country, on the other hand, in that period of time, left-wing nationalism was divided between those close to the MLNV in the Southern Basque Country and those who proposed an autonomous movement in the north and led by Iparretarrak[25] and other groups (cfr. Ahedo, 2006; Bidegain, 2011; Jacob, 1994).

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[23]The PNV had likewise evolved in its discourse in comparison with its ideology prior to the war of 1936, shunning the idea of race and defending democracy and the integration of immigrants (De Pablo, 2009).

[24]Herri Batasuna (HB, People's Unity) was a coalition of political parties close to the left-wing pro-independence movement, which was created in 1978.

[25]Iparretarrak (IK), an armed group in the Northern Basque Country, set up in 1973 and active until 2000, which defended a homegrown nationalist strategy for this part of the country.

3.3 A discourse called into question

The predominant Basque nationalist discourse until the 1980s had been one of resistance and well suited to such an adverse situation as Franco's dictatorship. However, the institutional and political changes (Autonomous Communities, in particular) that occurred following the latter's death opened up new possibilities, the reason why the existing discourse began to be challenged. One of the sources of tension arose precisely in relation to the main theoretical element defining the Basque nation, the language. ETA's definition of the nation around the Basque language and culture, which, in the former context, helped give cohesion to nationalism's social mass, following the political changes, in the 1970s and 1980s, faced political and socio-linguistic difficulties in order to uphold its theoretic principles. A difficulty worthy of particular mention is the existence of a large mass of non-Basque speaking population.

On the one hand, the social prestige of Basque rose according as the new Basque institutions began to embrace and support it: its use in public grew and language policies were drawn up to foment it. However, one sector of nationalism, the one most concerned with the importance of the language, felt that the policies promoted by the Autonomous Community's institutions were insufficient, while opinions clashed within the nationalist movement on the strategies with regard to the institutionalization of the *euskaltzale* movement. In general, this sector criticized nationalism for its failure to ensure that the language be learnt and used to the extent that it should, despite it having been afforded a central role in its theory (Zabalo & Odriozola, 2017).

Another major source of tension worth highlighting refers to political practice. Following Franco's death, clandestine structures with their large numbers of activists were no longer necessary, while political attention was concentrated on institutional activity, as is usual in a liberal democracy. However, this scheme of things clashed with the revolutionary praxis of former times. Within left-wing nationalism, the driving force behind the former discourse, contradictions arose around several points: the validity of the institutions, the degree of democracy they implied, how to approach the new situation, the need for ETA to persist, etc. (Zabalo & Odriozola, 2017).

In this respect, efforts to solve conflicts in different parts of the world by means of dialogue became highly important. In the Basque case, of special relevance is the dialogue-based solution given to the Irish conflict, with the result that Basque nationalism's two main forces, PNV and the Nationalist Left, together with EA,[26] launched some conversations which they called the *Ireland Forum* (Casanova, 2007, pp. 422–423) in 1998 (following the Stormont and Good Friday agreements).

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[26]Eusko Alkartasuna (EA) is a political party with social democratic ideology. It was founded following the split with the PNV in 1986.

4 A new nationalism? Basque nationalism in the 21st century

The globalization process has not only brought us its intentions to homogenize, doing away with borders and equalizing trends and customs, but it has also provided us with the response of self-identification and differentiation, which is, ultimately, the cornerstone of nationalism.

In this respect, diversity is seen as an asset that must be safeguarded in all spheres and aspects. The concept of biodiversity, a term coined in the field of environmentalism, is applied to all living beings on the planet and, by extension, to all cultures and identities in the world. In opposition to the homogenization process, and at times theoretically incompatible with the concept of equality, the concept of diversity has revitalized nationalist theories, particularly in the western world, and afforded them a new theoretical corpus, closely linked to the concept of democracy, as we shall later see in relation to the Basque case.

4.1 An intense start to the 21st century

Generally speaking, the Basque Country has witnessed a change in its demographic and socio-economic structure, and this has had an impact on the nationalist movement. The coastal population has risen in the Northern Basque Country thanks, to a large extent, to its appeal for tourists and retired people, as well as its capacity to generate new jobs. This has led to a double migratory flow toward the Basque coast, mainly linked to the first sector, from France and the Basque hinterland, which is gradually being depopulated. These movements have affected Basque nationalism in two respects: in part, by a heightened defense of the culture associated with the Basque language, in decline here too, and an environment that is more urban than it used to be; and, on the other hand, a robust environmental movement in defense of the land and the revitalization of the hinterland.

The defense of the culture and the land are therefore the core areas of new Basque nationalism in the Northern Basque Country. Highly active in both aspects, its political moves have been largely concerned with winning institutional recognition for its territory, diluted since the 18th century within the department of Atlantic Pyrenees. Availing of the diverse possibilities for decentralization that the French state has been implementing, especially, since 1982, Basque nationalism's historic demand for its own department has evolved since then to new ways of organization, eventually leading to the Basque Country Community in 2017. Irrespective of the limited competences of this Community, it was considered of vital importance for Basque nationalism as it has managed to agglutinate a large number of political parties and a significant part of the population around an objective put forward and defended by the nationalist movement.

Changes are likewise evident in the territories of the Southern Basque Country. Since the end of the 20th century, the economic structure has changed radically:

the large shipbuilders and steelworks have disappeared, and, in their place, smaller businesses have proliferated, often as cooperatives; the services sector, among them, tourism, has developed quickly; and the primary sector is far less important than it was. The countryside is still being depopulated, even more acutely in the Pyrenees region of Navarre, although a large number of recent immigrants, from Africa, Eastern Europe, and South America, have been attracted to the primary sector, particularly in the Ribera region of Navarre, where immigrants make up a third of the population.

Problems of integration, immigrants' rights, and rejection by a sector of the local population are the order of the day, although studies have highlighted the high degree of acceptance of the migrant population by the native population (Ikuspegi, 2019a). Basque nationalism has a wait and see attitude to these issues, as it is aware that immigration could threaten its budgetary funds (above all, as far as Basque culture is concerned), but the more left-wing currents of Basque nationalism are likewise seeking a possible alliance with the more active sectors in immigration.

However, what has changed radically is the political situation in the Basque Country, due, above all, to ETA's unilateral decision to abandon its armed activity in 2011 and, more so, to its dissolution in 2018. Since the end of Franco's dictatorship, there had been an intense debate within Basque nationalism on the legitimacy of using violence to reach its objectives, with outright opposition from more moderate nationalism, such as parties like PNV and EA. Furthermore, at the end of the century, a clear change in the international context can be appreciated with respect to the use of violence in Western European countries (reflected in the ending of the armed campaigns in Northern Ireland and in Corsica). Nevertheless, in the early 21st century, other internal reasons were added to these external reasons, with respect to the strategic appropriateness of continuing with the armed struggle (cfr. Murua, 2016; Whitfield, 2014; Zabalo & Saratxo, 2015).

In the space of a few short years, between 1998 and 2010, the changes were of great magnitude. In 1998, ETA tried to forge an alliance with the different nationalist political and socialist forces (under the so-called *Lizarra-Garazi Agreement*) with an aim to outline a path toward self-determination, without the use of violence. The agreement broke down in 2000, although, in another sense, the subject of self-determination and a greater share in government was included in a proposal for the renewal of the Statute of Autonomy for the Basque Autonomous Community (popularly known as the *Ibarretxe Plan*, in reference to the then president of the Basque Government), which was passed by the Autonomous Parliament in 2004. It was summarily rejected by the main Spanish parties on its presentation the following year.

The frustration generated by the refusal to discuss any point of the proposal was further aggravated by lack of unity within Basque nationalism, and even more so within the PNV itself, the party that had actually promoted the proposal. It could

be said that the wing of the party clearly satisfied with the Autonomous Community system or the less pro-independent faction within the PNV took control of the party and was eager to abandon new proposals for self-government, which it subsequently managed to do and has continued to do, thanks to its favorable electoral results up to the present day.

While the negotiations with respect to this project for a new statute of autonomy were underway, in 2005, a new framework for negotiation, this time between ETA and the Spanish Government (under the PSOE), was set up, with an aim, once again, to find channels to reach an end to ETA's armed activities. It was unusual as it also included a political negotiating table at Basque level, between the Socialist Party of Euskadi (part of the PSOE), the PNV, and the Nationalist Left (the so-called *Loiola Conversations*).

The failure to reach agreement in both negotiation fronts had serious consequences for the Nationalist Left, as, during that period, the Spanish Government launched a severe campaign of illegalization and arrests affecting any organization or person related to the Nationalist Left. ETA activists were arrested, but so too were political representatives of Batasuna (of the Nationalist Left), activists in youth organizations, social movements, bodies providing support for Basque prisoners; major newspapers were shut down; fines were handed out on a steady basis, etc.

In this repressive atmosphere and with two failed negotiating processes in a period of eight years (1998–2006), the Nationalist Left, including ETA, embarked on a process of reflection on the strategic appropriateness of maintaining armed activity. As far as the civil side was concerned, the process culminated in 2010 with an official presentation in Pamplona, in which the Nationalist Left upheld its strategic goals, but with the democratic channels only in order to achieve them and with no reference whatsoever to the use of armed activity (the *Zutik Euskal Herria* document). Moreover, the move was complemented by a debate held by ETA, which led to its unilateral decision to abandon its armed activity in 2011.

What would seem logical in this situation is for Spain to have shown an interest in strengthening this stance and verifying the actual end of armed violence. However, this was not the case, as, quite the contrary, the stance of the Spanish government was both unrelenting and obstructive (mainly on the part of the Popular Party, in power for many of these years, but also at times on the part of the PSOE), unwilling to see the end unless it were as a result of a resounding military defeat. Denied any chance of negotiation by the Spanish side, ETA decided to dissolve unilaterally, with the aid of a series of experienced international observers, and this it did in 2018.

These last 20 years of the 21st century thus offer us two widely differing scenarios in the Southern Basque Country. The first unstable decade focused to a large extent on ETA, subsequently compounded by the economic downturn; and a

second decade, in which ETA was voluntarily disappearing from the scene, forced the political forces and society itself to reposition themselves. Undoubtedly, the most evident change is the repositioning of the Nationalist Left, which, in a very short period of time, went from being illegalized and outlawed to entering into alliances with other political forces, to governing in many town and city councils (some as important as San Sebastian and Pamplona), or in the historical territory of Gipuzkoa, and participating in coalition governments, as is the case in Navarre.

Institutional activity became more important in these last few years for Basque nationalism. Nevertheless, more than one alternative social movement and part of the Nationalist Left's social base had certain qualms in relation to this activity. They wanted the institutions to pay more attention to the daily work of these movements but were likewise concerned about the eventual greater presence of the institutions in spheres they considered their own, due to their prolonged involvement in them. The first stance was patent in the movement for the recovery of the Basque language, which calls for effective policies on the part of the institutions and which are considered insufficient by this movement. The second stance can be appreciated in feminist and environmentalist groups, to give just two examples.

Either directly as a result of ETA's dissolution or due to the changes and movements arising in consequence, and because there is a constant flow of new ideas and initiatives from within and abroad, the 21st century is forcing people to rethink their former positions and ways of doing things, which now seem more or less exhausted. First of all, we shall see how the theoretical conceptualization of Basque nationalism is changing and why; and second, we shall look at how it is affecting its day-to-day activities.

4.2 Rethinking Basque nationalism in the 21st century

The idea that nationalism is unchangeable in time is transmitted both from outside, and always understood as negative criticism, as being something firmly anchored in the 19th century, and from inside, understood as an example of positive cohesion, that a nationalist movement exists which is in no way affected by time until it has achieved all its goals. The fact of the matter is that, logically, like all movements, it evolves accordingly as new ideas and contexts emerge and develop. This is certainly the case in these first years of the 21st century.

4.2.1 The right to decide

The first nationalism of the 19th century saw the nation as a unique subject in history, with its own path unlike other nations in the world, the reason why it claimed the same rights as the rest of nations, among them, the right to establish a state. The perception of uniqueness has not changed since then, but, during the 20th century, with the advent of the right to self-determination and, in particu-

lar, since the end of that century, it came to be understood that, in the name of diversity, all identities deserve to be acknowledged and preserved, provided those holding said identity decide so. In other words, in the case of nations, they have the democratic right to set up a state if the majority of the citizens in the territory in which the consultation on the subject is held decide so. This is the basis of the so-called right to decide, which, during the 21st century, has had such an impact on Basque nationalism.

It derives from the right to self-determination, an important democratic instrument for establishing new states in the 20th century, particularly the overseas colonies of a number of European countries, although not just in these. Indeed, the discussion on whether the right to self-determination only affects the colonies or too any nation claiming it is at the origin of the right to decide.

A major contribution to this discussion is provided by Quebec, with respect to going beyond the colonial theory. Indeed, the attempts at independence in Quebec (referendums in 1980 and 1995) gave rise to an academic (see, e.g., Macedo & Buchanan, 2003; Moore, 1998), as well as a political and legal debate on the actual legitimacy of a democratic consultation of a given population if the state of origin does not agree to it.

Be it understood as a reformulation of the right to self-determination, or as a different theory, although one based on said right, the right to decide has been the subject of extensive theorization in Catalonia in recent years. In its formulation, the uniqueness of the nation loses its position to the democratic right which all political communities should have to be able to decide on their future. In other words, rather than a nation, we are referring to a *demos*, a political community in a given territory that may be made up of more than one nation, but where the democratic spirit prevails for resolving any conflicts that might arise, among which that of setting up an independent state (see Cuadras-Morató, 2016; López, 2011; Vilajosana, 2014).

Over and above the foregoing debate on whether certain conditions are met in order to be able to hold a referendum on self-determination, López proposes bringing the debate back to democratic terms, on whether there is in fact a right "to participate in a decision." "Based on a principle of democratic radicalism," the right to decide "refers to citizens who have the right to decide because the decision affects them" (2011, p. 24).

The theoretical consequences of these proposals are obvious with respect to nationalism, given that its main objective, setting up an independent state, remains but it is now based on a *demos* which does not coincide with the nation itself. The illusion of a state comparable to a nation, which was hardly ever true, fades away immediately in this formulation, which must satisfy its population not in terms of national identity but rather in terms of social, economic, political, and cultural well-being.

The influence of these new theories in the Basque Country is clear, particularly going by the echo the Catalan secessionist experience has had, although it is true that reception varied. Basque left-wing nationalists were highly enthusiastic as it put forward a real, if complicated, way toward independence whereas the PNV were more cautious, as they are not happy with unilateral channels not agreed on with the state, and fear that state repression in Catalonia could affect the Basque Country's autonomy.

At all events, and as a consequence of Catalonia's influence, there have been appreciable changes in the pro-sovereignty message, which is now more open to material questions, related to well-being, and not only to identity issues. Some recent proposals, for example, abandoning the concept of nationalism and embracing that of pro-independence, underlining the fact that the political project is open to all citizens and, to a certain extent, disassociated from national identity (e.g., Apaolaza, 2016).

Moreover, this new approach sits well with other contributions coming from feminist or environmentalist movements, as we shall see later. Its formulation, directed at all citizens, and focused on well-being, democracy, and individual rights, is not, on the other hand, so appealing for some *euskaltzale* sectors, who insist that the recognition of individual rights does not guarantee the recognition of collective rights, such as cultural and linguistic ones. They emphasize that a stateless nation like the Basque Country is in an asymmetrical power relation with Spanish and French cultures and languages.

In other words, we can currently appreciate that there is a combination of two discourses in Basque nationalism. Both discourses propose an independent Basque state. One of them attaches great importance to factors relating to identity, above all, to the Basque language, and its aim is to set up a state that can equip the Basque nation with the mechanisms and structures for safeguarding Basque culture and language,[27] as well as other more material objectives. On the other hand, the new discourse attaches greater importance to the diverse improvements that a Basque state could imply for the entire population, and not, in particular, for the Basque nation, which is why it tends to lower its emphasis on identity factors and the central role of the Basque language.

4.2.2 Language and diversity

As we have seen, the language question has been central to Basque nationalism since its origins, but, especially, since the second half of the 20th century, when left-wing nationalism, to start with, and then Basque nationalism as a whole accorded it a central role as a defining element of the nation. It needs to be clarified that this central role was qualified in practice, as a consequence of the socio-linguistic reality

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[27] UNESCO's Atlas of World's Languages in Danger (2010) rates Basque's situation as "vulnerable."

of the Basque language. In other words, as it is a minority language, not spoken by the majority of the population, and excluded from many social spaces, nationalism was obliged to be more flexible in its position: the language defined the nation, but, in practice, allegiance to its political project was put before the language (Conversi, 1997, p. 240; Zabalo, 2008).

At any rate, Basque has been, and still is, a core element in Basque nationalism, which helps us understand the tension caused by the new tendencies seen in the previous point, insofar as they diminish its leading role as the main national factor. In light of these new approaches, some sectors, with acknowledged relevance within Basque nationalism, advocate upholding the central role of Basque (in its theorization, e.g., Azurmendi, 2017). At any rate, Basque nationalism cannot be understood today without the Basque language, and proof of the same is that said debates on theory are being held mainly in Basque, unlike what occurred decades before (the language's situation has improved considerably since the 1980s).

Nevertheless, nowadays, the challenge faced by Basque nationalism with regard to the language and culture is not limited to Basque, as there is also a question of its diversity and the management thereof. As already mentioned, immigration—without taking into account inter-state migratory flows—is a growing reality in the Basque Country, especially since the beginning of the 21st century. The truth is, despite the importance in demographic terms of this phenomenon, no significant variant of Basque nationalism holds an anti-immigrant view, unlike some other European nationalist movements. It could be said that, as far as its management by the institutions, particularly in the CAV (Jeram, 2012), and civil society are concerned, Basque nationalism's view is that of a nation open to immigration (Iraola, 2015).

However, how do the defense of a native tongue and the construction of an open approach to cultural diversity relate? There is no doubt that the relation is complex and there are tensions, but the need to open up to the migratory reality has likewise led to a need to reformulate certain ideas about the role of language in nationalism. Therefore, acceptance of cultural diversity as a value has helped strengthen further a more open approach to the linguistic diversity of the Basque Country.

Worthy of note is that this relation between multiculturalism and the Basque language is being led by a social movement in favor of the recovery of the language, *Euskalgintza* (not strictly nationalist), particularly at local level. In addition, incipient initiatives have cropped up around the Basque Country, such as *Euskal Herria Hamaika Kolore* (The multi-colored Basque Country), which seek a more general approach, relating the migratory issue and multiculturalism with Basque, accordingly the central role to the Basque language, providing the means for greater cohesion of a diverse society (H11Kolore, n.d.).

4.2.3 Emerging contributions from feminist and environmentalist movements and alternative economy

Basque left-wing nationalism has always had ties with social movements, which have helped inspire its theory, despite the fact that they have not always been strictly nationalist. It could be said that, in recent years, this dynamic has been enhanced, due to the boom of, and the greater role played, by certain movements in the Basque Country. It is true that these are minor contributions, within society as a whole, but they are extremely significant in theoretical terms, given that they are reflected in Basque nationalism's current discourse, especially that of left-wing nationalism, and, to a far lesser extent, in the case of the PNV's nationalism.

Here we would point out the contributions from feminist movements, environmentalist movements and alternative economy entities, three interrelated movements, in their practice as well in their new theoretical approaches. In many cases, their influence can be appreciated in specific local practices, but several of the theories emerging from these movements have had an impact on Basque nationalism.

Feminism is today one of the most influential movements in the Basque Country and, at the same time, one of the most productive as regards theory. A movement in vogue in Europe and throughout the world, it is reflected in a very specific way in the Basque Country, where the specific features of Basque feminism add to its overall clout: a widespread network of small groups in numerous towns in the Basque Country; a socially relevant movement for many decades, although constantly rejuvenated, and currently boasting a large number of young women among its members; and two sides, as a social movement and an institutional one. An example of the latter can be found in the *Emakumeen Etxeak*, women's houses, which are spread around different towns and are funded by the municipal authorities.

The relation between Basque nationalism and feminism is not new, as we have already pointed out. It can be traced back to the women's groups—as yet not feminist—which, after 1922, formed the PNV's female branch (Ugalde, 1993). However, *abertzale* feminism, linked to left-wing nationalism, began to take shape in the 1970s and1980s, in the framework of the effervescence of the broader Basque feminist movement (women's assemblies, numerous local groups, etc.). This is when the first feminist organizations were set up within the Basque nationalist movement, in coordination with the rest of the groups in the feminist movement, and have continued until this century, when they gained in significance, particularly in recent years.

Its importance within the general feminist movement is clearly reflected in the use of the Basque territory as the framework for discussion and action of the entire movement, and not as a mere appendage of the Spanish or French one. Similarly, its importance as a major social player can be appreciated in numerous recent examples: the feminist strikes of 2018 and 2019, organized by the Basque feminist

movement throughout the Basque Country; the Women's Global March; or the general strike held in the Southern Basque Country by nationalist trade unions and a variety of social movements (among which was the feminist movement with significant participation) on January 30, 2020, in *defense of a dignified life*, according to the slogan (EiTB, 2020).

In what way does feminism have an impact on Basque nationalism? On the one hand, feminism's input in terms of theory is fundamental today in the approaches of left-wing nationalism, political parties, and trade unions. This is evident in the use in these discourses of concepts like *feminist sovereignty*[28] or in the feminist review of the national question currently underway. Added to these new pro-independence currents, which we have already analyzed, are the theories that have arisen relating the pro-independence objective to feminism, envisaging the Basque state as a tool in the fight against patriarchy (Goikoetxea, 2016).

Environmentalism too is making a fundamental contribution to Basque nationalism, particularly, left-wing nationalism. This is not new as this relation has existed since the 1960s, especially with the antinuclear struggle in the 1980s. Just as with feminism, broadly speaking, it is a social movement which, currently, has considerable clout, due perhaps to the alarm caused by climate change. This impact on Basque nationalism is particularly relevant in the Northern Basque Country, where environmentalism plays a leading role in its political program and in movements such as *Bizi* (Live)[29] or in the *Chamber of Agriculture of the Northern Basque Country*[30].

How is Basque nationalism influenced by environmentalism? Generally speaking, it is evident in the success of concepts like that of *food sovereignty* (Conversi, 2016), agroecology or the importance attached to local communities in the political community's overall development, as well as its criticism of capitalism. All these concepts are highly attractive and appropriate for nationalist theory, insofar as what the latter proposes is a defense of what is one's own, namely one's country. The concept of sovereignty has been renewed, linked as it is now to food production and consumption. An example of this influence is a manifesto of 2020 advocating an *environmental transition*, within the framework of the COVID-19 crisis, with the support of the nationalist left-wing parties and trade unions (Euskal Herria, 2020).

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[28] A concept defended by the feminist and Basque nationalist organization, *Bilgune Feminista*, among others, for example, and which interrelates the feminist viewpoint of the concept of sovereignty with the sovereignty of the Basque Country (Bilgune Feminista, 2020).

[29] An alterglobalization movement in the Northern Basque Country, founded in 2009, closely linked to Basque nationalism, which is active in fields related to climate change and the environment, and attaching considerable importance to civil disobedience.

[30] Association set up by the agricultural trade union of the Northern Basque Country, ELB to defend farmers' interests and help promote sustainable agriculture.

On the other hand, worth mentioning, and in relation to more practical initiatives, is the importance it has in the Northern Basque Country, where Basque nationalism seems to be evolving toward green nationalism, under the theoretical banner of the concept of biodiversity. With the defense of diversity at its core, it advocates the defense of a cultural identity and the defense of the earth, understood as the environmental survival of a peripheral community in the French context. In the Southern Basque Country, it is embodied in different points of the nationalist left-wing movement's political programs. Thus, one of the central points of the left-wing nationalist coalition, EH Bildu when they were in the regional government of Gipuzkoa between 2011 and 2015, was its all-out opposition to a waste incineration plant. Moreover, one of the coalition's proposals, were it to win the elections for the Autonomous Community Government in 2012, was to create a Ministry for Food Sovereignty (see La Vanguardia, 2012).

A third emerging, although brief, contribution worth highlighting is alternative economy, associated, in the Basque case, to cooperatives. The cooperative is a phenomenon characteristic of the Basque Country's economic make-up, where it is of major importance in its industry. The model's author of reference is José María Arizmendiarrieta, its theorist and founder of Mondragón Corporación Cooperativa, a major social economy business group. It is a solid model and prevalent in the town of Mondragón and throughout the region, where it even has its own university linked to the venture.

There are, however, other numerous models of cooperatives. After the economic downturn that began in 2008, many small cooperatives were set up in the Basque Country, some of them associated with what is called alternative economy (closely linked to feminism and environmentalism). We are talking about minor initiatives, often implying a discourse linked to sovereignty: they claim that the question of sovereignty is not limited to the independence of the Basque Country, but is rather linked to the self-organization of communities, to material sovereignty, which is why they defend creating tools apart from large companies.

It should be noted that many of the initiatives we have mentioned are not, strictly speaking, nationalist, but sit well with left-wing nationalism, insofar as they promote and give a new dimension to the concept of sovereignty, fundamental in all nationalist theorization. Economic sovereignty, food sovereignty, and political sovereignty act as a tool to combat patriarchy, and with it, the enhancement of local and daily practices, associated with the territory. All these highlight the concept of sovereignty, and the fact that the latter is a practice that can be built on a daily basis.

4.3 Basque nationalism today

Nowadays, Basque nationalism is, without a doubt, one of the main political and social players in the Basque Country. Although it may have failed to achieve its ul-

timate aim of creating an independent state, it wields considerable political power, above all, in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country; national identification, to the detriment of the Spanish or French ones, is considerable; and its presence in different aspects of Basque society is notable. Let us look now at how Basque nationalism is organized today.

Apart from the institutional recognition of the Basque Country, in the Northern Basque Country, the process of establishing the Community of the Basque Country has helped agglutinate the majority of political nationalists around a new coalition, Euskal Herria Bai. Set up in 2007, it is made up of three parties, as well as some independents, and has a close relationship with the EH Bildu coalition in the Southern Basque Country (in fact, two of its parties form part of both coalitions). Its electoral experience is limited, but it has maintained an upward trend, which has turned it into an important reference in the political context of the region as it was the third most voted party in the legislative elections of 2017, with 10.42% (in local elections, it is capable of obtaining over 20% and of actually holding office in some small towns).

The main objectives of this institutionalization are focused on the recovery of the Basque language, to which end they demand its being made official; on the defense of the primary sector in the country's hinterland; and on other progressive social measures or policies, often environment-related. Nationalism is extremely active in the latter sphere, and many of its activists are involved in associations or initiatives of this kind: acts of environmental disobedience, the use of a local environment-friendly and solidarity currency, or the organization of numerous local alternative projects. This new approach has led Euskal Herria Bai to strengthen ties with French Green parties (resulting in numerous joint voting lists between environmentalists and nationalists).

In the Foral Community of Navarre, the relative progress of Basque nationalism is evident in the continuity and development of left-wing nationalism, but, likewise, in the emergence of a new party which agglutinates a more centrist spectrum and with a diminished Basque nationalist profile. The main party is Euskal Herria Bildu, a coalition forged in 2012 between three left-wing parties, and whose main element is the traditional Nationalist Left. The second party is Geroa Bai (Yes to the Future), a coalition of parties and associations set up in 2011, with the PNV as the main element. The presence of the latter party has been pivotal in the historical turning point in the political scene in Navarre. In point of fact, the predominance, over decades, of regionalist or right-wing Spanish parties, strongly opposed to Basque nationalism, has been partially checked by the possibilities that these two parties and other left-wing ones have to form a coalition. As well as holding office in a variety of towns in Navarre, they have formed part of the last two Navarre governments, the first of which was, moreover, presided by Geroa Bai.

In the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country, ETA's end and the possibilities opening up for the Nationalist Left (illegalized for the first decade of the 21st century) to stand in elections has led to the total domination of Basque nationalist forces. The main political force in this demarcation is the PNV. With a centrist, Christian-democratic ideology, it has been the dominant party in many of the CAV institutions since the end of the Franco dictatorship and up to the present. The second political force is EH Bildu, a left-wing force, as we have already pointed out, which is connected with the Nationalist Left (historically close to ETA) and to the PNV's leftist splinter wing. Despite the fact that their electoral results imply an absolute majority in the Basque Parliament, being in charge of practically all of the regional and municipal institutions, a climate of cooperation between them is absent, as both are vying for primacy. Their condition as nationalists does, however, reveal itself in matters relating to the promotion of the Basque language, or in the recent project for drawing up a new statute of autonomy, which was launched in 2018.

A distinctive element of Basque nationalism is the great strength of its trade unions, something that other regions find particularly striking, and which can be explained, in part, by the long left-wing tradition of some of the branches of the nationalist movement. Currently, the main trade union in the Southern Basque Country is ELA. Of Christian origin and very close to the PNV, its theory has evolved toward a more alternative and radical stance than what its origins would indicate. Currently, the second largest nationalist trade union (third of all those in the Southern Basque Country) is LAB. Founded in 1974, in the final years of Franco's regime, it has always held a left-wing nationalist position and has gradually gained in significance in the Basque trade union scene.

With a, at times, tense relationship, due to their rivalry in trying to reach primacy, they are aware of the force they can accumulate when they join together. This has occurred quite often, with joint political statements and, above all, a call for general strikes, which have been quite successful. They have likewise collaborated in other social initiatives, together with other alternative movements and organizations. LAB is the only one with an organization in the Northern Basque Country, and its power as a trade union is extremely limited. However, its influence is greater than its specific importance, as, here too, it collaborates in alternative initiatives.

We could not conclude this overview without mentioning, albeit in a general fashion, all the specialized organizations and movements who maintain some kind of relationship with Basque nationalism. Thus, they too keep to the path opened up by the first nationalists, which was broadened with the second form of nationalism, in order to build a global nationalist movement, which encompasses broad aspects of Basque organizational life, although not directly organized as nationalists.

The main movement is, undoubtedly, the one related to the Basque language. It is made up of numerous groups and small organizations involved in a variety of aspects: the teaching of the language, local groups promoting the language, publications, etc. A second movement that has gained strength in recent years is the feminist movement, and it is certainly worth pointing out the importance of its proximity to Basque nationalism, with the result that the mutual influence has been constant. A third dominant movement in recent times is the one related to the right to decide. Organized locally, it has been highly active and has organized initiatives with great public impact. Without exhausting the list of movements revolving around Basque nationalism, last of all, we would mention the diverse socio-environmentalist and anti-repression groups which have proliferated in recent years.

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CHRIS KOSTOV, FERNANDO DE VICENTE DE LA CASA
AND MARÍA DOLORES ROMERO LESMES

Discussing independence in Catalonia today is uncomfortable and sometimes generates discord, but it also arouses interest. This is due to the implications that secession entails and the media projection that the issue has. There is a continuous debate on the Catalonian situation by politicians, economists, jurists, or linguists, and therefore, it is necessary to treat the nationalist process by areas. In recent years, the Catalonian independence process has fluctuated from instability to inconsistency, and recently, it has reached a point of intensity that baffles. For this reason, it is necessary to specify the fields of action that the secessionist groups carry out to keep the debate on nationalism alive and to activate the legalization of its process. Thus, this chapter employs a multidisciplinary approach. It is structured in three parts, written by three different authors specializing in three different disciplines, yet equally focused on the Catalonian situation. As the title indicates "Separatism in Catalonia: Legal, political, and linguistic aspects," it reflects the current Catalonian reality from areas that are related to each other.

The first part, written by Professor Fernando de Vicente, analyzes the Catalonian independence process from a legal point of view. It is based on the hypothesis that if Catalonia separates to build a new state, aspects related to domestic and international law must be considered. Likewise, the use of a referendum as a tool to decide on secession is debated, and it is contrasted with the legality of the referendum of the Parliament of Catalonia. Finally, Dr. de Vicente points out the legal consequences that would occur in the three judicial powers, in the Public Administration, and in the Public Treasury.

The second part, written by Professor Chris Kostov, is dedicated to the use of the education system and diplomacy by Catalonian separatists in order to achieve their goals. History and geography textbooks subsidized by the Catalonian government are analyzed to demonstrate their use as a tool of indoctrination in schools from a very young age. Then, the author tackles the propaganda carried out by the Catalonian delegations abroad, which serve as Catalonian quasi-embassies in order to internationalize the independence conflict and gain international support for Catalonia.

Lastly, Professor María Dolores Romero addresses the linguistic aspect of the sovereignty process, to offer an analysis of how the Catalan language is used in

order to achieve and defend independence. The work is divided into two parts. The first deals with Catalan identity and nationalism as a source of inspiration in secessionist aspirations. This section highlights the use of the language in Catalan society, the increasing politicization of the language, and the symbol it represents. The second part shows Catalan language policy in the public sector and its implications. Special emphasis is placed on the Catalan language immersion model. The problems associated with the labeling of products in this language and the linguistic requirements to access public employment are also discussed. The work ends with conclusions that highlight the main ideas and reflect on the implications of the Catalan language for nationalism.

1 The Catalonian independence: Legal analysis

This text analyzes the possibilities and consequences, from the legal point of view, of the independence process, which has taken place in Catalonia since 2017. This process has not taken into account the legal procedure, as well as the legal results that it could bring, and that in fact it is already having, about Catalonia itself and its citizens.

First, it should be noted that both a territorial modification and the secession of a territory to constitute a new state entail innumerable aspects of domestic and international law that must be considered. Therefore, this chapter intends to begin by analyzing whether a territory or a part of a Spanish territory can become independent, according to Spanish and European Union regulations.

Secondly, a referendum has been discussed and attempted to be used as a tool to decide on this matter, so it is necessary to analyze what the right to decide is, what limits it has, and what our legislation says about it. Likewise, we will see if what is established by the Referendum Law of the Parliament of Catalonia meets the law or not.

Thirdly, we will analyze the consequences that independence would have on the three powers, the Catalan Public Administration, and the Treasury, by studying the Disconnection Law of the Parliament of Catalonia and its legality.

2 Can a part of the Spanish territory be independent?

To answer this question, we must first turn to the Spanish Constitution. Article 2 establishes that "The Constitution is based on the indissoluble unity of the Spanish Nation, common and indivisible homeland of all Spaniards, and recognizes and guarantees the right to autonomy of the nationalities and regions that integrate it and solidarity among them." It is perfectly clear that a territory cannot be separated from the Spanish State.

Now, let's analyze what the Treaty of the European Union says on the matter. Article 4.2 establishes that "Under the principle of conferral, the Union shall act only within the limits of the competences conferred upon it by the Member States in the Treaties to attain the objectives set out therein. Competences not conferred upon the Union in the Treaties remain with the Member States." It does not seem that the EU also sponsors the independence of a territory, but that, like our Constitution, it defends the territorial integrity of the States that make up the EU, although it defends the autonomy of the regions that form them.

However, the EU can never get involved in the internal affairs of states, such as this one we are talking about. As Araceli Mangas states: "Therefore, no treaty has regulated or may regulate changes in the territory of the member states. It is an internal matter of each State. It is a matter that is not within the competence of the EU; therefore, the secession of parts of a State is not regulated in or under the framework of EU law. European Union law cannot and should not regulate secession or the specific consequences of a loss or an increase in the territory of one of its member States" (Mangas, 2013, p. 57). Thus, when the unification of the two Germanies took place, the Federal Republic did not have to request the re-entry of the new country, either together or separately. This case was used by Catalan politicians to say that the reverse would be the same, but it is not so, as we will see later.

Therefore, and contrary to what was claimed by Catalan politicians, "it is not a treaty gap; nor can it be said that EU norms are ambiguous, as they want to make us think, to hide the consequences of a secession. Secession is not mentioned nor can it be regulated in the EU treaties, as the territory of each state is not within the competence of the EU. Nor can it be said that, as there have been no precedents, it is not known how the institutions will react. One thing is that there has never been a secession within the territory [...] of an EU Member State and another thing [...] is that there are no clear rules applicable" (Mangas, 2013, p. 57).

It has been argued by Catalan politicians the applicability of UN Resolution 2625, which modifies and expands UN Resolution 1514, whose sixth paragraph states that "Any attempt to totally or partially break the national unity and territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations." I think this text does not give any ground to interpretation. It is true that UN Resolution 2625 specified the text of the original Resolution regarding the right to decide, but this issue will be discussed in the next section.

Therefore, a part of the Spanish territory cannot be unilaterally separated from the rest, according to both national and international law.

3 Can a referendum be used to decide on the independence of a Spanish territory?

Before entering into the analysis of said article and of the Constitutional Court Judgments related to it, we must first study whether or not there is the so-called right to decide or right to self-determination. In principle, the Spanish Constitution does not recognize or include it, nor the Treaties of the European Union, and only international law, through the UN Resolution mentioned above, refers to the free determination of the colonial peoples, which obviously is not the case of Catalonia. There is also an International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of January 3, 1976, which in its art. 1.1 says that "All peoples have the right of self-determination. Under this right they freely establish their political status and also provide for their economic, social and cultural development." This same text can be found in UN Resolution 1514. Although both texts say nothing about the secession of a territory, as can be seen, they are normally used as the basis of the so-called right of self-determination.

But they forget paragraph 3, which states: "The States Parties to the present Covenant, including those responsible for administering non-autonomous territories and territories in trust, shall promote the exercise of the right of self-determination, and respect this right in conformity with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations." Nothing else is regulated on how States should promote such exercise.

A non-autonomous territory is defined as a dependent territory that, by mandate of the UN, must be the object of a decolonization process (United Nations, 1945, Chapter XI). A trust territory is defined as a territory subject to a mandate from the League of Nations; a territory that, as a result of the Second World War, was segregated from an enemy State; and a territory that would have been voluntarily placed under this regime by the State/s responsible for its administration (United Nations, 1945, Chapter XII). Therefore, Catalonia is not a non-autonomous territory nor a trust territory.

In addition, subsequent resolutions related to that Covenant have extended the right of self-determination, understood as a claim of unilateral access to independence, to cases of subjecting peoples to foreign subjugation, domination, and exploitation, typical case of the colonies.

Subjugation occurs when a State dominates part of its territory by taking away its freedom. Catalonia is autonomous and has its own government and parliament. Domination occurs when a State has absolute, unchallengeable authority over a territory. Catalonia citizens can appeal to their own judicial system and the go to the Spanish one. Exploitation occurs when a State exploits the resources of an occupied territory. This case does not occur in Catalonia either: Catalonia was not occupied by Spain, it merged with the Kingdom of Aragon, and the latest with the Kingdom of Castile, forming what we know as Spain.

The UN Declaration 50/6 includes the following in the third paragraph of point one: "Continue reaffirming the right of all peoples to self-determination, taking into account the particular situation of peoples subject to colonial domination or other forms of foreign domination or occupation, and recognizing the right of peoples to take legitimate measures, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, aimed at realizing their inalienable right to self-determination. None of the foregoing shall be understood to mean that it authorizes or encourages any action aimed at violating or undermining, in whole or in part, the territorial integrity or the political unit of sovereign and independent States that are conducted in accordance with the principle of equality of rights and self-determination of the peoples and are, therefore, endowed with a government that represents the entire people belonging to the territory, without distinction." Catalonia is not a colony, nor is occupied by Spain or dominated by it as we have just explained above. Also, it has its own government and a parliament that represents all citizens that live in Catalonia, who elect its members.

UN Resolution 2625 is a bit more explicit but not much more: "Under the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, enshrined in the Charter, all peoples have the right to freely determine, without external interference, its political status and continuing its economic, social and cultural development, and every State has the duty to respect this right in accordance with the provisions of the Charter.

Every State has the duty to promote, through joint or individual action, the application of the principle of sovereign equality of rights and self-determination of peoples, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter, and to provide assistance to the United Nations in compliance with the obligations entrusted to it by the Charter regarding the application of said principle, in order to:

a) foster friendly relations and cooperation between States;

b) quickly end colonialism, taking due account of the freely expressed will of the peoples to the subjugation in question; and bearing in mind that the submission of peoples to foreign subjugation, domination and exploitation constitutes a violation of the principle, as well as a denial of fundamental human rights, and is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations."

This is once again a clear reference to colonies, non-autonomous territories, and territories in trust. And it continues: "[...] The establishment of a sovereign and independent State, the free association or integration with an independent State or the acquisition of any other political condition freely decided by the people, constitute forms of the exercise of the right of self-determination of that people. Every State has the duty to refrain from resorting to any measure of force that deprives the aforementioned people in the formulation of the present principle of their right to self-determination and freedom and independence."

This is the first and only occasion in which the "right to decide" appears. But the text does not tell us what this means or what is meant by the word "people."

And it continues: "The territory of a colony or other non-autonomous territory has, under the Charter of the United Nations, a distinct and separate legal status from that of the territory of the State that administers it, and that legal status distinct and separate according to the Charter will exist until the people of the colony or non-autonomous territory have exercised their right of self-determination in accordance with the Charter and, in particular, with their purposes and principles." Again, riveting that we talk about colonies and non-autonomous territories.

Finally, it repeats again the defense of the integrity of the States: "None of the provisions of the preceding paragraphs shall be understood to mean that it authorizes or encourages any action aimed at violating or undermining, in whole or in part, the territorial integrity of sovereign and independent States that are conducted in accordance with the principle of equal rights and self-determination of the people described above and are, therefore, endowed with a government that represents all the people belonging to the territory, without distinction on the grounds of race, creed or color."

The Catalonians enjoy the same rights as the rest of the Spaniards, in the governing bodies of the Spanish State. The Catalonian people are represented in the two Houses of the Spanish Parliament, and in addition, there have been Catalonian political parties on which the governance of Spain has depended, both with Felipe Gonzalez and with Jose Maria Aznar. We must repeat again that Catalonia has its executive, legislative, and judicial powers that can operate freely within the framework of the Spanish legislation.

From all that has been said, it follows that the right to decide and the right to self-determination exist in the field of international law but referred to a reality that is not precisely that of Catalonia. Therefore, and given that international law is not applicable to this case, we can only use Spanish domestic law to analyze whether there is any rule that allows the independence of a territory.

If we analyze the Ley Organica 2/1980, of January 18, on the regulation of the different referendum modalities, it regulates several types contained in our Constitution, in arts. 92 (consultative referendum), 151 and 152 (approval and reform of the Statutes of Autonomy), and 167 and 168 (approval of a reform of the Constitution). Of all of them, there is only one that could be applied to this case, the consultative referendum of art. 92.

Art. 92 says that: "Political decisions of special importance may be submitted to an advisory referendum of all citizens." We understand that the separation of a part of the territory is, without a doubt, a decision of special importance, so all Spaniards should vote in the referendum that could be made. This referendum must be approved by the Congress. In addition, art. 149.1.32 of the Constitution establishes that referendums are of the exclusive competence of the State.

The Constitutional Court has repeatedly ruled on this article. Thus, in STC 103/2008, which prosecuted the Law of the Basque Parliament 9/2008, of June 27, of convening and regulating a popular consultation in order to obtain citizen opinion in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country on the opening of a negotiation process to achieve peace and political normalization, which covered the convening and regulation of a popular self-determination consultation, the Constitutional Court affirmed that: "The question that wanted to be submitted to the citizens of the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country affects (art. 2 of the Spanish Constitution) the basis of the current constitutional order (as far as it involves the reconsideration of the identity and unity of the sovereign subject [...]) and therefore can only be subject to popular consultation by via the constitutional review referendum." That is, one of the arts. 167 and 168. If we extend this resolution to the case of Catalonia, it eliminates the possibility of applying art. 92.

As Catalonian politicians knew this perfectly, a norm was approved for the 2014 consultation that was entitled Law of the Parliament of Catalonia 10/2014, of September 26, on non-referendum popular consultations and other forms of citizen participation. Note that the words "non-referendum" are included to try to skip the aforementioned ruling. This norm was also declared unconstitutional by STC 31/2015. The judgment expresses that: "we are before a referendum when the public power summons all citizens of a particular territorial area to exercise the fundamental right of participation in public affairs by issuing their opinion, binding or not, on a certain issue, by vote and with the guarantees of an electoral process." Thus, the Catalonian Law regulated two types of consultations, sectorial and general. Although the TC approved the first ones, it did not do so with the second ones because: "[...] the Law of the Parliament of Catalonia 10/2014, of September 26, regulates—under the name of 'general consultations'—a true referendum consultation, articulated as a call to the electoral body through the vote" (Constitutional Court, 2015a, FJ 8).

Together with this rule, the Decree of the President of the Generalitat of Catalonia 129/2014, of September 27, convened the non-referendum consultation on the political future of Catalonia. Again, the words "non-referendum" appear, as if their inclusion alone is enough to legitimize the query. The STC 32/2015 declared the Decree unconstitutional, saying that "[...] the contested decree, by calling to participate those over sixteen who have the political status of Catalans and foreigners who are also over sixteen and meet the requirements established in its art. 4 b) and c), so that through the suffrage and through the procedure and guarantees established in Law 10/2014 and in the Decree itself—rules that establish an electoral procedure and guarantees—express their opinion on the matter submitted to its consideration, is calling a referendum consultation and, therefore, incurs [...] the same constitutional infractions in which Law 10/2014 incurs, [...] by regulating general consultations."

The end of this process has been the approval of Law 19/2017, of September 6, on the self-determination referendum, in spite of all the previous warnings made by the Constitutional Court that the referendum can only be authorized and convened by the State. Thus, STC 103/2008 said that: "The referendum is [...] that query whose object is strictly referred to by the electoral body (expressive of the will of the people: STC 12/2008, of January 29, FJ 10) conformed and externalized through an electoral procedure, that is, based on the census, managed by the electoral administration and insured with specific jurisdictional guarantees, always in relation to public matters whose management, directly or indirectly, through the exercise of political power on the part of citizens, constitutes the object of the fundamental right recognized by the Constitution in art. 2.3 [...]. To qualify a consultation as a referendum or, more precisely, to determine whether a popular consultation is verified 'by way of referendum' (art. 149.1.32 CE) and its call then requires an authorization reserved to the State, it must be considered the identity of the subject consulted, so if it is the electoral body, whose own way of manifestation is that of the electoral procedures, with the corresponding guarantees, we will be in a referendum consultation." Therefore, the consultation regulated in the Referendum Law of the Parliament of Catalonia violates the Constitution per se.

In addition, the aforementioned Law includes in its arts. 4 to 9 all the elements of the previous definition, so the STC 114/2017 had no other option but to declare the norm unconstitutional. Consequently, the October 1, 2017, referendum in Catalonia was illegal.

The Law was unconstitutional because it is not based on any legislation that authorizes or regulates it: "Law 19/2017 does not seek to be based [...] neither on the Constitution nor on the Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia itself, but it does intend to do so based in a 'right to self-determination' (art. 3.3) which is said to be 'fundamental and inalienable of the people of Catalonia' (art. 3.2), which, it claims, "forms part of the current legal system" (art. 3.3). These normative statements link with the invocation that the preamble makes to certain international treaties to which Spain is a party, in which that "right of people to self-determination" would have been recognized "as the first of human rights," which we have already seen that are not applicable to the case.

And secondly, apart from other reasons that the sentence relates, the Parliament of Catalonia is not competent to call a referendum according to arts. 92 and 149.1.32 of the Constitution, since "a referendum [...] has been called without obtaining the mandatory authorization of the State (art. 149.1.32 CE). In addition, this specific type of consultation is not provided either in the Constitution or in the Organic Law referred to in article 92.3 EC (Organic Law 2/1980, of January 18, at present), without offering any basis to regulate it in article 122 EAC [Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia]; which the contested law, based in the 'sovereignty' of Catalonia, refrains from invoking [...]."

Consequently, a referendum cannot be used to decide on the independence of Catalonia, except by way of art. 168 of the Constitution, by means of a reform of it, given that the consultation on the "self-determination" of Catalonia would fully affect the identity and unity of the subject holder of sovereignty, set out in art. 2 of the Preliminary Title.

4 What legal consequences would the independence of Catalonia have?

We are going to analyze now the consequences that the independence of Catalonia would have, both at a general level and by the application of Law 20/2017, of September 8, of legal and foundational transition to the Republic.

4.1 The relationship with the European Union

If Catalonia becomes independent from Spain, it would automatically be constituted in a new State, and it will cease to be part of the European Union, since it does not appear as such in the EU Treaties.[1] In addition, and for the same reason, it would be left out of the UN, the ILO, the WTO, the NATO, the IMF, the World Bank, etc.

When you are outside the EU, you are automatically outside the customs union, having to bear tariffs for your products; out of the internal market, losing all production benefits and subsidies, as well as structural aid and funds; out of the Economic and Monetary Union, although Catalonia could continue using the euro through an agreement according to art. 219.3 of the EU Treaty; and would stop participating in the Committee of the Regions or any other where it had representation.

To become a member of the EU again, Catalonia should undergo the procedure of joining the EU. Art. 49 of the EU Treaty states that: "The conditions of admission and the adaptations that this admission entails in relation to the Treaties on which the Union is founded will be the subject of an agreement between the Member States and the requesting State. Said agreement shall be subject to the ratification of all the contracting States, in accordance with their respective con-

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[1]Referred to this, the then Vice President of the Commission and responsible for Justice, Viviane Reding, said: "When a part of the territory of a Member State ceases to be part of that state, for example because the territory becomes an independent state, treaties no longer apply ... An independent region would become, by the fact of its independence, a third country with respect to the Union; and the treaties, from the day of their independence, would no longer apply to their territory." (Europa Press, 2012).

Also Romano Prodi, Jose Manuel Durão Barroso, and Jean-Claude Juncker have argued the same thesis, with very few variations in its formulation: "If a territory of a Member State ceases to be part of this State because that territory becomes an independent State, the Treaties cannot continue to apply to that part of the territory. And the new independent region becomes, as a result of its independence, a third country." (Pérez, 2017).

stitutional norms." Then, it is enough that only one State opposes the entry of Catalonia into the EU so that it cannot be a member. It is assumed that Spain would oppose.

Law 20/2017, of September 8, on legal and foundational transition to the Republic includes in its arts. 14 and 15 that the European and international laws of which Spain was a party will be fully applied in the new State. This is absolutely impossible, as we have just commented. Catalonia should sign and ratify again all the treaties of which it wants to be part, and in many of them, it will need the approval of the current members, such as the EU or NATO.

4.2 The three powers

In principle, when Catalonia becomes an independent State, it could constitute the three powers as reflected in Law 20/2017, of September 8, on the legal and foundational transition to the Republic in its arts. 29 to 42 and 65 to 79. However, there are certain aspects regulated in that Law that are of doubtful legality.

First, art. 16 states that "the Administration of the Generalitat (Catalonia's government), which includes all the administration of Catalonia, succeeds the administration of the Spanish State in the territory of Catalonia, as well as in relation to the citizens of Catalonia residing outside this territory." Here is no succession from one State to another, but a separation from a territory, which is not a State until it is separated and constituted as such, from another that really is a State. Catalonia cannot at all succeed the Spanish State without its consent. Therefore, the succession established in other regulations of this Law regarding contracts and personnel is not valid.

Thus, art. 17.2 says that "the staff of the Spanish State that provides its services in the General Administration of Catalonia, the Local Administration of Catalonia, the Catalan universities or the Administration of Justice in Catalonia is integrated into the public administration of Catalonia that corresponds according to their administration body of origin, under the same remuneration and employment conditions, unless it gives up the integration in the terms established by the Decree that will develop this Law." The official of any of these institutions has obtained his/her job by contest when Catalonia was part of the Spanish State, so, based on the rights already acquired, he/she would be free to decide whether or not to integrate, regardless of whether or not he/she complies with the procedure of the art. 18 of the Transition Law or the one that its development norms could establish. On the other hand, the official could not be removed from his post unilaterally, as art. 18 for Public Administration and art. 68 for the Judiciary say, since in both cases the integration must be requested and can be granted or not.

Art. 68.4 ends saying that "The judges, magistrates, prosecutors and lawyers of the Administration of Justice that belong to the corresponding bodies of the Spanish State may compete for the places that are convened." Those who have

earned the right to have any of these positions cannot be removed and have to be allowed to access newly created ones or vacancies.

Similarly, art. 19.1 establishes the subrogation of the new State in public service contracts, works, supplies, assets, agreements and collaboration agreements that the Spanish State had in Catalonia. As every jurist knows, a contract signed between two parties cannot be modified by a third party without the agreement of the other two. What makes this alleged subrogation legally impossible?

Finally, art. 20 states that "the Catalan State succeeds the Spanish State [...] in the ownership of any kind of real right over all types of property in Catalonia." The new State would keep all the property owned by the Spanish state that is based in Catalonia. This would only be possible through a procedure similar to that of expropriation, with the corresponding just price, which Catalonia would have to pay, unless both parties reach another type of agreement. Any other way to deprive the Spanish State of its property would be illegal.

The Judicial power will be fully controlled by the Executive power. Art. 70 states that "Until the Constitution is approved, the government of the judiciary is exercised, in the terms established in the following articles, by the Government Chamber of the Supreme Court and by a Joint Commission formed jointly by the Government Chamber of the Supreme Court and the Government of the Generalitat." This Commission is formed, according to art. 72.1 for 10 members, 5 from the Government and 5 from among the judges[2], one of them is the president of the Supreme Court elected by the Government. Among the powers of this Joint Commission, regulated in art. 72.2, highlights one that is a clear and direct interference: participate in the selective processes of judges, without specifying what this participation consists on.

We cannot omit art. 79.4 either, which stipulates: "The courts and tribunals overrule or annul the criminal proceedings against those investigated or convicted of conducts that sought a democratic ruling on the independence of Catalonia or the creation of a new state in a democratic and non-violent manner." A Law cannot order this dismissal or annulment without violating judicial independence, apart from the fact that the processes referred to in the article would no longer depend on these new Courts, but on those of the Spanish State, so the dismissal or annulment would have no effect. The suits would remain active.

4.3 The Catalonian Treasury

Art. 82 establishes that "The Catalan State succeeds the Kingdom of Spain in the rights and obligations of an economic and financial nature in the terms agreed with it, and those derived from agreements with third parties." At least in this case, it does allow a previous agreement between both parties and even with third parties.

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[2]I wonder what would happen in case of a tie when making a decision.

There are two problems. The first is that until that agreement arrives, and the most predictable thing would be that it will not take place, to whom should tax-payers pay their taxes? If they do it to the new State, the Spanish Treasury would continue to claim their due, for what they could be paying twice, even by the Spanish Treasury seizing the property of those who do not pay. Even in case of agreement, a Double Taxation Treaty would be required.

In addition, a significant loss of income for the Catalan coffers can already be foreseen, since most of the large companies have moved their fiscal headquarters outside of Catalonia. VAT, the main tax affected, represents 6,000 million euros for Catalonia and is its largest source of income after personal income tax. The same applies to Corporate Tax. Also, more companies will continue to leave as soon as they are out of the European Union.

The second problem is that the new State would have a debt with the Spanish State of 52,499 million euros, which I imagine they will not expect to be forgiven. How do they plan to deal with it? The Law of Transition does not mention it.

Finally, it is really surprising that the Transition Law refers to succession in incomes but not in expenses.

4.4 Other controversial issues

The issue that would still be discussed is that of nationality, more specifically double-nationality.

Art. 9.1 states that the acquisition of Catalan nationality does not mean giving up the Spanish one. The legislator forgets, however, that this is a decision that belongs to the Spanish State and not to him, and most likely, the Spanish State will not allow double-nationality with a territory which has illegally become independent, and a Treaty is needed, as correctly indicated in art. 9.2.

5 Conclusion

As we have seen, the Catalan Government has no legal basis to affirm the "right of self-determination" or "the right to decide" in relation to the territory it governs, it cannot use the referendum as a tool to become independent from Spain, and the two laws that it has approved to achieve this objective have no defense from a legal standpoint.

6 Textbooks and delegations abroad as pathways to Catalonian independence

In the last few years, we can observe in Spain a very intensive and persistent political, public, academic, and, most of all, media interest into the Catalonian strategies to achieve independence. Many Spanish public figures as well as the general public

seem to be furious both with the Catalonian delegations abroad, proudly waiving Catalonian flags and designed to serve as de facto embassies of the autonomous region, and the Catalonian public education system, which focuses clearly on the indoctrination of Catalonian children from a very early age with separatist ideas and a very distorted version of Spanish history and geography attempting to prove that Catalonia and the Catalonian nation have existed as independent entities since time immemorial. This indignation is certainly justified, but we will argue that nobody in Spain should be surprised with this development, because all nationalist movements use history as a propagandistic instrument if they have this opportunity, and more importantly, the indoctrination process in Catalan schools has not started on October 1, 2017, with the attempted referendum or on November 9, 2014, when the previous smaller scale referendum was held. In fact, this process started more than 38 years ago with the adopted Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia in 1979, following the inauguration of the new democratic Spanish Constitution of 1978, but apparently nobody paid attention in the rest of Spain back then. Article 21.1 of the Statute of Autonomy gives the right of the *Generalitat* to "establish a model of education in the public interest" (Parlament de Catalunya, 2006). The main issue here, however, is who would define this public interest—the Spanish government or a small group of Catalan separatists with petty and narrow separatist goals. Furthermore, Article 194, Offices Abroad, stipulates that "In order to promote the interests of Catalonia, the Generalitat may establish offices abroad" (Parlament de Catalunya, Art. 194). The abovementioned article is in a clear contradiction with Article 149.3 of the current Spanish Constitution, which clearly states that the State has an exclusive competence in International Relations (Agencia Estatal Boletín Oficial del Estado, 1978, Art. 149.3). Nevertheless, both articles were included in the Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia without any serious objections by the Spanish authorities or the Constitutional Court. Therefore, as early as the 1980s, right after the democratization of Spain, the Catalonian separatists decided to use the public education system in Catalonia to prepare a new generation of Catalonian residents who would be indoctrinated with the Catalonian separatist ideology and anti-Spanish sentiments. Thus, the next Catalanized generation could be manipulated much easier and used as an important support base for achieving Catalonian independence. The history and geography lessons were crucial tools for this purpose. We could easily argue that hijacking and usurping the public education in Catalonia was one of the most important domestic goals of the Catalonian separatists together with the imposition of the Catalonian language as the only medium of public communication and teaching in Catalonia. The major external goal of the separatists became the circumnavigation of the Spanish Constitution by setting up of a Catalonian network of para-diplomatic delegations abroad, which could serve as quasi-embassies, represent and defend Catalan separatism abroad, and most importantly, these delegations could establish and maintain diplomatic

relations with key countries in Europe and the world and thus prepare the ground for the international recognition of independent Catalonia in the case of secession from Spain.

Finally, thanks to the failed referendum on October 1, 2017, and the frail attempt by the former premier of Catalonia Carles Puigdemont to declare Catalonian independence on October 27, 2017, the Spanish media, academic, and public attention focused on Catalonia and all the tools that were used by the separatists to achieve their goals. The Catalonian textbooks quickly came into the radar of the Spanish media attention with their preposterous and utterly absurd claims and manipulations of ancient, medieval, and even modern history of the Iberian Peninsula and Spain as well as the distortion of the current political map of the Iberian Peninsula and Europe.

In fact, as the journalist Sergio Fidalgo revealed—the separatist brainwashing starts almost in the cradle. Fidalgo included some photos by Eduardo González Palomar to demonstrate how even public playgrounds for children in Catalonia are decorated with Catalonian flags to make sure that even babies and infants see Catalonian symbols while playing (Fidalgo, 2018). The Catalonian children who just started to read could enjoy the book *La Cabanya, un petit país* (La Cabanya—a little country), published in 2012 to describe the adventures of five friends who decided at some point to sew a big Catalonian flag—*la estelada*, generously drawn on the book cover as well (Reixach, 2018).

The primary school textbooks use a more systematic propaganda. The textbook of Editorial Barcanova. Cicle Superior 1 de Primària. 2015. *Medi natural, social i cultural* dedicates Units 12–15 only to the history of Catalonia without any references to Spain. The authors claim that the Romans invaded the Catalonian territory in 218 B.C.E. and gradually occupied it as if Catalonia was an ancient country which existed in pre-Roman times (Editorial Barcanova, 2015, p. 199). The Kingdom of Aragon is referred to as the Catalano—Aragon Crown/*corona catalanoaragonesa* (Editorial Barcanova, 2015, p. 216), which essentially is another invention of Catalonian separatists since no respected historian uses such a term. In Editorial Barcanova. Cicle Superior 2 de Primària. 2014. *Medi natural, social i cultural*, Carlos I of Spain and V of the Holy Roman Empire is presented as Carlos I of Castile and of Catalonia-Aragon (Editorial Barcanova, 2014, p. 205). Apparently, the authors achieved their goal to create the impression that Spain did not exist at all as a political entity in the XVI century, whereas Catalonia existed, even though hyphenated as Catalonia-Aragon, which in fact is another fabricated term for a political unit that never existed. Another key event—the War of the Spanish Succession (1702–1714) is introduced in a very manipulative way as a conflict in which the Catalans supported Carlos II of Austria against Philip V, because they wanted to maintain their self-government. The authors create the impression that independent Catalonia existed up to that moment and it could continue in case

of Carlos II's victory (Editorial Barcanova, 2014, p. 211). This is another historical manipulation, because the war between the Bourbons and the Habsburgs for the control of Spain was a purely dynastic conflict and Carlos II's victory would not have led to any independent or self-governing Catalonia. Curiously, the textbook Editorial La Galera. 2014. *Coneixement del medi.* Projecte Tram 2.0. Cicle superior. 6è Primària introduces Catalonia as one of the kingdoms of the Catalano-Aragon Crown, together with Valencia and Aragon, when in fact such a kingdom never existed (Editorial La Galera, 2014, p. 203). The same textbook claims as well that Columbus was financed by the Catholic Kings, when in fact he was sponsored only by Isabel of Castile (Editorial La Galera, 2014, p. 218). The idea behind this extortion of historical facts is again to present Catalonia as a major participant in important historical events such as the discovery, exploration, and colonization of the Americas.

In another attempt to omit the existence of Spain and its relation to Catalonia, the textbook Editorial Cruïlla de 5è de Primària. 2014. *Coneixement del medi. Ciències socials i ciències naturals.* Construïm. Cicle superior. 5è Primària describes the political system of Catalonia without any single reference to Spain or the Spanish national institutions (Editorial Cruïlla de 5è de Primària, 2014, p. 135). It seems that the word Spain is not even worth mentioning in Catalonian textbooks. On a map of Europe, Catalonia is colored as a separate country and it is compared to other European countries such as Belgium, Britain, Germany, and Italy, whereas Spain is not even named on the map; there is merely a blank space that denotes everything beyond Catalonia (Editorial Cruïlla de 5è de Primària, 2014, p. 137). According to the same textbook, the principal law of Catalonia is the "Estatut," the Generalitat is supposed to comply with the laws adopted by the Catalan Parliament, and Barcelona is the capital of Catalonia (Editorial Cruïlla de 5è de Primària, 2014, pp. 139, 143–145). Once again, no references to the Spanish Constitution, legislature, or the fact that Catalonia is in fact a part of a bigger political entity called Spain. The authors of this textbook went even to a further extreme by including both Spain and Catalonia in a list of European countries with data for their population as if they were two distinct independent countries (Editorial Cruïlla de 5è de Primària, 2014, p. 146).

The secondary education system is used to reinstate these separatist Catalonian arguments in order to finish successfully the indoctrination of the next generation of Catalonian residents. The secondary education textbooks again refer to the fictional Kingdom of Catalonia and historic kings with fabricated titles, such as King Jaime I—the Conqueror of Catalonia-Aragon (Editorial Barcanova, 2017a, p. 172), and Alfonso I of Catalonia and II of Aragon (Editorial Barcanova, 2017a, p. 176), whereas Catalonia is explicitly described as an independent country, stating that there are 58 countries in the world with a smaller territory than Catalonia and 94 countries with a smaller population than "our country" (Editorial Barcanova,

2017a, p. 13). Therefore, the Catalonian separatists openly use the textbooks to instill in the local students that only Catalonia is "our country" and it is de facto independent, whereas the official declaration of independence is just a formality that can only confirm the already existing status quo. All the separatist propaganda from the primary school textbooks is reinstated into the secondary education textbooks with some curious additions. Isabel I of Castile married Fernando I – "el Principe catalanoaragonés"/the Prince of Catalonia-Aragon (Editorial Barcanova, 2017b, p. 310), which is another invented title, unknown to historians. The term Spain is avoided and omitted and the Spanish monarchy is called simply the Hispanic monarchy (Editorial Barcanova, 2017b, p. 314). Another textbook as far as to claim that: "Una gran part de la societat (catalana) i de partits catalans es decanta per la via independentista" (Editorial Cruïlla, 2017, p. 233). It is obvious that this statement aims at the indoctrination of Catalonian students with the idea that Catalonian independence is a normal idea, which is shared by the majority of Catalonians, so that the students are prepared how to vote when the next referendum for independence is scheduled. The secondary education textbooks also attempt to use the Francoist period of Spain to instill hostility toward Spain overall by asserting that the political and social repression included the prohibition of the public use of the Catalonian language, which is another false claim (Editorial Edebé, 2017, p. 284). The authors conveniently missed some important facts, such as the literary awards for novels in Catalonian language—Joan Martorell Award and Josep Pla Award of Honor in 1947 and Victor Català Award in 1956, as well as the academic chairs in Catalonian language and literature founded in the 1950s and 1960s or the book written in Catalonian and promoted on the pages of *La Vanguardia* (Sindicat AMES, 2017).

The so-called Fundació Institut Nova Història in Catalonia publishes pseudo-academic studies which attempt to brainwash the Catalonian university students with shocking book titles, such as *Erasmus and the Catalan Construction of Spain, Catalan Discovery and Conquest of America, Little Manual of the Catalan Discovery of America, Columbus and the Royal Catalan House,* and *Cristopher Columbus—The Prince of Catalonia* (Fundació Institut Nova Història, 2019). These titles seem to have more in common with science fiction than with history and that is why after the October 2017 referendum, they have been ridiculed together with the Catalonian textbooks and overall Catalonian separatist historic falsifications and claims in the Spanish public space. All these criticisms, however, have missed the main aim of the Catalonian propaganda in the public education system. The main goal of Catalonian separatists is not to argue with prominent professional historians in Spain or abroad if Catalonia really existed before the Romans conquered the Iberian Peninsula or if there has ever been a kingdom called Catalonia. Even the staunch Catalonian separatists know that they would lose disgracefully such a dispute. However, their main goal is much different—to instill into the Catalonian

students' brains that these are the facts and Spain and Spanish identity do not really exist or if they exist, they are very weak unlike the strong, vibrant, and very old Catalonian national identity. As the Spanish authorities have not taken any serious measures to supervise and monitor the textbook content in Catalonia since 1979, our conclusion is that the Catalonian separatists have achieved their goal, and an increasing number of young Catalonians believe and will believe such outrageous distortions of history unless the Spanish authorities take any measures against this scandalous propaganda scheme, de facto funded with the money of all Spanish taxpayers. These measures could include the imposition of national standards for the textbook contents and the regular monitoring of the different textbook editions, the restriction of the autonomy of the autonomous communities in the area of education and other similar actions, which could prevent Catalonian separatists or any other propagandists to use the educational system for their own petty interests. If this organized indoctrination of Catalonian students of all ages is not prevented and stopped, we will witness 20 years later even stronger separatist moods in Catalonia, because we will have at least two generations of adult Catalonians carefully programed with ideas for Catalonian independence. The current relaxed attitude of the Spanish authorities also allows a similar indoctrination to happen in other autonomous communities. In fact, in 2018, a textbook written in Spanish but containing false historic terms such as *corona catalanoaragonesa* was also published (N., 2018). In the case of the Balearic Islands and the Valencian Community, Catalonian books with questionable historic facts are also distributed as a matter of fact (Amorós & San Martin, 2017).

In terms of International Relations, following the example of other regions in the world with ambitions for independence, such as Flanders, Scotland, and Quebec, the Catalonian government ignored the Spanish constitution without any repercussions and started to open in various countries with Spanish taxpayers' money delegations abroad, popularly known as Catalonian houses. The purpose of these delegations is to serve as de facto embassies of Catalonia in key countries around the world in order to carry out external relations, stipulate bilateral and multilateral cooperation, sign international treaties and agreements on behalf of Catalonia, support the local Catalonian expat communities, and promote abroad the idea of independent Catalonia. The first Catalonian delegation abroad was opened in 1986 in Brussels in order to lobby for the Catalan interests in the European Community, now the European Union and then such delegations, 12 in total, started to appear in other countries across Europe and the world—New York, London, Paris, Geneva, Copenhagen, Lisbon, Warsaw, Zagreb, etc (Durán, 2015, p. 203). The Public Diplomacy Council of Catalonia (DiploCat) also hoped to use 123 Catalan expat communities in 38 countries as a useful instrument of promoting Catalonian culture and separatist propaganda abroad (Stoica, Horga, & Ribeiro, 2016, pp. 318–323). In a leaflet explaining the Catalonian foreign policy ambitions, the

Catalonian government stated that: "At the beginning of the 21st century, after three decades of self-government, the Government of Catalonia aims at spreading an ambitious foreign policy meant to intensify the bilateral relationships between the region and foreign state and under-state governments. This policy is intended to consolidate its presence in multilateral organizations and establish a strong net of delegations in different and strategic locations worldwide" (Stoica, Horga, & Ribeiro, 2016, p. 322).

Following these goals, the Catalonian government started to increase its foreign policy budget and to announce the opening of new delegations abroad every year until October 30, 2017, when the Spanish government finally took the necessary measures, following the Constitution of Spain, and closed 11 Catalonian delegations abroad with the exception to the delegation in Brussels. The Spanish government closed as well the Public Diplomacy Council of Catalonia (DiploCat) and dismissed all the employees in these offices, including the head of Catalonia's delegation to the European Union—Amadeu Altafaj (Spongenberg, 2017).

Thus, in comparison to the Catalonian domestic policy of systematic propaganda and indoctrination of Catalonian students, which is very successful up to now, as we already demonstrated, the Catalonian diplomatic ambitions turned into a failure. On the one hand, the Catalan government failed in its foreign policy due to the recent actions of the Spanish government, which invoked the Spanish law by closing down most of the Catalonian delegations abroad but more importantly, the Catalonian diplomats completely failed, before and after the referendum, in their attempt to persuade any country in the world to recognize Catalonian independence. Virtually all key geopolitical players in the world, including the USA, China, Russia, as well as all EU member states and other European and non-European countries, made official statements in the media, via diplomatic channels and on their official government websites that they are watching the development of the political situation in Spain; however, they consider the Catalonian issue to be an internal affair of Spain, and they fully support the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Spain (Nauert, 2017; The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 2017; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece, 2017). These official statements are not surprising, because neither the USA, nor the other EU countries want to see more instability and disintegration in Europe.

In a nutshell, both textbooks and the launching of Catalonian delegations overseas, serving as de facto embassies, have been used by the Catalonian government and various separatist groups to promote Catalonian culture, language, and separatist ideas. The terms Spain and Spanish are avoided as much as possible in the Catalonian textbooks in order to implant into the minds of Catalonian children that the Catalonian identity is the only viable and possible identity for them, and historical and geographic manipulations and falsifications have been used to reinforce and justify Catalonian separatism and identity, whereas the delegations

abroad have been used to muster support for an independent Catalonia. However, this is not a new process but rather a systematic Catalonian policy, which started as early as the 1980s due to the passivity of the Spanish government, which ignored these developments despite the fact that in many cases, the Catalonian actions were unconstitutional. The unconstitutional attempt of a Catalonian independence referendum on October 1, 2017, however, finally brought the subversive Catalonian domestic and external policies into the spotlight, and as a result, the Catalonian foreign policy ambitions were seriously impeded by the dismantling of 11 of their 12 delegations abroad. The Catalonian public education system, however, and the contents of all the published and assigned textbooks are other serious matters, which should not be underestimated neither in Catalonia, nor in any other autonomous community. The Spanish government should make sure that there are strict national standards in public education, which are followed by all autonomous communities. Any attempt of falsifying history or misrepresenting the political map or system of Spain must be immediately intercepted with a strict inspection system of all textbook contents. This inspection must be performed regularly and routinely and not only before and after attempted independence referendums. The textbooks seem to be one of the strongest tools for the Catalonian separatists, and if the Spanish government ignores the issue and does not interfere, there will be many more historical falsifications and indoctrination with separatist propaganda not only in Catalonia but in other autonomous communities as well. Thus, many schools will turn into a breeding ground for a new generation of separatists with strong anti-Spanish sentiments.

7 The Catalan language in the sovereignty process: Linguistic implications

"No language, no nation"—Welsh Proverb

Independence in Catalonia is a controversial issue for the general public, but it also provides many elements of interest for academic analysis. There is a continuous debate on the Catalan situation among politicians, economists, jurists, and academics of all disciplines that reflects how the Catalan independence process affects many areas of regional and national life. The political dynamics that surround this process is based on measures and initiatives in various fields of action that aim to advance the goals of the secessionists.

The chapter is divided into two parts. The first part studies the Catalan identity and nationalism as a source of inspiration in secessionist aspirations. This section points out the use of language in Catalan society, the growing politicization of the language and its symbolic role within the "process." The second part analyses the Catalan language policy in the public sector and its implications. Also, special interest is given to the Catalan language immersion model. The problems associated with the labeling of products in this language and the linguistic requirements

for access to public jobs are also mentioned. The chapter concludes that although the efforts have not been that effective (half of the population still uses Spanish as their main working language), it has been a powerful tool for the independence movement.

7.1 Catalan as identity and nationalism

Throughout history many countries have been identified with their language, so the names of some nation-states, especially in Europe, are directly related to the national language: German in the case of Germany (Deutsch/Deutschland), French in France (Français/France), Turkish in Turkey (Turkçe/Turkiye), etc. This is because language is a central aspect of national identity, linked to a territory's culture and history. Many times, however, in the creation of new nation-states, there is not a single language present in the territory, but there is a predominant language that coexists with one or several minority languages. In these cases, for the nationalist movement, in some regions their language plays a key role in the claims for greater autonomy and/or independence. In addition, groups seek international affirmation through their language and culture.

In this regard, it is interesting to understand how regions that pursue independence from recognized states use language in their secession strategy. This is the case of Catalan, which has been used as a key tool in the secessionist process, even before the process became explicit.

To understand the concept of identity and nationalism of Catalans, it is important to know the history and culture of their language. The Catalan language, based on Latin and Provencal, began to be considered with distinct linguistic characteristics in the 10th and 11th centuries. The use of this language extended during the 12th century and it was applied in scientific, religious, legal, or literary texts. The 19th century was a period of cultural splendor called "Renaixensa," creating among the intellectuals a basic essence for the diffusion of nationalism. At the beginning of the 20th century, the first dictionary with phonological and orthographic standards (1913) and the Catalan Grammar of Pompeu Fabra were published (Benítez, 2014). Also in this period, the language was standardized and modernized, becoming a collective means to consolidate the nationalist movement in Catalonia. Later, after the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) and the arrival of Francisco Franco's regime, which had negative consequences for any attempt at regional autonomy, its use was totally prohibited in the official institutions and was only employed in the private sphere (Miller & Miller, 1996). Since the restoration of democracy in 1978, there has been an intensive process to promote its use in different aspects of life, in institutions and in education.

Currently, Catalan is spoken[3] throughout the territory of Catalonia where it is a co-official language, along with Spanish. According to data from the Institute of Statistics of Catalonia, 36% use Catalan as their usual language and 46% use the Spanish language ('Idioma catalán', 2020). That is, there is bilingualism with Spanish, and Catalan's relative use depends on the regions and the social context. The language is used in all autonomous and municipal administrations of the Catalan Community. However, in some public services such as justice or airports that depend on the Spanish State, Castilian dominates. In relation to the media, Catalan and Spanish programs coexist. Likewise, the retransmissions of the regional channels and the radio stations (Catalunya Ràdio) and television (TV3) tend to favor Catalan and are considered as a fundamental pillar for the conservation and promotion of the language (Miller & Miller, 1996).

Throughout its history and culture, the Catalan language has played an important role as a symbol of identity. As Brais Benítez (Benítez, 2014) says, "Catalan today plays a central role in Catalan identity and culture." However, there is a large proportion of the population residing in Catalonia that comes from other regions of Spain such as Andalusia and Galicia as well as from abroad. These immigrants who come to Catalonia and their descendants identify with the region but also with Spain and Europe.

Another factor that takes root in the Catalan identity is the growing politicization of the language that has become an essential issue for the nationalist elite in this community. In the process of secession, the nationalists emphasize the use of the language as an exclusive identity mark of Catalan society. In addition, the radical secessionists justify their efforts to strengthen linguistic normalization because of the potential threat that Catalan could disappear. However, according to many analysts, there is little chance that Catalan would die (Benítez, 2014). Indeed, an estimated 9 million people speak it regularly.

According to the pro-independence politicians, the problem of the recognition of Catalan as an official language comes from the exclusionary treatment by the Spanish Government, but also from the fact that Spanish is a recognized language in the European Union (EU) while Catalan is not, because it is considered a minority language (Bastarda-Boada, 2012). For the secessionists, this situation is discriminatory since other languages in the EU that have fewer speakers and are officially recognized, unlike Catalonia, represent a state. For example, the secessionists usually refer to the case of Danish, spoken by just 6 million people, compared to 10

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[3]Catalan is spoken in Andorra, where it is the only official language. In the Balearic Islands, it is considered official, along with Castilian. In most of the Valencian Community, it is also co-official and is called Valencian generically. It is also used in the eastern part of Aragon (Franja de Aragón), but it is not official. In a small region of Murcia, known as the Carche, about 500 people speak it, although it is not official. In France, it is spoken in the former counties of Roussillon and Sardinia although the dominant language is French, but it is not official either. There are also speakers in Alghero, a small city on the island of Sardinia, Italy ('Catalán en el mundo', 2020).

million Catalan speakers (Plataforma per la Llengua, 2016). For them, the lack of recognition of their language in the EU works against the identification of the Catalan Government as a relevant actor in important supranational institutions.

Likewise, the story of the independence process in relation to identity and nationalism is loaded with symbols related to the Catalan language and culture. As Verónica Benet-Martínez (in Gálvez, 2017) points out, these symbols are used to activate feelings within oneself and to reaffirm beliefs. Even some non-secessionists, "use it as a symbol" to say "I also speak Catalan and I'm not independent." According to this author, it is a kind of political psychology in Catalonia that cannot be understood without the political and cultural context of the current Spanish state. This idea has been a key element since 1995, also with the different governments of the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE). Similarly, in the continuous demonstrations for or against secessionism, symbols of identity have been created with the Catalan language through posters, signs, or advertisements that call for the identity of one or the other side.

A great majority of Catalans feel aggrieved, that is, rejected, unwanted by the rest of the Spaniards. The feeling of grievance contains linguistic and economic elements. In the aspect of language, Catalan independence formations, non-nationalist political groups, and part of Spanish society contribute, in some way, to this discomfort through speeches, stories, or comments, economically, for example, by rejecting and boycotting "the Catalan Brand" in products (champagne, jewelry, food). From all areas, sports, social, and artistic, this confrontation between Spaniards and Catalans is promoted, which creates an atmosphere of uneasiness and detachment toward the rest of Spain, on the part of Catalan society.

In that regard, in 2015 the Catalan government published a list of grievances of the Spanish State against Catalonia in which it details "the strategy of the Spanish Executive to drown, limit and laminate Catalan self-government." The report, in addition to pointing out the Catalan fiscal deficit of 15 billion euros, warns about the attack on the Catalan educational model: "the contempt for the language" and the "passivity" of the State vis-à-vis some "Catalanophobic positions" by which they denounce a premeditated offensive against the Catalan identity (Rubio, 2013).

However, the efforts made by the secessionist politicians so that Catalan could be a motor driving nationalism have not been as effective as expected. In fact, there has not been a total alignment with the pro-independence proposal. In other words, the fact that people feel more attached to the Catalan language may be for reasons of identity, but not necessarily because they want to become independent from Spain. In addition, as noted, there are many immigrants and their descendants who do not feel identified with the nationalist identity although they speak Catalan. The following section analyzes in more detail the policy of promotion of the Catalan language in order to understand its results.

7.2 The Catalan linguistic policy

The measures developed by the Catalan Government for the protection of the language have generated a great debate from all fields. In this section, we will highlight three areas related to linguistic policies in Catalonia: the education system, the private sector, and the public administration.

7.2.1 The education system

One of the basic pillars in the Catalan public education system is the linguistic immersion in schools. This has become the main axis to guarantee social cohesion and an essential element for the Catalan language to prevail. Historically, it is at the end of the dictatorship and beginning of democracy, after receiving many emigrants (1960–1980) from the rest of Spain when the Catalan language reached its lowest level. In 1975, 58% of the population living in Catalonia had Spanish as their first language. In this period, there were no legal communications or educational structures to teach the Catalan language in this group.

From then on, regional governments decided to implement Catalan as a vehicular language in education, but it was not until the 1990s that the system of linguistic immersion in the entire educational network was consolidated. It should be noted that initially it was not a nationalist government that promoted this linguistic model, but the Partic Socialista Unificat de Catalunya (Benítez, 2014), which saw it as an element in the search for greater regional autonomy. Subsequently, the independence parties intensified the model as part of their strategy to move toward independence.

Nowadays, in public schools, Catalan is present in all primary and secondary school subjects, except the Spanish language class. Also, the presence of this tongue is dominant in Catalan universities since the use of the language as a teaching tool is between 60% and 100%. However, unlike what happened in pre-university education, no government of Catalonia has established a university language policy with homogeneous criteria for all universities (Dalmases, 2017).

However, to what extent has the policy of linguistic promotion of Catalan been effective? Let us analyze this question in relation to the educational field that should be the main instrument of this strategy, and we observe contradictions from the perspective of the nationalists.

Firstly, these contradictions are observed in the linguistic preferences that students have in Catalonia. In the surveys carried out by the Generalitat (regional government) on language in the Catalan public schools, citizens are not asked if a trilingual model (Catalan, Spanish, English), bilingual (Catalan, Spanish), or monolingual (Catalan) is preferred. However, other analyses offer this type of information. A recent study by Gabinet d'Estudis Socials i Opinió Pública (GESOP) (2017) shows that only 8.8% of the Catalans surveyed are inclined toward the monolin-

gual model, that is, Catalan is spoken as the only vehicular language. This contrasts with the 75% who opt for trilingualism and the rest for bilingualism. This figure reveals an internationalist position of many Catalans that clashes with the vision promoted by the secessionists who seem to prefer monolingualism or bilingualism with English and not with Spanish (Coll, 2017).

Secondly, another way in which the Generalitat claims its linguistic policy is superior is by comparing it with the rest of Spain in the General Diagnostic Evaluation (EGD) conducted by the Spanish Ministry of Education in 2017. This examination evaluates the level of reading comprehension and written expression of the Spanish language among students of 15 and 16 years old. The EGD placed Catalan students with a score of 6.41, compared to the Spanish average with a score of 6.45, so that Catalan children dominate Spanish practically at the same level as the rest of the autonomous communities (Quintáns & Álvarez, 2018).

However, it should be noted that any test that certifies the mastery of a language must contain, in addition to these two criteria, an oral examination and another one of listening comprehension. If these elements were considered, few Catalan students could demonstrate their global knowledge of the Spanish language. It is not probable that the level of knowledge in Spanish of Catalan students (who only study Spanish 2 hours a week in primary school, 3 hours a week in secondary school, and 2 hours a week in high school) is equal or superior to the rest of Spain. If it were true, it would be extraordinary because it means students and teachers there have pedagogical and didactic skills that would attract the attention of any international study related to bilingualism.

Finally, another piece of evidence is the PISA report (Program for International Students Assessment) of 2014, which the Catalan Government showed as a model of success in its schools, compared with the rest of Spain. However, this affirmation does not take into account that this version of the test is only done in Catalan, never in Spanish, and students whose language level is not enough (3.37%) are excluded (Sierra & Vilarrubias, 2014). Thus, reading comprehension of Spanish could hardly be evaluated, let alone can it be compared with another region.

On the other hand, what happens to the families residing in Catalonia who want their children to study in Spanish? There is a growing discomfort among Spanish speakers: students, parents, and teachers. There are innumerable documented cases that show the little effort made by public schools to integrate students whose mother tongue is not Catalan. An example of this discontent is seen in an interview carried out in El Catalán of Ana Losada who belongs to the Assembly for a Bilingual School. The interviewee points out that "Spanish is treated as a foreign language." Not only that she stresses "the rights of Spanish speakers are not respected since they cannot study in their mother tongue and article 3 of the Spanish Constitution is not respected." Likewise, Mrs. Losada criticizes the fact that there "is a greater pressure on students in the metropolitan area because some centers

specifically score the follow-up of linguistic immersion: if the student speaks in Catalan to the teachers, if h/she uses the Catalan language spontaneously when answering in class or if h/she talks to his classmates." (Fidalgo, 2017). The current process to study in Spanish in Catalan public schools is confusing, since you must request financial support to enroll in private schools. According to the data of the Department of Education of the Generalitat, in the last academic year, it received 560 applications and provided aid to 50 students (Álvarez & Baquero, 2018).

In addition, it should be noted that children of immigrants and their descendants do not obtain the same results in other subjects. According to another report written by Convivencia Cívica Catalana, based on the latest edition (2017) of the PISA report, it was noted that "Spanish speakers in this community perform worse, repeat more and have higher school failure than Catalan speakers and therefore they feel less integrated into society." The figures in the report reveal that 20.3% did not exceed the minimum level of PISA in mathematics, 18.3% in reading and 18% in science, higher levels than Catalan-speaking students (Rodríguez, 2017).

7.2.2 Private Sector

In the private sector, a key policy initiated by the Generalitat was the requirement that all products in stores be labeled in Catalan. The Law of Linguistic Policy of 1998 obliges to label at a minimum in Catalan all the signs on the sideboard or inside the establishment, an obligation that does not include trademarks or commercial names. The norm has generated considerable controversy, due to the fines that the Generalitat has imposed. Under the theme *In Barcelona, do it in Catalan or pay the fine*, "Catalan secessionism has taken energetic measures against companies that label only in Spanish," which face fines of thousands of euros (The Economist, 2016). In fact, as pointed out by *The Economist* (2016), the Generalitat defends the rule as a measure to "preserve the language." "The linguistic fines consecrate the fundamental right of Catalan consumers to be able to use and be cared for in their own language," said the Agència de Consum de Catalunya.

In this context, according to a study by the Barcelona City Council and the Consumers Union of Catalonia (UCC), Raval, a neighborhood with a large number of immigrant shops (Moroccans, Pakistanis, and Latin Americans), is the commercial place where there has been a greater breach of the Language Policy Law (El Periódico, 2012). This suggests that immigrants, whose first language is not Catalan, are disadvantaged and concerned with this linguistic imposition.

Also, many entrepreneurs and traders from other zones and Catalan regions are very upset because they are forced to translate every public communication into Catalan, and if they do not do so, they must pay high penalties. For example, in the first 4 months of 2016, there were a total of 89 companies with disciplinary proceedings in process for not writing in this language (El Mundo, 2016). However, on January 31, 2018, the Supreme Court (TC) has dismissed the fines because "you

cannot impose the use of a language in relations between individuals and, therefore, it is also not possible to establish a sanctioning regime" (Pellicer, 2018). That is, you cannot force a company or individual to use a certain language. In addition, the TC insists on the co-officiality of Castilian and Catalan and that any of them can be used.

7.2.3 Public administration

Finally, in the field of public administration, it is important to highlight the linguistic requirements to access public jobs in Catalonia. The Administration of the Generalitat through the Regulation of Public Service of 2002 indicates that all the officials of the local corporations, services of the universities, personnel of their autonomous entities and personnel of the consortia in which most of these institutions participate are required to accredit a level of Catalan depending on the position (Durà, 2017).

It should be noted that the linguistic requirement of Catalan to obtain government positions also extends to other autonomous communities such as the Valencian Community and the Balearic Community. In some competitions, mastering the Catalan language can score more than several university degrees, decades of experience, or knowledge of English. For some candidates, this linguistic requirement is an obstacle to opt for a public position, especially in the education and health sectors (Ojer et al., 2017). The current laws and regional decrees limits in practice access to public jobs for residents of other autonomous communities (Losada, 2018).

8 Conclusion and implications

In this chapter, we have seen that separatist politicians and other groups use Catalan to promote the fundamental values of secession. They take advantage of the fact that the language has become a symbol and an instrument for the dissemination and expression of their own culture. However, the fact that Catalans feel fonder of their language may form part of their search for identity, but it does not necessarily mean they wish to be separate from Spain.

Also, in spite of the efforts made by the Generalitat in the education system through linguistic immersion, in the private sector, through requiring the labeling of commercial products, and in public administration, by requiring knowledge of Catalan to access to public jobs so that this language is more important than Spanish has achieved the expected results. In fact, according to a study commissioned in 2013 by the Department of Culture of the Generalitat, Spanish is still the most widely spoken language in Catalonia. The survey shows the linguistic uses in the Catalan region and reveals that Catalan is the usual language of 36.3%, compared to 50.7% that use Spanish. That is, Spanish is spoken by 40% more Catalan residents

than Catalan (Dolca Catalunya, 2015), reflecting the ineffectiveness of language policies for the prevalence of Catalan over Spanish.

This situation also offers arguments to independence movements that seek to promote the idea that Catalonia and its language are being oppressed by the Spanish Government. However, their response has the effect of excluding people and entities that do not share their ideology or their desire to impose the primacy of the Catalan language, which has not been as effective linguistically. That is to say, the Catalan secessionist process is a good example of how language is used to divide and not unite people who live in a same territory.

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Faroese nationalism: To be and not to be a sovereign state, that is the question

4

HANS ANDRIAS SØLVARÁ

1 Introduction and main question

The Faroese historian Hans Jacob Debes (1940–2003) argued in an article about nationalism as a historical phenomenon that in international research on nationalism, the Faroese case is unique (Debes, 1991, pp. 23–24). With reference to the famous work of Miroslav Hroch (1932–) on nationalism (Hroch, 1968/1985), Debes mentions that the Faroese national history can be divided into three periods—a cultural period until 1901–1906, a period with political agitation until 1940–1946, and a final period from 1946 to 1948 where the political question about full sovereignty from Denmark is the main question. However, even if the question of Faroese sovereignty was decided at a Faroese referendum on September 14, 1946, the Faroese decision did not result in Faroese independence. According to Hans Jacob Debes, this is unique, and he was not able to find any example in the international literature about another nation, which first decided on independence and then turned back to something less than independence. Hans Jacob Debes even invented a specific term to describe this unique Faroese example—phase of "relapse" (Debes, 1991, pp. 8–27).

However, in the 1991 article Hans Jacob Debes rightfully concludes that historians can only analyze the past, while the future belongs to the prophets. Now, nearly 30 years later, it can in retrospect be "prophesised" that the issue of independence is still disputed and unsolved in Faroese politics, and even if the question became a mayor political issue in the islands in the late 1990s, the question remains unsolved. The Faroese example may not be historically unique (Sølvará, 2017, pp. 84–85), but it certainly represents a "relapse" with mayor consequences for the development of the political life in the Faroe Islands.

In this chapter, the specific Faroese nationalist example will be described and discussed. A common definition of nationalism is that it is a political doctrine invented in Europe in the 19th century and that the political goal of nationalist movements is that national and political borders shall coincide in a nation-state (Gellner, 1983, p. 1). This idea was dynamite for the dominated European 17th century multinational state-model, organized independent of ethnic borders. However, while nationalist consciousness often implies the romantic view that national-

ist movement's only preserve a threatened culture or awake the repressed national consciousness of a repressed people, modern nationalist research implies the opposite. The nation is neither historically or logically a condition for nationalism, but nationalism is a movement that transforms peasant people without a written high culture into a high culture with a written cultural language and creates or invents nations and national consciousness (Gellner, 1983; Anderson, 1983; Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1990/1992; Østergård, 1996/2007). This modern constructionist view has also influenced research on Faroese nationalism (Joensen, 1991/2003); see also Simonsen, 2012). A relevant question to discuss in relation to the Faroese example is therefore how it happened that Faroese nationalism, which during the 19th and 20th centuries succeeded in the main effort to transform the threatened oral Faroese peasant language and culture into an educated culture with a successful Faroese literacy, has not resulted in an independent Faroese state. This question has focused on the unique character of Faroese nationalism mentioned by Debes. To answer the question, it is necessary to analyze 1) the historical–political relations between the Faroe Islands and Norway/Denmark, 2) the origin and development of Faroese nationalism, as well as 3) the development of the relations between the Faroe Islands and the Danish Kingdom in the contemporary modern globalized world.

Nations and national consciousness may be inventions of the 19th century, but they are not invented completely independent of any history and local traditions. Nations are invented by utilizing certain aspects of local tradition and transforming them into general images or perceptions of the nation. If the goal of nationalism is to create nations in order to establish nation-states, then many national movements have succeeded in their struggle (e.g., Iceland), others have only partially succeeded (e.g., Faroe Islands), while many potential nations failed as local cultures have faced extinction—some of them because of nationalism. If nationalism creates nations by transforming local tradition into the national identity of a larger population, then successful nationalisms necessarily challenge some local cultures. However, modern liberal democratic nation-states can't unconditionally be compared with 19th century new democratic nation-states—not to mention authoritarian 19th century nation-states. While state-nationalism in authoritarian nation-states necessarily encourages counter nationalisms, state-nationalism in modern liberal democratic states may under certain circumstances, to a certain degree, tolerate ethnic differences within the nation-state and therefore decrease the strength or radicalism of counter nationalism within the state. This distinction may indicate why specific context or time, early or late, when nationalism enters an area is relevant for the development or success of the movement. A national movement, which gains support within a specific part of a population in an authoritarian state, may—if not subjected—be motivated to establish an independent state, while a national movement that gains support late within a population inside

a liberal democratic nation-state may be inclined to accept a limited cultural and political recognition within the nation-state.

The thesis in this chapter is that the latter development fits better the Faroese example. This thesis will be discussed from an historical and contemporary point of view, where a comparison with the development of national movements in other comparable areas also will be made. If the success of any nationalism by definition is the establishment of a new independent nation-state, then the term ethnicity may be introduced to describe the success of national movements whose aim is limited to the invention and then the recognition of a high culture within the legal framework of an established liberal democratic nation-state (Østergård, 1996/2007, p. 547). Nationalism may by definition mean something, but in real history, there is no logical necessity between the advent or success of nationalism and the establishment of an independent nation-state. The Faroe Islands remain an historical example of this empirical fact.

However, as Hans Jacob Debes rightly points out, historians can't say anything about the future.

2 A Norwegian dependency

The Faroe Islands were settled in the 4th century AD (Church et al., 2013), probably by Celtic monks from Ireland, but in the early 9th century Norwegian Vikings drew the monks away and settled in the islands (Tierney, 1967, pp. 75–77). The Norse population has since been mixed with, for example, Celtic population, but the surviving tradition and language was the Norwegian cultural and political tradition and the West Norse language of Western Norway.

The islands were probably relatively independent in the beginning, but in the 11th century they came under the authority of Norway and the inhabitants were obliged to pay taxes to Norwegian Kings. Norwegian law became Faroese law in the 13th century, but the specific circumstances in the islands had the effect that in some areas specific Faroese law was implemented in the islands. The Sheep letter, a specific Faroese agricultural legislation, was registered in the Faroe Islands in 1298. In this letter, it is documented that the ancient Faroese parliament of Norwegian origin from the late 9th century, which in 1273 was converted into a representative Norwegian Løgting, was summoned in Tórshavn on Ólavsøku, Olai, the 29th of July, the death day of the famous Norwegian King Olav the Holy in 1030 AD (Mortensen, 1998, pp. 111–126). The Faroe Islands, Iceland, Greenland, Isle of Man, Hebrides, Orkney, and Shetland became early part of the expanding realm of Norwegian Kings. However, already in the 13th and 15th centuries, Isle of Man, Orkney, Hebrides, and Shetland were lost to the Scottish king, while Danish Kings in the 16th century without success tried to sell the Faroe Island and Iceland to English kings. (Sølvará, 2016, p. 217). These events had fatal consequences for

the Norse culture and language in the Islands. It was only in the Faroe Islands and Iceland where the ancient Norse culture and language survived, while Scottish and English language replaced Norse in other islands—in Greenland, the Norse culture and the Norse settlers vanished in the 15th century and only Inuit people with Inuit culture and language survived.

Important changes happened in 1380 when the Danish Crown inherited the Norwegian Kingdom. Formally, the Danish king became King of Norway as Norwegian King, but during the centuries the administration of the two kingdoms was centralized in Copenhagen and the administrative language in the kingdoms became Danish. In the 17th century, the Faroese trade center was moved from the Norwegian city Bergen to the Danish capital Copenhagen, and the administration of the Faroese Church matters was at the same time moved closer to the Danish Capital (Sølvará, 2002, p. 69). At the same time, the Kings power increased in the aftermath of the reformation in the 16th century, culminating with absolutism in the 17th century, when the king's administrative personal replaced local government.

3 Language and culture

This centralizing and professionalizing development of the administration together with the 19th century transformation of the subsistence peasant society into a market-oriented fishing society challenged local culture. The Norse culture and language in Orkney and Shetland extinguished already in the 17th century, while the Faroese culture and language survived the pressure from Danish culture and language—only as a spoken culture and vernacular of the common people.

Linguists tell us that specific Faroese characteristics are in the Sheep Letter and in preserved letters from the late 15th century; it appears clear that the Norse language in the Faroe Islands was about to develop into a particular West Nordic language (Marnersdóttir & Sigurðardóttir, 2011, p. 59). However, in the 16th century, no Faroese letters are preserved, the written administrative, clerical and biblical language in the islands is Danish, while Faroese language only survived as a deprived spoken vernacular of the common Faroese people. While Icelandic mainly because of the Icelandic middle age Saga literature survived as a written language, Faroese as well as Norwegian written language was replaced by Danish in administration and in church. In the late 18th century, the Faroese vernacular was so depraved by Danish influence that a learned Faroese academic, who did an immensely important pioneer work for the subsequent development of the Faroese language, thought that it would be best if Danish completely replaced Faroese (Svabo, 1976, p. 266). The Faroese language was apparently about to have the same fate as the Norse language in Orkney and Shetland, but the limited Danish presence in the islands probably saved the language.

From a Faroese point of view, it is interesting that the reformation, which already in the 16th century usually established local language as biblical language and subsequently became very important for the rise of vernaculars to written cultural language, in this respect took four centuries in the Faroe Islands. While the Bible already in the 16th century was translated from Hebrew and Greek or Latin into German, Danish or Icelandic, the Faroese had to wait until mid-20th century for the first Faroese translation of the Bible. It was only in 1939 that Faroese was recognized as church language in the Faroe Islands on equal terms as Danish, and in 1948, Faroese became the main language in the islands. The translation of biblical texts that happened simultaneously outside and within the official Danish Church in the Faroe Islands was of great importance to the development and general recognition of Faroese vernacular as written cultural language.

The Faroese language became in the 19th and 20th centuries the primary foundation behind Faroese nationalism and the construction of a Faroese identity, but specific historical circumstances were important or even decisive for the development and the eventual construction of a Faroese identity.

4 From Kiel to the Danish constitution

There are events that are of major importance for the future of a society. In relation to the Faroese society, such an event happened in Kiel in January 1814. The Danish Kingdom, a conglomerate state with a glorious colonial past, was a declining power. The eastern possessions of the conglomerate at the Baltic Sea were lost early, and Scania was lost to Sweden in the 17th century. At the beginning of the 19th century, unsuccessful participation on the losing side in the Napoleonic Wars threatened the mere existence of Denmark, but the British saved the core of a weak Danish state, which in the mid-19th century eventually was reduced to a small and relatively homogeneous Danish nation-state.

In January 1814, Denmark was under severe pressure from Sweden and its strong allies, England and Russia, on the winning side of the Napoleonic Wars. Sweden had in 1809 lost the Finnish parts of the state to Russia and wanted to achieve Norway from Denmark as a compensation—a claim backed by Russia and England. The Swedish army directly threatened Denmark from Schleswig, and the Danish King had to accept to give up Norway to the Swedish King. However, the Faroe Islands, Iceland, and Greenland, Norwegian possessions since the early middle ages, were for some still disputed reasons explicitly excluded from the Norwegian Kingdom offered to the Swedish King—and remained under the Danish King. Some historians have proposed that a clever Danish negotiator cheated a Swedish negotiator who was unaware that the islands belonged to Norway (Nielsen, 1886, p. 24; Nørregård, 1954, p. 170). Someone has stressed a supposed initiative from the powerful Swedish crown prince Karl Johan who was in Kiel in January 1814

(Wang, 2013). Others propose more likely that the British wanted to secure their maritime interests in the North Atlantic and prevent a strengthened Sweden to become a strong North Atlantic power (Gad, 1979), but the most likely explanation appears to be that lack of interest for the North Atlantic was the reason why the islands remained with a weak Danish King (Sølvará, 2018, pp. 101–138).

However, there were prominent persons in England and Sweden who argued for an annexation of the islands (Sølvará, 2018), and the possibility for another outcome with very different long-term consequences for the culture and language in the islands may be considered. If the Faroe Islands in 1814 had become a part of the British Empire, a very likely scenario would be that Faroese culture and language might not have survived. The powerful and attractive British culture might have been irresistible for the most talented Faroese intellectuals who would have been educated at British universities instead of Danish (Kjærgaard, 2016a/2016b). A more likely scenario is that the North Atlantic islands followed the actual Norway under the Swedish Crown, and some linguists have argued that this outcome might have had quite similar consequences (Brunstad, 2011, pp. 275–294). It may be that the threatened Faroese vernacular of west Nordic origin under these conditions disappeared into a likewise west Nordic originated Norwegian language and that Faroese would not exist as a written language today. If so, Faroese language would have met the same fate of extinction as Norse in, for example, Orkney and Shetland. Instead, Faroe Islands in 1814 became a cultural anomaly in a weak and powerless Danish Kingdom, whose culture and language originated from the eastern Nordic tradition. Further, already in the period 1813–1821, the Faroe Islands was established as a separate legislative area in the Danish kingdom, where the law became very different from the actual Denmark. Under these circumstances of otherness, Faroese language became the identifier for Faroese nationalism and since developed to an almost miraculously successful cultural language for only 50,000 people in the Faroe Islands. This may be the uniqueness with Faroese nationalism.

The question is how this successful development was possible for a population of 5000 in 1814.

5 Danish and Faroese nationalism

The development of Denmark from a conglomerate kingdom into a Danish nation-state continued after the major defeat in the Napoleonic Wars. In the 1830s, enlightenment and social revolution challenged absolutism, and the development against the democratic Danish constitution began from 1849. However, the self-confidence of the Danish King strengthened with the victory in the 1848 war against Prussia. In 1863, a confident democratic Danish state decided to annex Schleswig, which as part of the Duchy of Schleswig-Holstein had been in dominion with Denmark since 1460, into the new democratic Danish unitary state. This

decision led in 1864 Denmark to a catastrophic war with Prussia, which would not accept that the new Danish state annexed a part of a Duchy at the Prussian northern border. Denmark suffered in 1864 a major defeat with long-lasting consequences for the development of a new national consciousness in the democratic Danish nation-state. The logic of lost wars had eventually reduced the Danish conglomerate Kingdom to a small and powerless, but relatively homogeneous, Danish nation-state, which had to come to terms with the rise of a strong Prussian/German nation-state at the southern Danish border. Additionally, what the conglomerate Danish Kingdom had lost in terms of influence and power on the external world scene was on the internal state scene gained with the construction of common national values and social coherence.

Danish nationalism, which intended to strengthen the Danishness within a new Danish nation-state, was in part a reaction to the defeat in the 1864 war against Prussia. Similarly, Faroese nationalism was in part a reaction to pressure from Danish nationalism. Before the advent of state nationalism, in 1814, Denmark inherited the old and culturally different North Atlantic possessions from Norway. It was not evident how or if the Danish Kingdom planned to integrate the islands into the Kingdom, but in the 1830s it appears evident that the intention was to integrate the Nordic areas into the Danish state, while the Danish colonies in Greenland, West India, and India still should to be treated as colonies. The basis for this development was a kind of romantic Nordic nationalism in Denmark at the beginning of the 19th century. The Danish linguist Rasmus Chr. Rask (1787–1832) became in 1804 interested in Icelandic and Faroese language. Rask had the romantic view that these two languages were the original languages spoken in Scandinavia in the Viking and middle ages. Rask was especially interested in Icelandic, but also other Danes, for example, Hans Chr. Lyngbye (1782–1837), Niels M. Petersen (1791–1862), Carl Chr. Rafn (1795–1864), Sven Grundtvig (1825–1883), and Jørgen Bloch (1839–1910), contributed with important work for Faroese language. Lyngbye published in 1822 the first book, a collection of Faroese Ballads, in Faroese and Rafn published in 1832 the 13th century Icelandic Saga about the Faroese in Faroese (Lyngbye, 1822; Rafn, 1832). Lyngbye and Rafn did not have any established Faroese orthography to rely on, but help from the Faroese priest Johan Hendrik Schrøter (1771–1851) who translated and published the second book in Faroese, the Gospel of Matthew in 1823 (Schrøter, 1823), was of crucial importance for Lyngbye's work with the Faroese ballads. Furthermore, the late 18th century work of the Faroese Jens Christian Svabo (1746–1824) about Faroese orthography was, even if it was only published in mid-20th century, vital for anything that was done for the establishment of a Faroese orthography (Djupedal, 2016).

However, the spoken Faroese language, which Jens Christian Svabo in the late 18th century (e.g., some years before the Treaty of Kiel in 1814) characterized as so depraved that he recommended to replace it with Danish (Svabo, 1976, p. 266),

came a few years after the Kiel-treaty in focus of Danish academics who were in-spired by romantic Scandinavian nationalism. This major change in the interest in Faroese language together with the chronological order of the change became important for the fate of the Faroese language. If the Faroe Islands had remained with Norway after 1814, Faroese language may not have existed today, but the interest for Faroese language especially among Danish academics in the years fol-lowing the Treaty of Kiel actually became a milestone for the subsequent work, which later led to the construction of a Faroese orthography. On the other hand, Danish state nationalism in the 1840s to 1860s, which intended to create political and cultural unity within the new Danish nation-state, also appears to have both provoked and inspired rise of a Faroese nationalism, which from the beginning fo-cused on the Faroese language as the national identifier. Additionally, at exactly this point Faroese as a west Nordic language—despite romantic views about Icelandic and Faroese as the common Scandinavian Viking age language—differed more from Danish as an east Nordic language.

In the period 1831–1864 when the remains of the former so glorious absolutist Danish Kingdom were reorganized into a democratic constitutional kingdom, a small Danish nation-state, the intention was to incorporate the (alleged) Danish areas at the southern border and the Nordic islands in the North Atlantic into the new democratic Danish state. The intention was never to incorporate the colonies who did not have an indigenous Nordic population into the new Danish democratic state, but the important thing in our context is that it only succeeded to incorporate the Faroe Islands into the new Danish state. A strong Icelandic na-tional movement, which became powerful already in the 1830s, managed to achieve acceptance from Denmark to have the ancient Icelandic parliament (the Alting), abolished in 1800 and resurrected already in 1843. The new Icelandic parliament opposed in 1851 the Danish intentions to register the constitution in Iceland. Prus-sia forced in 1864 the Danes to abolish their intentions to incorporate Schleswig into the new Danish state. Even if some Faroese individuals already in the 1840s sent applications to the Danes authorities about home rule, the claims were weak (Jensen, 1934, p. 607). They couldn't prevent the Danish authorities from incor-porating the Faroe Islands into the new democratic Danish unitary state—without consulting any Faroese representation, without asking any Faroese, and without any protests from any Faroese assembly or persons (Patursson, 1903; Thorsteins-son, 1990). Instead, the Faroe Islands subsequently, in 1852, had the ancient parlia-ment (the Løgting), abolished in 1816 and resurrected as a consultative body within the constitutional borders of the new unitary Danish state.

To sum up, Icelandic nationalism became so powerful already under the non-democratic diversity under absolutism that it managed to preserve a relatively in-dependent Icelandic position before the advent of the new Danish unitary state. Faroese nationalism, on the other hand, came later and was so weak that it could

not preserve the relative independence of the Faroe Islands before the advent of the new Danish unitary state. Therefore, in the Faroe Islands, nationalism could not prevent the Danish authorities from incorporating the island into the new Danish state. In fact, nationalism did not really come to the Faroe Islands until Denmark had become a democratic state. This chronology of events can in part explain why Icelandic and Faroe nationalism developed in very different ways.

However, even if it is claimed that nationalism first come to the Faroe Islands in 1888, the origin of Faroese nationalism may be traced back to 1844 when the first application for Faroese home rule was sent to the Danish state authorities. In accordance with Danish romantic nationalism, Danish authorities wanted to promote Danish values within the Danish state. This was indicated in 1844 when a debate about the implementation of the first regular school system in the Faroe Islands was held in a temporary Danish representative assembly (Tarbensen, 1993, pp. 155–180). There was as with the implementation of the constitution no Faroese representative in the assembly, whose members had the view that Danish language should be the teaching language in the Faroese schools. This question was not a great issue among the common Faroese people in mid-19th century. Faroese peasants were more interested in the expenses that a regular school would lay on them and that a regular school would prevent the children from participating in the work on the land or fishing. Nevertheless, Faroese academics in Copenhagen were astonished by the lack of knowledge about Faroese language among the Danish representatives in the assembly who, for example, claimed that Faroese was only a deprived Danish dialect. These events actually started the process that led to the construction of a Faroese orthography.

V.U. Hammershaimb (1819–1909), a young Faroese theology student in Copenhagen, protested against this ignorance in an article in a Danish newspaper in 1844 (Grundtvig, 1978, pp. 83–87), and in 1845 his Danish friend Svend Grundtvig pseudonymously published a booklet about the question, where he provokingly compared the Danish attitude to Faroese with the German attitude to Danish in Schleswig (Grundtvig, 1978). The school system was implemented in 1846, but it was because of many Faroese complaints, which as mentioned were not mainly about the teaching language, abolished already in 1854. However, the long-term consequence of the debate in the Danish assembly about the Faroese language was the important linguistic work that eventually resulted in the construction of the etymological Faroese orthography of 1846, which constitutes modern Faroese orthography. In popular Faroese national culture, it is often claimed that Hammershaimb constructed the Faroese orthography, but scholars have for almost a century recognized that the Danish linguist Niels M. Petersen and especially the Icelandic linguist and historian Jón Sigurðsson (1811–1879) constructed the Faroese orthography (Matras, 1951; Lindqvist, 2018). However, the major work of Ham-

mershaimb for the Faroese language can't be underestimated just as the major work of Danish and Icelandic academics for Faroese language must be acknowledged.

In 1854, Hammershaimg published the first Faroese grammar, based on Sigurðsson's etymological Faroese orthography (Hammershaimb, 1854), which with some minor changes is still used. At that time, he had already collected and published Faroese Ballads (Hammershaimb, 1851) and published a Faroese Anthology in 1886–1891 (Hammershaimb, 1891).

Jakob Jakobsen (1864–1918), the first Faroese linguist, became in 1897 the first Faroese Doctor with a thesis on the extinct Norn language in Shetland (Jakobsen, 1897). Jakobsen wrote in 1892 a biography about Páll Nolsøe (1766–1809), usually called Nólsoyar Páll, who in 1804 built the first Faroese owned sea-going vessel for many centuries (Jakobsen, 1892). During the troublesome Napoleonic Wars, when it was a challenge to supply the Faroe Islands, Nolsøe sailed between the Faroe Islands and Denmark/Norway/England with merchandize, but he never arrived in the Faroe Islands from his last sea-journey from London, from where he left late in 1808. In Jakobsen's biography, published in a Faroese edition in 1912 (Jacobsen, 1912/1966), where he used his own phonetic proposal from 1898 of a new Faroese orthography, he constructed a picture of Páll Nolsøe as a Faroese national hero. Jakobsen also collected Faroese folktales, which he published from 1898 (Jacobsen, 1898–1901), and he laid the foundation for a Faroese literature. Jakob Jakobsen was in his engaged work for Faroese language obviously motivated by a fear for that Faroese would meet the same fate as Norn in Shetland (Joensen, 2010, pp. 232–233), and it has since been claimed that a few committed and engaged persons like Jacobsen saved Faroese from facing the same fate of extinction as Norn in Shetland (Joensen (2010, p. 240).

Gradually, and naturally, Faroese academics as time went became the major figures in the struggle and work for Faroese language, while the role of Danish and Icelandic academics just as naturally declined. However, the interesting point is that Faroese nationalism was both inspired from the 19th century Danish national culture—through inspiration from Danish universities on Faroese students and through work of Danish academics with Faroese language and culture–and a Faroese reaction against the more narrow Danish state nationalism, which developed in the period 1831–1864. This context doesn't in principle distinguish Faroese nationalism from nationalism elsewhere, but if we keep in mind that Faroese nationalism developed within a weak democratic state, we have a likely explanation of the fact that Faroese nationalism never developed into a strong and irresistible secession movement.[1]

Gradually, the Faroese language gained acceptance from the Faroese people, and when the Faroese Association was founded in Tórshavn in 1889, Faroese language

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[1] For the development of the Faroese secession movement, see Sølvará (2014) and in English Sølvará (2016a).

and culture became the main issue. With the first newspaper, *Føringatíðindi* from 1890, published in Faroese, based on the etymological orthography of Sigurðsson, a broader Faroese public for the first time regularly could read Faroese (Matras, 1969; Debes, 1969). Disputes between supporters of the etymological orthography of Sigurðsson and supporters of the phonetic orthography of Jakobsen grew within the association, but the disagreements were not only about the orthography. A moderate wing wanted to promote Faroese as the common language in the Faroe Islands, without challenging Danish as the cultural language (among them was an old and more moderate Hammershaimb) (Debes, 1982, pp. 368–369), while a radical wing on the basis of Sigurðsson's etymological orthography intended to establish Faroese as the cultural language in the Faroe Islands on the same level as Danish. The moderate wing claimed that the etymological orthography was "Icelandic" and separated Faroese from Danish. The other side argued that the etymological orthography was well suited to embrace the dialectical variations in the Faroe Islands (Hammershaimb, 1891, pp. LIV–LVI). A phonetic orthography had the advantage that the written language would remain close to the spoken language, but the challenge would be to find a standard independent of any specific dialect. The critics said that the standard would most likely become the language spoken in Tórshavn, where the influence from Danish would also be the most significant. In the end, the etymological orthography prevailed, but the discussion is still ongoing in the Faroe Islands (see Nauerby, 1996). At the beginning of the 20th century, the Faroese Association split up, but at that time, the interest for Faroese language and its place in the Faroese society had changed from an academic one in 1844 to an issue of major political interest for a large part of the Faroese people.

However, the almost restraint free way in which the written Faroese language in the 19th and 20th centuries developed within the Danish state context and gained acceptance in the Faroe Islands created an ambivalent element toward Denmark within modern Faroese nationalism. Faroese nationalists—as nationalists in general—tend to describe opponents, Faroese or Danes, in negative terms, but many of them recognize at the same time that modern Faroese culture and language is deeply in debt to Danish culture and intellectuals who have inspired and promoted Faroese culture and language (e.g., Jacobsen, 1927, pp. 79, 80, 87; Hoydal, 2000, p. 23).

6 Between home rule and independence

Traditionally, Faroese research on nationalism, for example, Hans Jacob Debes, are in line with Miroslav Hroch and distinguish between a cultural and a political period (Debes, 1982). The cultural period begins around 1888, when participants at a famous Christmas meeting in Tórshavn decided to establish the Faroese Association of 1889 in order to preserve the Faroese language and Faroese culture.

The first Faroese newspaper published in Faroese (*Føringatíðindi* from 1890) was a result of this meeting. Following the cultural period, the association in 1901–1906 splits into a conservative and progressive wing, which marked the beginning of the political period. The characteristic of the cultural period is the focus on the preservation of language and culture, while it is the focus on the political consequences of the new national awareness, eventually leading to secession, which characterizes the political period.

In retrospect, this kind of periodization can give researchers a better view over national periods, but historically, methodologically, and philosophically researchers may draw wrong conclusions if they confuse these models with reality. First, it is empirically difficult with basis in the Faroese material to distinguish between a cultural and a political period. It may be relevant to distinguish between an intellectual and a popular period in the development of Faroese nationalism, but in chronological terms, it is difficult to separate the cultural and the political track. Nothing indicates that the interest for the preservation of Faroese language preceded the interest for political home rule. Similarly, the focus on the Christmas meeting in 1888 appears flawed and incidental. Second, in methodological terms the focus on Miroslav Hroch's periodization appears to have led some Faroese researchers to overlook empirical evidence, which indicates, that the political track is parallel—not following—the cultural track. Third, empirical models relating to the development of nationalism from a cultural period over a political period to independence can lead researchers to the philosophical view that secession is the determined goal of any nationalism—a view that may underlie Hans Jacob Debes' apparent surprise over the fact that Faroese nationalism did not result in secession from Denmark. Lastly, researchers of nationalism may, if they study inside a national culture, be biased and tempted to overlook or underestimate broader contexts and contributions from intellectuals from outside.

This chapter is written with these reflections in mind and when this chapter about the struggle for home rule also starts with the traditional periodization, we must keep these limitations in mind. The point is not that Faroese nationalism eventually became progressive and political in 1901–1906, while the opponents were only conservative remnants from a dying cultural period. The point is that at the beginning of the 20th century Faroese nationalism, for example, the cultural and political issue, increasingly became a subject, which was relevant for a large part of the Faroese population. In this respect, we can argue that Benedict Andersons term "print-language" can be applied to a Faroese context from 1890, when a large part of the population got access to printed Faroese texts (Anderson, 1983). This is an empirical fact—not a normative or philosophical claim about the direction or strength of Faroese nationalism.

The major Danish defeat in 1864 resulted in a conservative Danish reaction that led to a conservative revision of the constitution in 1867. The position of the King

in the political system remained strong against the parliament, and any attempts to move the unitary Danish state in a federal direction was overruled (Østergård, 2012, p. 38). The Faroese parliament's attempts in the late 19th century to liberalize, democratize, or increase the authority of the Løgting were denied (Sølvará, 2002, pp. 125–130). At the end of the 19th century, the King ruled with preliminary laws, while the majority in the Danish parliament became increasingly in favor of reducing the power of the King. In 1901, the King eventually gave up and appointed a government with bases in the liberal majority in the parliament. At the same time, the Faroese representatives in the Danish parliament were in favor of extended Faroese home rule within the Danish Kingdom (Debes, 1993, pp. 129–137).

This Danish context created the Faroese political framework underlying the development of modern Faroese politics and modern democratic nationalism in the Faroe Islands. In 1901, the Faroese voters elected Jóannes Patursson (1866–1946), the undisputed leader of the Faroese national movement, as a Faroese representative in the Danish parliament. Patursson published in 1903 the book "Faroese Politics" (*Færøsk Politik*), written in Danish and intended to Danish politicians, where he criticized that the Danish authorities in 1850 registered the constitution in the Faroe Islands without consulting the Faroese people or any Faroese (Patursson, 1903). This argument remains a part of the political vocabulary of modern Faroese nationalism, and it remains undisputed that the interest of the Faroese for the constitution is weak. Three times, in 1920, 1939, and 1953, have there been referendums in Denmark and the Faroe Islands about changes in the constitution. The poll in Denmark was, respectively, 49.6%, 48.9% and 59.1%, but in the Faroe Islands, the comparable numbers were 24.9%, 10.7%, and 8.7% (Sølvará, 2017, pp. 62–64). The constitution required that a majority of at least 45% of the electorate was necessary in order to accept the changes. Interestingly, 45.8% of the Danish electorate voted in favor of the constitution in 1953, while only 6.7% of the Faroese electorate voted in favor of the new constitution. These numbers indicate that even if the constitution remains valid in the Faroe Islands, the legitimacy of the constitution in the islands can be questioned. Paterson's message with the book was that the Faroe Islands should be recognized home rule within the Danish realm. Three years later, in 1906, he managed to get an offer from the Danish government on extended home rule to the Løgting (Sølvará, 2011, pp. 20–39). The Løgting should be recognized as extended power in some domestic affairs and with consent from the Danish government authority to collect taxes tin the Faroe Islands. The debate in the Faroe Islands was harsh, and following an electoral campaign to the Løgting, where the dominating discourse was high Faroese taxes, the Løgting rejected the offer from the Danish government about home rule.

The result was the establishment of the first political parties in the Faroe Islands, the Unionist Party (1906), which wanted to preserve the relations between the

Faroe Islands and Denmark as they were, and the Home Rule Party of 1909, which wanted legislative power to the Løgting in Faroese matters and full rights to Faroese in Faroese matters. This dividing line has since been defining in Faroese politics and was the main political conflict during most of the interwar period. Even if the Unionist Party had the majority in the Løgting during most of the interwar period, a majority in the Løgting in 1919 accepted to consult the Danish government with a proposal, which would change the constitution in a way that would authorize the Danish parliament to give the Løgting legislative power in internal Faroese matters (Sølvará, 2017, p. 60). However, when the first referendum on the constitution was in 1920, the proposed change was not included in the changes in the text. This affected the view of the Home Rule Party against the referendum as well as against the Danish authorities in a negative way. The constitution has since been part of a legal argument against extended Faroese home rule, and it constitutes the interpretive context related to the status of the Faroe Islands within the Danish state.

At the same time, in the period 1918–1923, the Løgting several times accepted to give the Faroese language the same position as Danish in the school and in the church, but it was not until 1939 that Faroese achieved the same right as Danish in the Faroese school and church (Sølvará, 2013, pp. 167–170). At that time, two new parties, the Social Democratic Party (1925) and the Industry Party (1935), who added a new left-right dimension to the unionist-home rule dimension in Faroese politics, had achieved representatives in the Løgting, and both parties were more nationally oriented than the Unionist Party. However, the definitive nationalist question of Faroese secession, expressed for the first time in 1925 (Sølvará, 2016, pp. 140–141), had to wait for the Second World War to achieve extensive political support from the Faroese population. Instead, extensive Danish state grants, which were intended to fund the necessary modernization of the Faroese society, especially to fund the construction of modern harbors in the new industrial fishing places, were with Faroese political consent sent to the Faroe Islands in the interwar period (Steining, 1953, pp. 148–149).

Under the Second World War, the Germans occupied Denmark, while the British occupied the Faroe Islands. The Faroese flag, drawn in 1919 by Faroese students in Copenhagen, was in 1940 recognized by the British to use at sea. Further, a preliminary constitution recognized the Løgting together with the Danish Governor a kind of legislative power in domestic Faroese issues. In addition, economically the war years were very lucrative for the Faroese society. These special circumstances strengthened the Faroese independence movement, which had been weak during the pre-war economic crises (Sølvará, 2016, pp. 141–143). The independent minded Peoples Party (1939), which achieved six representatives in the Løgting at the pre-war election in 1940, achieved 12 of 25 representatives in the Løgting at the late wartime election in 1943. However, the Peoples Party never

achieved the majority in the Løgting and the British occupiers made it clear that they would never accept any Faroese decision to secede from Denmark without consultation with a liberated Danish government (Sørensen, 1998, pp. 212–213). It was clear that the question about independence would not disappear, but the British decision postponed it to after the war.

Past-war negotiations did not lead to any Faroese consensus, and the Danish government in early 1946 eventually proposed a solution within the constitution that none of the Faroese parties were fond off. The Unionist Party thought that the proposal was too radical, the Social Democratic party didn't think it was radical enough, while the Peoples Party could not accept it at all. In the end, the unionist majority in the Løgting understood that the proposal was an ultimatum and decided to hold a Faroese referendum about the Danish government's proposal or secession (Sølvará, 2017, pp. 65–78). The Peoples Party, which wanted the Faroe Islands to have an independent dominion relation to the Danish Kingdom, was against the accepted "either-or" referendum without a positive alternative to the government's proposal, but the Danish government accepted the proposed referendum. The unionist parties as well as the Peoples Party suspected that the either-or referendum would result in a majority for the government's proposal, but when the result of the referendum on September 14, 1946, was official, a unified political elite in Denmark and in the Faroe Islands was astonished. A marginal majority, 50.7% of the poll, 67.6%, was in favor of secession. However, when a small majority in the Løgting decided to undertake the preparations for secession, the Danish King (the government) resolved the Løgting with reference to §18 in the constitution. The government now interpreted the constitution in a way that rendered the referendum consultative, and the decision of the Løgting illegal, because the final and binding decision about Faroese secession could only be taken by the Danish parliament.

The political system in the Faroe Islands generally accepted the Danish decision, but the election to the Løgting in November 1946 changed the secessionist majority in the Løgting to a unionist one. The new unionist majority interpreted the result of the referendum as a rejection of both proposals and undertook new negotiations with the Danish government. Eventually the unionist majority and the Danish government agreed on the Home Rule Law of April 1948, which despite the constitution furnished the Løgting with legislative authority in domestic Faroese matters, while, for example, foreign policy and defence belonged to the Danish authorities. Further, 400 years after the reformation, the Faroese language was recognized as the main language in the Faroe Islands. Additionally, the Løgting was authorized to collect taxes in the Faroe Islands. If the Danish authorities wanted to keep the Faroe Islands within the Danish state, they had to accept this unpreceded Home Rule Act (Mayer, 1947, pp. 289–299), but historical research indicates, on the other hand, that the Home Rule Law in respect to foreign pol-

icy and defence was deliberately constructed to fit American interests during the Cold War (Thorsteinsson, 1999, p. 44; see also Jensen, 2004). The Home Rule Law allowed Danish authorities to register the NATO treaty in the Faroe Islands even though the Løgting in 1940 had decided that the Faroe Islands should be outside all military alliances. The decision was renewed later and the Danish decision to build a NATO station in the Faroe Islands led to massive public protests in the 1950s. The left-wing oriented Republican Party, founded in 1948 because of the "betrayal" against the result of the referendum in 1946, gained substantial support during this period and established itself as one of the four big political parties in the Faroe Islands.

However, even though there were major crises between the Faroe Islands and Denmark during the home rule period, and the Republican Party established itself as a strong political secession party in the period, the Faroe Islands subsequently developed into a semi-independent top-modern society within the home rule system. Even though the independence-minded parties, the Peoples Party and the Republican Party, didn't accept the Home Rule Law, the Home Rule Law furnished the political system and the Faroese People with the authority and opportunity to achieve most of the goals of the national movement, except full secession. The Faroese language was recognized as the main language in the Faroe Islands and the Løgting, which according to the home rule system had the opportunity to increase its influence by taking over the legislative power and economic responsibility of Faroese areas, could during the period establish itself as the main legislator of the Faroe Islands. The Faroese language has within the framework of the Home Rule Law also in praxis developed into the administrative and the cultural language in the Faroe Islands. Additionally, the legislative power, which until 1948 exclusively was with the Danish Parliament in Copenhagen, where the Faroe Islands since 1851 have had two representatives, is in the 21th century almost exclusively with the Faroese Løgting. Furthermore, because of the Home Rule Law, the Løgting in 1974 was able to decide that the Faroe Islands would not follow Denmark into the EEC (now EU). The Danish colony of Greenland, which as the Faroe Islands and Iceland became a Danish possession in 1814, was only included into the constitutional realm in 1953, when colonialism was about to be passé, but without home rule Greenland became as an integrated part of Denmark member of EEC. Greenland could only leave the EEC 1982, for example, when Greenland in 1979 had achieved home rule as the Faroe Islands in 1948. It was also during the home rule period that the Faroe Islands with Danish inspiration and extensive economic subsidies from the Danish state developed into a modern and prosperous welfare society.

Of course, there have also been crises in the relationship between Denmark and the Faroe Islands, for example, during deep economic crises in the 1950s and 1990s, which put extensive pressure on the relationship. Both in the 1960s and the late

1990s independence-minded parties achieved the majority in the Løgting and succeeded to agree on independent-minded coalitions. However, in the end these crises and combined Danish-Faroese efforts to support and reconstruct the very sensitive fishery-dependent Faroese economy appear in the long run to have strengthened the ties between the countries (see Mikkelsen, 2001). The deep economic crises in the Faroe Islands in the 1990s damaged the Danish-Faroese political relations so much on the short term that an election to the Løgting in 1998 for the first time resulted in an independence-minded majority and consequently the establishment of a new Faroese government, which intended to establish an independent Faroese state (Sølvará, 2002, pp. 372–385). The ultimate political goal of the national movement in the Faroe Islands appeared to be very close around 2000.

In the 1980s, Faroese authorities with the Home Rule Law had achieved control over the Faroese economy, and experienced by the crises in the 1950s, the Danish authorities were reluctant to interfere in Faroese matters. Furthermore, the fear of losing control over the fish resources in the Faroese sea territories, which in 1977 were extended to 200 miles from the coast, to the European Economic Community (EEC), made the Faroese skeptical toward a membership of EEC. The vital importance of the fishing industry for the Faroese economy and the decision to stay outside EEC gave the Faroe Islands an even more independent status within the Danish state. Consequently, Faroese authorities can relatively independently negotiate with independent states about fishing agreements and they can act relatively independent in some Foreign policy matters. In order to utilize the limited fish resources in Faroese waters and protect the sensitive Faroese economy from world marked fluctuations following the first oil crises in 1973, the Faroese governments during the 1980s undertook heavily to subsidize the fishing industry with the Faroese taxpayer's money. The consequence was a major economic crisis, which in 1992 forced the Faroese government to ask the Danish government for economic help. The Danish pecuniary help was extensive, but the condition was that the Danish government got control over the Faroese economy. The unemployment rate—an otherwise unknown pheromone in the Faroe Islands—grew to 24% and 13% of the population immigrated. The economy gradually recovered during the late 1990s, but the consequence was a major political crisis in the relations between Denmark and the Faroe Islands. A Faroese government coalition between the Peoples Party, the Republican Party and the Home Rule Party following the election in 1998 proclaimed their main goal to be to establish the Faroe Islands as an independent state with its own constitution —in a dominion relation to the Danish Crown. During the negotiations with the Danish government in 2000, the Faroese government also intended to reach an agreement about a gradual reduction of the Danish subsidies over 15 years, but the Danish government could not accept a transition period longer than 4 years. After four meetings, the negotiations ended in October 2000 without an agreement. The Faroese Prime Minister

(Løgmaður) cancelled because of this, two referendums, which should be in 2001, on a Faroese constitution and on the agreement with Denmark about, for example, the economic transition period. Instead, the Faroese government coalition - with authorization in the Home Rule Law—decided to take the responsibility for some expensive domestic areas. Consequently, the Danish state expenses in the Faroe Islands—approximately 1.300 million Danish Krona—were reduced with 366 million Danish Krona in 2002. In 1997, the Danish state expenses in the Faroe Islands were 20% of the Faroese GDP. In 2002, the number was about 10% (Sølvará, 2002, p. 383).

However, the sovereignty government lost the majority in the Faroese parliament in 2004, and even if the Faroese economy is strong and never has been more independent of Danish subsidies then now (2014–2019), there has never since been a majority for Faroese sovereignty in the Faroese parliament. Following the international economic crises in 2008, which only subsequently effected the Faroese economy, the unionist led Faroese government from 2011 negotiated with the Danish government about raising the subsidies with hundreds of millions to a price indexed pre-2002 level, but the Danish government only accepted that they were price indexed with a few millions from the 2011 level. Since then the political debate in the Faroe Islands about the Danish subsidies has mainly been about if they shall be price indexed or not, while the work with a constitution has continued until recently. The intention was to have a referendum about the constitution in 2018, but political disagreements and priorities effected that there has not yet been a referendum. The intention with a Faroese constitution is to establish the rights of the Faroese People and that the sovereignty issue is solely with the Faroese people. The origin to the work on the constitution is the political aftermath of the economic crises in the 1990s, but the problem is just as old as the Danish 1849 constitution, registered in the Faroe Islands in 1850. The Danish state authorities have ever since interpreted the constitution in such a way that it defines Denmark as a unitary state and that the legislative power according to the constitution is with the Danish parliament (Ross, 1980, p. 496). The constitution has been used as an argument against Faroese home rule. Attempts to change the constitution in order to authorize the Løgting legislative power were overlooked. The referendum in 1946 was defined as consultative, and the subsequent decisions of the Løgting based on the referendum were therefore illegal according to the unitary Danish interpretation of the constitution. Danish state authorities have—based on the constitution—defined the Home Rule Law as only a one-sided delegation of the Danish parliament's legislative power to the Løgting (Thorsteinsson & Rasmussen, 1999, p. 525). Moreover, the Danish state authorities hold the view that a specific Faroese constitution will only be accepted if it is corresponding with the Danish state constitution. However, the Danish government has accepted the current proposal for a Faroese constitution, but interestingly, the Faroese Unionist Party claimed that

the proposal in reality means Faroese secession from Denmark, despite the fact that the text explicitly reads that another referendum is necessary if the Faroe Islands is to become a sovereign state. The proposed Faroese constitutional text doesn't—if accepted at a referendum—establish a sovereign Faroese state, but, if accepted, the constitution places the authority to decide to establish a sovereign Faroese state with the Faroese people only.

These questions may not be of vital importance as the Danish state authorities—independent of who holds the Danish governmental power—also politically hold the view that they will respect a Faroese decision to establish an independent Faroese state. In addition, in political praxis the Faroese home rule authorities independent of formal interpretations of the constitution have the legislative and executive authority in the Faroe Islands. Interestingly, already in 1950, the Faroese judicial expert Edward Mitens (1889–1973) interpreted the Home Rule Law in broader historical context and argued that the Home Rule was an agreement, which recognized the Faroe Islands "partial state quality" (Mitens, 1950, p. 91). Anyway, the new Faroese coalition between the Unionist Party, the Peoples Party and the Centre Party, which took over in September 2019, when the Faroese economy was as strong as ever before, has no plans to continue the work with the Faroese constitution. This appears peculiar because the general political pattern since the Home Rule Law in 1948 has been that in economically good times the independence movement has been strong, while it has been weak in economically bad times.

7 The state of mind in the 21st century

The national movement in the Faroe Islands has occasionally succeeded to bring independence on the political agenda in the Faroe Islands. However, it mainly appears to be a consequence of external factors, for example, the Second World War and the political crises in the relations between the Faroe Islands and Denmark in the aftermath of the economic crises in the 1990s. In addition, the development in Faroese politics in the 21st century appears to indicate that even in economically good times the secessionist agenda fails to convince the majority of Faroese voters. The ultimate national goal of an independent Faroese state in a culturally homogenous Faroese society seems to be beyond reach.

The unionist Andras Samuelsen (1873–1954), who became the first Faroese prime minister in 1948 under the Home Rule Law, represented occasionally the Faroe Islands in the Danish parliament. In 1923, he said this in the Danish parliament: "Also the unionist people are Faroese and nationally minded Faroese, but we believe that our national peculiarities not only can be preserved, but that they only can be preserved in union with Denmark." (Translated from the Danish in

Sølvará, 2013, p. 196). This almost 100 year old, unionist—and national—view may indicate an explanation of the Faroese development in relation to nationalism.

Faroese late 19th century nationalism, which culturally became interested in the Faroese language, was inspired and partially supported from Denmark. However, at that time, at the beginning of the 19th century, when the Faroe Islands became a possession of the Danish king, the Faroese language was threatened by especially Danish language, but within the new democratic Danish state, Faroese language gradually could develop into the main cultural language in the Faroe Islands. The Faroese language is no longer a threatened language, and it certainly isn't threatened by Danish language. If anything threatens the Faroese language in the 21st century, then it would be the English language. A Faroese university, which with other institutions makes research in relevant Faroese issues on many fields—issues related to natural science, social science, and human science—was founded in 1965. Thus, the 19th and 20th centuries' struggle for establishing the Faroese language a space within a Danish-dominated cultural and linguistic context is over. Inspired by Andras Samuelsen, we may conclude that the establishment of the Faroese language was possible in cooperation with Denmark; maybe, it was only possible in a liberal democratic Danish context, and the challenges ahead are not from the Danish language, but they come from English, which through the social media dominates the youth.

Nobody can challenge the proposition that national Faroese culture and modern Faroese literacy, based on Sigurðsson's etymological orthography, is a remarkable success. However, any national standard, which is constructed or invented with the intention to build bridges across local variations, will by necessity loose or suppress some elements in the original variations in local cultures. If we look at the victorious Faroese etymological orthography, we may conclude that its advantage is that it embraces very well the large number of Faroese dialects, but the cost is that it creates a difference between the spoken and the more difficult written language. More importantly, since the Home Rule Law, Faroese politics, authorities, and institutions have been concentrated in the capital of Tórshavn, while the fishing industry is concentrated outside the capital. Consequently, the educated Faroese elite is concentrated in Tórshavn, where many of the governmentally financed research institutions are situated. This tendency has, since the home rule, created a division between the administrative center and the industrial areas outside the capital. In the recent years, it has become obvious that old disputes between the administrative capital and the industrial areas have become the major axe in Faroese politics, while the secession-union and, to some degree, the left-right axe have become secondary. However, the political left-right axe can be interpreted as a part of the division between the largely politically left oriented capital Tórshavn and the largely right oriented industrial areas in the north. Disagreements about the distribution of wealth between geographical areas and population groups in

the Faroe Islands is more tense than disagreements about the relations between the Faroe Islands and Denmark. This has been obvious since 2013, when discussions about how to distribute (allocate or sell) very valuable mackerel quotas to the fishing industry were happening in the Løgting. The disputes inside the Faroe Islands remain just as important as the disputes between Denmark and the Faroe Islands. In conclusion, nationalism has not succeeded to establish national coherence in any secessionist interpretation of the concept in the Faroe Islands, which is one of the world's most ethnically homogeneous, egalitarian, and prosperous societies.

If we look at the political objectives of nationalism, we may conclude that many of them have found their practical solution within the context of the home rule, where it has been possible gradually to widen the maneuvering possibilities of the Faroese authorities. If not in formality, then in reality the Faroese parliament and government is responsible for the Faroe Islands, legally, politically, culturally, and economically. The limits in Foreign policy are widened during the home rule period and appear to be widened even more in the future independent of the political color of the Faroese or Danish governments. The Faroe Islands have today their own representations (embassies and representatives/ambassadors in the capital of several independent states (Copenhagen, London, Brussels, Moscow, Beijing, and in 2020 also in Tel Aviv), where important Faroese interests are, but the Faroese "embassies" are for practical and principal reasons, connected to and under the auspices of the Danish embassies.

There are of course limits in especially relations to the international community that the Faroese home rule authorities can't pass, for example, membership of the United Nations and other international organizations for sovereign states. On the other hand, the home rule system has despite the Danish view that Denmark is a unitary state given the Faroe Islands, which historically belongs to the West Norse Scandinavian tradition, that is, Iceland and Norway, who are outside the European Union (EU), the opportunity to stay outside the EU, where the independent East Norse countries, that is, Denmark and Sweden, are members. This Faroese peculiarity, which we may compare with the position of the none-EU members Isle of Man and Guernsey under the British Crown, challenges the concept of a Danish unitary state. During the Crimean crises in 2014, when Russia annexed Ukrainian Crim, the EU decided to implement trade restrictions on Russia. These restrictions did not affect the Faroe Islands as a none-EU member. However, at the same time, the Faroe Islands was in a major conflict with the coastal states, some of them members of the EU, about how to share the mackerel quotas. In this situation, the EU, where Denmark is member, also decided to implement restrictions on the Faroese fish export to EU. In this remarkable situation, the unitary Danish state seemed to be in conflict with itself, but what made the situation even more extraordinary was that the Faroese prime minister in this sensitive situation travelled to Moscow with the intention to increase the Faroese fish export to Russia. This sensitive situ-

ation challenged the concept of a unitary Danish state and demonstrated the wide degree of maneuverability that the Faroe Islands has within the home rule system. The coastal states eventually reached an agreement about to share the mackerel quotas, but the major Faroese increase in the fish export to Russia appears be a long-term consequence of the conflict. However, this extensive Faroese maneuverability in foreign relations also demonstrates the potential for national conflict between Denmark and the Faroe Islands if/when the interests of the countries are conflicting. Another area where conflicting interests could generate national conflicts between Denmark and the Faroe Islands is the growing international interest in the Artic following the climate changes. The North Atlantic Faroe Islands and especially Greenland may as Artic nations not have the same interests as the actual non-artic mainland and EU oriented Denmark.

Apart from extensive maneuverability in most domestic Faroese (and foreign) matters, the Faroese people have advantages as part of the Danish state. Economically the Faroese receive subsidies from the Danish state to run the welfare systems. Vital institutions, court, police, financial control with the banks, the monetary system, and citizenship are still under Danish authority. Further, to overcome the deep economic crises in the 1950s and 1990s, economic and political support from Denmark was required, but the global financial crises in 2008 demonstrated the challenges, which small states with their own monetary system face in a modern globalized world. The Faroese could observe how the Icelandic bank system and economy collapsed, while the Icelandic state of 1918 could do little but watch. The Faroese banks were not as vulnerable as the Icelandic who had acted remarkably offensive on the international arena, but in 2010 was one of the two great Faroese banks about to collapse. However, the difference was that while the Icelandic banks were on their own, the Faroese bank system was included in the Danish bank system, Financial Stability, which saved the bank from collapse. Thus, while the independent Icelandic economy collapsed during the global financial crises, the Faroese bank system and Faroese economy remained stable because of the home rule system.

Following the smooth solution of the bank crises, the unionists won the election in 2011 and for the first time since 2002 intended a government to increase the subsidies from Denmark. In addition, since then Faroese politics appears to have changed in a way that indicates that the secession-union axe has become secondary in Faroese politics. During most of the home rule period (1948–2015), at least one of the political parties from the former government has always continued in the following government. However, that changed in 2015, when coalitions in 2015 and 2019 were established between parties, which none were part of the former coalition. This indicates that Danish bloc politics (e.g., left- or right-wing governments) may be on the way in the Faroe Islands also, but the important thing is that the two major independence-minded parties, the Peoples Party and the Republican

Party, who historically used to constitute the strong Faroese independence wing, are in opposite blocs. This indicates that the major issues in Faroese politics are questions about industry, social issues, and local issues, while the question about establishing an independent Faroese state is about to become a secondary issue. Only a crisis in the relations between Denmark and the Faroe Islands, which appears very unlikely for the time being, can change this tendency, while the Faroese voters and parties concentrate their attention about other subjects, for example, the welfare society, how to organize the industry and distribution of public wealth and public services across the Faroe Islands.

Most of the Faroese voters appear to think—despite the Danish insistence on a unitary Danish state—that the home rule system through the Løgting in almost any practical sense allows them freedom to govern the Faroe Islands, as they want them to be governed. Anyway, it does not appear to be Danish politics, which prevents the Faroese politicians from addressing demanding challenges in the Faroese society. In 2018, Magni Arge (1959–), the Faroese republican representative in the Danish parliament invited Carles Puigdemont (1962–), the former Catalan president and secession leader, to speak in the Danish parliament and to the Faroe Islands. Since the referendum in Catalonia on October 1, 2017, about secession from Spain, Puigdemont had lived in exile in Belgium. Arge's intention was to attract political attention on the Spanish governments' violent behavior against the Catalan secessionists who von the referendum, which the Spanish government had declared illegal. Additionally, he wanted to through light on the issue of self-determination and to promote the Faroese secessionists political struggle for Faroese independence. The Faroese unionists on the other hand used the visits as an argument for the great extent of freedom that Faroese secessionists—in contrast to Catalan secessionists—have within the Danish state to work politically toward their ultimate political goal. The Faroese secessionists lost the following election to the Danish parliament, where two unionists now represent the Faroe Islands. Nothing indicates that Faroese voters, Danish citizens outside the EU who don't pay taxes to Denmark and travel with EU passports, for the time being will offer the rights that they have in the Danish state for independence. For a small country with a small population and a sensitive economy, it can be an advantage to be under the auspices of a greater democratic state, especially when the small part has achieved extensive political liberties. Only conflicts between the Faroe Islands and Denmark related to conflicting interests in the EU or in the Artic appear to have the potential to generate a real national conflict between Denmark and the Faroe Islands. Now Faroese voters don't appear interested in replacing their internal freedom with full sovereignty. Without full sovereignty, the Faroese appear to have freedom to be and act as Faroese.

The Faroe Islands may well be described as a semi-independent society with "partial state quality." To be and not to be an independent state can sometimes be an advantage for small populations.

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Divided Belgium: Flemish nationalism and the rise of pro-separatist politics 5

CATHERINE XHARDEZ

Flanders occupies a prominent place in the rise of pro-separatist politics, which currently characterizes several regions in Europe (Scotland, Catalonia, Basque Country, etc.). In the last decade, the Flemish pro-independence camp has been electorally strengthened, with two key political parties at the forefront of Belgium's politics: the right-wing *Nieuwe Vlaamse Alliantie* (New Flemish Alliance; henceforth, the N-VA) and the far-right *Vlaams Belang* (Flemish Interest; henceforth, the VB). For example, in the federal elections of 2010, almost half of the Flemish electorate was convinced by political parties advocating for the independence of Flanders. The pro-independence camp combined the votes for the VB (12.6%), N-VA (28.6%) as well as for a smaller right-wing populist party *Lijst De Decker* (3.7%) (Huysseune, 2017, p. 352). In the federal elections of 2019, the most successful party was still the N-VA (which, although remaining by far the largest party in Flanders with 25.5% of the vote, lost nearly 7% compared to the 2014 elections). Yet, the N-VA is now followed by the VB, which had the most remarkable result by tripling its 2014 vote share from 5.8% to 18.6% in 2019, almost back to its historic score of 19.0% in the 2007 federal election (Biard, Blaise, Faniel, Istasse, & Sägesser, 2019, p. 56).[1]

These excellent electoral results of pro-independence parties can only be understood in the light of a thorough study of the Belgian case and an in-depth analysis of the evolution Flemish nationalism. First, it is worth noting that Flemish nationalism is historically rooted in Belgium's foundation as a unitary and French-speaking state in 1830 (Witte, Craeybeckx, & Meynen, 2000). This situation fueled the so-called Flemish movement (*Vlaamse Beweging*) (Deprez & Vos, 1998) which not only struggled to defend language but also was a social, democratic and economic movement to foster respect for the middle and upper classes of society. The "Flemish movement" is broader than a language nationalism led by the oppressed Flemish minority: it also included cultural and economic dimensions (De Wever, 2013; De Wever, Verdoodt, & Vrints, 2015). While this movement has been central in the development of Flemish nationalism and its current actors, nationalist mobilizations—notwithstanding the electoral results of separatist parties—have progressively declined due to "the realization of the core demands of the Flemish

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[1]For a complete overview of the electoral results in the Flemish districts since 1946 see Figure 1, which is presented in Section 3 of this chapter.

movement, the approval of language laws and particularly the establishment of a language border (1962–1963), and the transformation of the unitary Belgian state into a federal system from the 1970s on" (Huysseune, 2017, p. 353).[2] Yet, any nationalist or independentist claim from Flemish elites is still today somewhat rooted in the Flemish movement and its political transformations, underlining the necessity to re-incorporate nationalism into its political context (Hossay, 1996) and to take into account the uniqueness of the Belgian framework (von Busekist, 2012).

Second, the more recent evolution of Flemish nationalism can only be understood by taking into account Belgium's federalization process (Xhardez et al., 2020) and its capacity to hold together a bipolar, multinational, and "divided" society (Deschouwer, 2012). Within a few decades, Belgium has been tremendously transformed through a quickly evolving, bipolar and centrifugal federalization process (Swenden, Brans, & De Winter, 2006). Belgium can be considered as a "holding together" federation (Swenden & Jans, 2006) as the state was originally unitary and subsequently became federal by devolving jurisdiction to subnational entities. Flemish sub-state nationalism has been one of the driving forces of this federalization process, along with economic inequalities between Flanders and Wallonia. In parallel, to understand the Flemish situation, it is useful to distinguish sub-state nationalists from sub-state separatists: with the federalization of the Belgian state, sub-state nationalist claims for recognition and autonomy were satisfied, while sub-state separatists still aim at transforming Flanders into an independent state. As underlined by Baycan, although both groups agreed on the federalization of the Belgian state, disagreements arose when the federalization is established: "the claims for greater autonomy and full independence continue for separatism, but not necessarily for sub-state nationalism" (Baycan, 2016, p. 86). While the first steps of federalizations played out along identity lines, other interests also arose: on the one hand, autonomy enlargements were still motivated by questions of identity in Flanders ("we want to do it ourselves because we are different"); on the other hand, considerations of efficiency and economic/fiscal interests also started to appear ("we want to do it ourselves because we do it better") (Erk, 2003). Consequently, the current evolution of Flemish nationalism cannot be separated from the federalist debate in Belgium.

Third, the Flemish situation is characterized by a "paradox" (Huysseune, 2017) as, despite the electoral success of separatist parties and in contrast to other European cases like Scotland or Catalonia, there is only a marginal minority that favors independence (Liñeira & Cetrà, 2015, p. 263). Regarding national identity[3], data

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[2]According to Huysseune (2017, p. 353), Flanders consequently differs from other European cases of ethnoregionalism (Catalonia, the Basque country, Scotland) as "the pro-independence fervour of civil society and the intelligentsia characteristic of other European cases [...] is altogether absent in Flanders."

[3]The national identity in this case is measured thanks to the so-called Moreno question, which allows the respondents for identifying to dual identities.

have shown that a large majority of Flemish inhabitants continue to express a Belgian identity: for example, in 2014, 40% of Flemings identify themselves "as much Flemings as Belgians," 23% even felt "only Belgians," while only 8.7% expressed Flemish identity in the strongest way (Deschouwer„ et al., 2015, pp. 156–157). Despite a lukewarm attitude of Flemish people toward independence, Huysseune highlights that the success of pro-independence parties (like the N-VA and the VB) can be seen "as one of the consequences of regionalization of political identities in Belgium and the promotion of a Flemish regional government" (Huysseune, 2017, p. 352). It is not possible to understand today's Flemish nationalism without emphasizing N-VA's success in Flanders and especially its political influence. Yet, to understand its hegemonic position, it is important to take into account several other factors than its independentist claims such as: its rejection of interregional solidarity, the popularity of its leader, its style of a new and anti-establishment party, its more offensive discourse on economic and institutional matters, its right-wing style of governance emphasizing the necessity of responsibility, and, last but not least, its change of tone regarding immigration (e.g., Abts, Dalle Mulle, & Laermans, 2019; Adam & Deschouwer, 2016; Beyens, Deschouwer, van Haute, & Verthé, 2017; Maly, 2016; Xhardez, 2019). Moreover, when in the past the N-VA had usually chosen to distinguish itself from the far-right, recent events have shown that it might not be the case anymore as the party has basically increasingly adopted "codes" and discourses of the far-right.

If Flemish nationalism is still alive today, it has rather been renewed or used by political actors than fostered by identity feelings or nationalist mobilizations on the ground. Consequently, this study of Flemish nationalism (especially regarding the last decade) will focus on political actors and elites. This chapter is organized along the different dimensions previously highlighted. The first section details Belgium's transformation into a federal state to demonstrate how the institutional context and the federalization process have tremendously influenced the journey of Flemish nationalism. The second section offers an historical background of Flemish nationalism roots with a study of the Flemish movement, pointing out to the main events that structured sub-state nationalism as well as sub-state separatism in Belgium. The third section focuses on Flemish party system and politics: it presents the main political parties that evolve on the Flemish side and explores the evolution of the pro-independence political actors (*Volksunie*, *Vlaams Blok/Belang*, N-VA). The fourth section proposes a more in-depth study of the key player of pro-separatist politics in Flanders today: the N-VA. The conclusion reflects on Belgium's recurrent deadlocks and the tenets for Flemish pro-separatist politics.

1 Belgium's evolution into a Federal State

While the Belgian state created in 1831 was a unitary state with some decentralized powers, Belgium has, in the last decades, evolved toward a fully-fledged and multi-layered federal state. Since the 1970s, the country has gone through six extensive state reforms (1970, 1980, 1988–1989, 1993, 2000–2001, 2012–2014) (Bernard, Lys, & Romainville, 2020; Romainville, 2015), culminating in Article 1 of the 1993 Belgian Constitution, officially stipulating that "Belgium is a federal state, composed of communities and regions". The country has thus evolved from a unitary to a fully-fledged, but very complex, federal state, which grants substantive autonomy to subnational levels (Deschouwer, 2012; Mabille, 2011). The successive stages of the federalization process granted political autonomy to six federated authorities: three regions and three communities. These "meso-level" entities are constitutionally recognized, each with exclusive legislative and executive powers over the competencies that were given to them (Peeters, 2007, p. 31). The three official *regions* are organized according to a territorial principle, dividing the country into Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels. These regions have jurisdiction over policies related to territorial issues such as transportation, economic development, housing, area-development planning, and employment. Conversely, the three official *communities* are based on a personality principle and organized along linguistic lines: the Flemish Community (Dutch-speaking), the French Community (French-speaking), and the German Community (German-speaking). The communities have jurisdiction over policies related to personal matters such as education, culture, media, and some social services.

Therefore, Belgium's political architecture mixes territorial and personality principles and is based on two types of member states (communities and regions) at the subnational level, which partly overlap territorially (Swenden et al., 2006). Consequently, "much of the complexity the Belgian federal state is known for is due to this double-layered structure" (Peeters, 2007, p. 31). Moreover, asymmetries exist between the subnational levels in terms of jurisdiction as well as structure (Meier, 2020). For instance, the institutions of the Flemish Community and the Flemish Region have merged (resulting in a single Flemish parliament and a single Flemish government), whereas the French Community and Walloon Region have not. Beyond the institutional complexity, the transformation of the Belgian state was politically complex, lengthy and difficult with periods of government turmoil as well as of deep crisis. Following the 2010 federal elections, it took 540 days to have a government and an agreement on the sixth state reform (Xhardez, 2012), mainly due to identity politics and tensions between Dutch-speaking elites (who wanted a larger degree of autonomy) and French-speaking (who were opposed to more decentralization, especially in fiscal and social-security matters). Today, inter-community tensions are still very high, especially as, following the 2019 elections, the process to form a Belgian government was again stalled with a vac-

uum of almost 10 months of negotiation times for government formation[4] (Faniel & Sägesser, 2020). Indeed, while the COVID-19 pandemic was spreading around the world, Belgium was still without a proper federal government; yet, to face the pandemic, an emergency, minority government (yet with full powers) was finally formed (Wilmès II) in March 2020 (Ganty, 2020). However, it was at the cost of complex and unique political and legal maneuvers amid the COVID-19 health crisis (Bouhon et al., 2020; Clarenne & Romainville, 2020).

Going back in time, although different dynamics were at play in transforming Belgium into a federal state, one of the main drivers of this process have been Flemish claims for more autonomy and recognition, driven by nationalist mobilizations. Belgium has always been a divided society, with strong religious and social tensions (Mabille, 2011). Yet, the most recent and acute tension which had taken the lead since the end of the Second World War was the linguistic divide that opposes the French-speaking and the Dutch communities (von Busekist, 2012). In addition, through the years, Flemish elites also started to emphasize not only linguistic difference but also socio-political differences (regarding policy preferences, Wallonia tends to be more leftist and Flanders more rightist (Swyngedouw, 2012)) and economic and fiscal differences (Cetrà, 2019). In Belgium, federalism has been both a solution to tensions as well as a cause of divisions, illustrating the "paradox of federalism" which can both accommodate or exacerbate ethnic divisions (Erk & Anderson, 2009). On the one hand, federalism has been a way to ease tensions and "keep together" a divided and multinational state. On the other hand, for example, each state reform has followed path-dependent centrifugal dynamics, with more and more jurisdiction devolved to the subnational authorities at the detriment of the federal level (Stouthuysen & Jans, 2011). In addition, the federalization has contributed to undermine Belgian traditional consociational problem-solving mechanisms (Reuchamps & Caluwaerts, 2014; Sinardet 2011). Beyond this short overview of the federalization process, it is worth noting that nationalist mobilizations and institutional evolutions have radically changed the center-periphery situation that characterized the early Belgian state and led to an in-depth transformation of the state, especially from the 1960s. To understand the origins and the development of Flemish nationalism, a more historical perspective is needed to retrace the genesis of the so-called "Flemish movement."

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[4]To be precise, Belgium did not have a proper federal government since December 2018 as the previous government felt at the end of 2018. The political elites decided to install a "caretaker government" until the elections, which were planned in May 2019. Yet, even in the aftermath of the federal elections, the negotiations were very difficult and tense. At the end, the country had been ruled by a "caretaker government" for 15 months (December 2018–March 2020), which was limited to urgent matters, public affairs and day-to-day management of pending cases (the so-called *gouvernement en affaires courantes* or *regering in lopende zaken* in Belgium).

2 Historical background: The seeds of the Flemish movement

Flemish nationalism originated in the *Vlaams Beweging* (Flemish movement) (Deprez & Vos, 1998), which was a broad movement of economic, social, political, and cultural emancipation associating several groups ranging ideologically from the left to the right (De Wever, 2013; De Wever et al., 2015; Wils, 2009). The Belgian state that emerged in 1830, following the unionist revolt against the Netherlands, enshrined French as the sole official language (von Busekist, 1998). The Flemish movement challenged the dominant position of the French-speaking elites in the 19th century, which imposed French as a working language in the administration, education, justice, and military. The Flemish middle class (*Vlaamse subbourgeoisie*), which then constituted the hard core of the Flemish base, saw the exclusive power of Francophone elites as an obstacle to the realization of its aspirations (De Wever, Verdoodt, & Vrints, 2016, p. 11; Léo, 1970).

The rise of the Flemish movement was directly related to language, although socio-economic considerations fostered its gradual growth (de Vroede, 1975). Initially, the Flemish movement was calling for official recognition of the existence of two languages in Belgium and the granting of language rights (Deschouwer, 2012, p. 43). Language claims also aimed at strengthening the economic, social and cultural capital of the middle classes, which felt threatened and humiliated by Francophone elites who treated Dutch as a "popular language considered as socially inferior"*[5] (De Wever et al., 2016, p. 15). In the second half of the 19th century, the Flemish movement supported the option of bilingualism for the Belgian state and had no "anti-Belgian" feelings (Deschouwer, 1999; Warland, 2008, p. 64).

The introduction of universal male plural suffrage in 1893 allowed the Flemish movement for acquiring a political and territorial base (Erk, 2002, p. 502). The following decades saw the growth of this movement, which affirmed the distinct character of the Flemish people. In 1898, the "equality law" (also known as the Coremans-De Vriendt Act) established two official languages in Belgium: French and Dutch (Deschouwer, 2012, p. 34). At the turn of the 20th century, the option of generalized bilingualism for Belgium was replaced by the claim of unilingualism for Flanders (van Velthoven, 2014). Although the Flemish movement was originally focused on the restructuration of the Belgian state and nation, it then transformed into a group expressing Flemish identity as such (Béland & Lecours, 2012, p. 162). Beyond language that was initially at stake, a strong relationship was progressively built and reinforced between language, territory and identity (Deschouwer, 1999).

The 1914–1918 War served as a catalyst for Flemish nationalism because, as underlined by von Busekist, the unjust composition of the regiment (there were four

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[5]The asterisk (*) indicates that the quotation has been translated by the author from French or Dutch to English.

times as many Flemings as Walloons, yet the leadership was exclusively French-speaking) and "because of the activism of a fraction of Flemings who seized the opportunity of the war, a moment of great national fragility, to make their demands visible and oppose government policy"* (von Busekist, 1998, p. 174). The perception of Flemish subjugation at the hand of French-speaking officers in the Great War is both a social reality and a myth created by a new generation of Flemings (Luykx, 1978): this story played a pivotal role among the rising social and political Flemish organizations in the immediate post-war years (Shelby, 2016, pp. 42–43).

At the same time, a new political trend emerged with the rise of anti-Belgian Flemish nationalists, who agitated for a separate Flemish state. For this reason, "it is only after World War I that Flemish mobilisation, constituting demands for cultural and linguistic equality, transformed into a political national movement in support of self-rule" (Adam & Deschouwer, 2016, p. 1294). During the inter-war period, Flemish nationalism expanded its base with the introduction of simple male suffrage in 1918. The Flemings, who outnumbered the Walloons, converted their demographic weight into political weight. After the First World War, Belgium's first regionalist party, *Frontpartij*, was also created with a first attempt to bring the Flemish Movement to party politics (Deschouwer, 2009, p. 563; Witte et al., 2000).

Gradually, the nationalist movement, which has been steadily growing, obtained certain concessions from the Belgian State. In April 1930, the University of Ghent became a properly Flemish institution, allowing Flemings to finally access higher education in their own language. The regional linguistic homogeneity was legally recognized in 1932, after a century of negotiations (von Busekist, 1998, p. 246). Flemish nationalism mainly developed among the Catholic population, crystallizing the political divide between Catholicism and secular forces (De Wever et al., 2016, p. 26; Gevers, 1998, p. 111; Vos, 1998, p. 63). To counter the rise of socialism, the Catholic Church used the Flemish nationalist movement to try to immobilize anti-clericalism. As explained by Jan Erk (2002, pp. 511–512), "the Church used divisions of class, religion and language to fight the anticlerical alliance of liberals and socialists"*.

During the Second World War, the more rightist successor to the *Frontpartij*, the *Vlaams Nationaal Verbond* (VNV, Flemish National League), which wanted to achieve Flanders' independence (Van Haute & Pilet, 2006, p. 298), endorsed ideas closer to Nazism, fascism, and anti-Semitism (Witte & Craeybeckx, 1987, p. 228). The party also administratively, politically as well as militarily collaborated with the Nazis (De Wever, 1994; Hasquin, 1988, p. 49). According to Mabille (2011, p. 239), Flemish nationalism greatly supported attitudes and opinions favorable to the German occupier. The VNV disappeared after the Liberation because of its collaboration with the German occupiers (De Wever, 1994); yet, "it thwarted any new political expression of the Flemish movement" (Van Haute & Pilet, 2006, p. 298). Indeed, this episode limited the potential of Flemish nationalism in the immediate

post-war period (Deschouwer, 2011, p. 84). While in 1954, a new regionalist and separatist political party was founded (*Volksunie*, which means People's Union; henceforth VU), it initially remained excluded from the political scene.

The 1950s and 1960s saw the escalation of the tensions between the Flemish and the French-speaking communities, with several central events, such as the Royal Question (which led to the abdication of the King Leopold III, despite the opposition of a majority of Flemings); the second School War (featuring the opposition of the Flemish movement to the Liberal-Socialist coalition); the language laws of 1962–1963 (introducing the "language frontier" in 1963); and the crisis at the University of Leuven (which ended in its division in 1967) (see, e.g., Blommaert, 2011; Busekist, 2012; Deschouwer, 2012; Mabille, 2011; Witte et al., 2000). These political crises and events led to a radical transformation of Belgian political party systems (see Section 3) and also fostered the federalization of the Belgian state previously described. While language and culture remained key mobilizing elements of Flemish nationalism, a new institutional dimension appeared through the gradual federalization of the Belgian state and the rise of new debates related to jurisdiction and autonomy for the different levels of government. Indeed, even more than the Flemish movement previously did, the newly founded and dedicated Flemish institutions contributed to the strengthening of the Flemish identity and stimulated nationalism in Flanders, especially through different political crises that punctuated the 1980s and 1990s (Béland & Lecours 2012, pp. 174–175; Lecours, 2001, 2002).

To conclude, the desire to reverse the linguistic and cultural iniquity that initially characterized the Belgian state was the driving force behind Flemish nationalism, with the main claim being the redistribution of political powers as compensation for past injustices (Erk, 2002, p. 503). This historical background demonstrates how the balance of powers completely shifted through the years, with a reversal of the center-periphery positions of both groups (De Winter, 2004, p. 4). Linguistically, Dutch became an official language and acquired equal footing with French. Politically, Flemish voters and elites became a large political majority—thanks to the evolution of the electoral system and their demographic importance. Economically, Flanders expanded while the Walloon economy declined, also reversing the former economic positions of both regions.

3 Party system and sub-state nationalist and separatist political actors

To better understand the evolution of Flemish nationalism and pro-separatist politics, brief insights into the political party landscape, systems, and actors are needed. Belgium's party system is regionalized along linguistic lines and divided into a Flemish and a Francophone party system; in other words, they are non-state-wide

parties (i.e., there are no Belgium-wide parties anymore[6]). In the 1960s and 1970s, traditional political parties separated along linguistic lines—even before Belgium's institutional transformation into a federal state. Moreover, except for Brussels, the electorate of one side of the linguistic border cannot vote for political parties of the other side (Pilet, 2005), even though the federal government is composed of political parties from both communities (De Winter, Swyngedouw, & Dumont, 2006). The emergence of a two-party system (with multiple political parties on both sides) (Brack & Pilet, 2010; Deschouwer, Pilet, & Van Haute, 2017) and the absence of a federal electoral district (where parties of both communities would compete) (Deschouwer & Van Parijs, 2013) have led to "the transformation of two separate classes at the community level and the virtual non-existence of a 'Belgian' political class" (Huysseune, 2017, p. 356). The division of political parties according to linguistic lines provides political actors very few incentives for pursuing interests common to both of the community, but rather community-specific interests. Nevertheless, the parties are integrated vertically and are not only regional: the Flemish and Francophone parties are present in regional as well as federal elections and parliaments. Furthermore, the Flemish and Walloon political landscapes have evolved very differently in recent decades in terms of the number of parties and their electoral successes (De Winter et al., 2006; Swyngedouw, 2012). The separated political dynamics are reinforced by a strong separation between the two community-based public spheres, media as well as civil society organizations.

In addition to understanding Belgian institutions, these insights demonstrate how much political community-based dynamics are important to understand Flemish nationalism and the current success of pro-separatist actors. Consequently, this section presents the main political parties in Flanders[7] and their electoral evolution (see Figure 1): on the one hand, Flemish "traditional" parties; on the other hand, more recent and "emerging" political parties, with a focus on pro-independence political parties. The brief presentation of traditional parties represents a good reminder that they have been the main actors of Flemish nationalism, while underlining that "it is possible to be a sub-state national without being a sub-state separatist, although the reverse is not possible" (Baycan, 2016, p. 86). Moreover, as underlined by Loobuyck and Jacobs (2010, p. 31), a kind of "democratic cultural nationalism" can be spotted in almost all Flemish political parties: "All the Flemish parties, and thus not only the explicit nationalist parties, are in favour of more political autonomy and use arguments from a nationalist discourse to protect the Flemish identity, language, territory and culture—especially against the Francophones."

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[6]However, the far-left (PVDA) and the ecologists (Groen-Ecolo) have tried to build a relationship and collaborate beyond the linguistic border.

[7]Due to their limited electoral results (less than 10% of vote share) and their very weak relationship with Flemish nationalism, the Green party (*Groen*) and the far-left Labour Party (*Partij van de Arbeid*, PVDA) are not presented in this section.
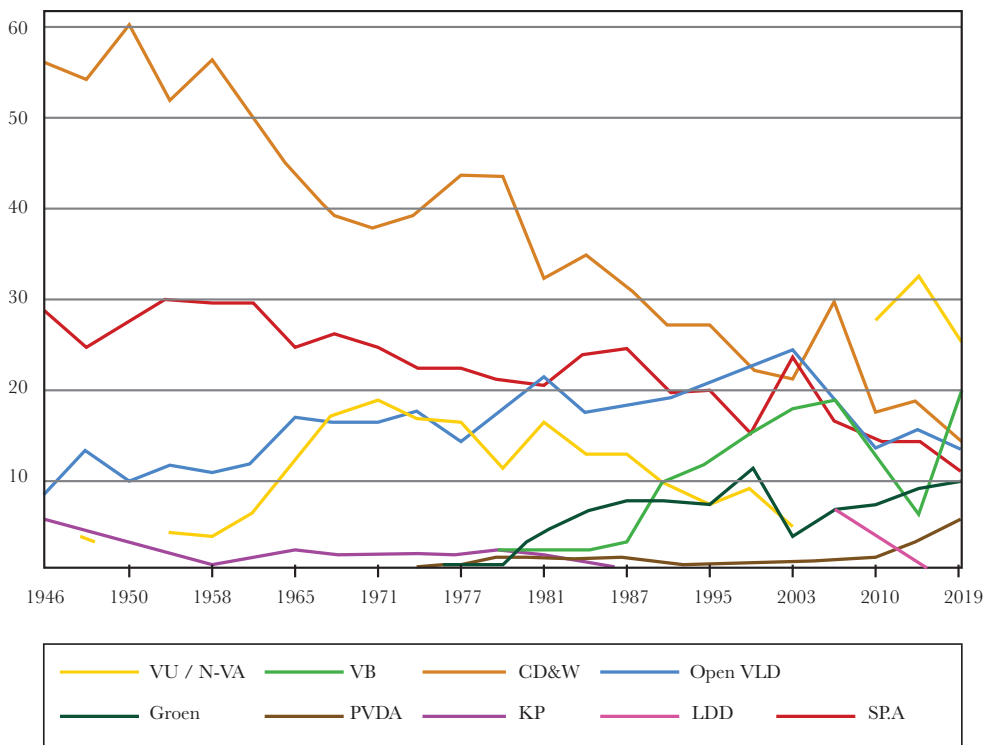
Fig. 1: Election of the House of Representatives (1946–2019). Evolution of the results of the main political parties in the Flemish districts in percentage of valid votes (Biard et al., 2019, p. 59).

In addition, all traditional parties have been impacted by the dissolution, in 2001, of a major sub-state separatist and regionalist party: the *Volksunie*. Indeed, in the aftermath of VU's dissolution traditional parties absorbed part of the legacy of Flemish regionalists as they welcomed VU's former elites or formed alliances/cartels with groups rising of the ashes of the VU (spirit and N-VA). Following the presentation of Flemish traditional parties (Section 3.1), this section details the evolution of the main pro-separatist parties: the rise and fall of the regionalist party *Volksunie* and its successors (N-VA and spirit) (Section 3.2); as well as the influence of the far-right through the *Vlaams Blok/Belang* (Section 3.3).

3.1 The traditional parties: Christian, Liberal and Socialist families

The traditional party families (Christian, Liberal, and Socialist) have a long history that goes back to the 19th century and originated in Belgium's initial cleavages: the Church-State and the Owner-Worker cleavages (Frognier, 2007). While these traditional political parties contributed to Belgium's political life as a unitary state,

these three parties split along the linguistic border between 1968 and 1978.[8] Although these party families cultivated links (especially in the past) (Deschouwer et al., 2017), they became separated and autonomous entities—operating at a different scale. It is why there is no more state-wide party in Belgium[9], which complicates the relationship between the different parts of the country (Deschouwer & Van Parijs, 2013). Since their split, these parties have had different destinies on the Flemish side, sometimes turbulent, and all punctuated by successive name changes.

The Flemish Christian party, represented by the CVP (*Christelijke Volkspartij*) and, after 2001, by the CD&V (*Christen-Democratisch en Vlaams*), has dominated Flanders' (and Belgium's) political landscape for a long time, both from an electoral perspective (vote seeking) and in terms of the ability to participate in and lead governments (office seeking) (Van Haute, 2011). As pointed out by Erk (2002, p. 511): "The Flemish Christian Democrats have historically dominated Flemish nationalism and have been a major force in the federalisation process of the last fifty years."* Regarding its ideology, the party clearly refers in its name to Christian Democracy[10] and is considered as center-right, although its positions vary, depending on the subject, between center-left (socio-economic center-left) and center-right (conservatism, periphery and authoritarianism) (Van Haute, 2011, p. 58). The early 1960s marked the beginning of its electoral decline. In 1999, for the first time, it was no longer the largest Flemish party in the country at the federal level—which was a major change in the Flemish political realm. In order to counter this situation, the Christian Democrats undertook an identity reorientation, both by insisting on Flemish claims for autonomy and by endorsing Christian values (Delwit, 2011, p. 26). In 2001, they changed their name (CD&V—*Christen-Democratisch & Vlaams*) and decided to promote "confederalism." In 2004, they set up a cartel with the N-VA, one of the successors of the *Volksunie* (VU), which was finally broken up in 2008. Today, they are still electorally weakened.

The Liberal family is represented in Flanders by the VLD (*Vlaamse Liberalen en Democraten*), which replaced the PVV (*Partij voor Vrijheid en Voortuigang*) in 1992 (Dedecker, 2011). The party was then completely restructured and enlarged (Delwit, 2011, p. 27). The VLD chose to accentuate its Flemish character and its regional claims, which allowed for opening its ranks to former activists and leaders form the non-conservative right-wing of the VU (*Volksunie*). Yet, it remains, compared to other Flemish political parties, a relatively moderate force on language issues. From a socio-economic perspective, its program is neo-liberal and promotes

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[8]Each party family split into a Dutch-speaking and French-speaking unit: in 1968, the Christians separated into PSC (*Parti social-chrétien*) and CVP (*Christelijke Volkspartij*); in 1972, the Liberals into PRL (*Parti réformateur libéral*) and PVV (*Partij voor Vrijheid and Vooruitgang*); in1978, the Socialists into PS (*Parti socialiste*) and SP (*Socialistische Partij*).

[9]More recent parties (such as the ecologists or the extreme right) have followed the same path.

[10]The history of Christian democracy in Belgium is closely linked to the Flemish movement. For this doctrine and the Christian Democratic parties, see van Kersbergen (1994) and Beke (2003).

a direct relationship between the citizen and the State. The VLD offers the classic attributes of the contemporary right. In 2007, the VLD joined forces in a cartel with two small neo-liberal groups, which gave rise to the Open VLD. The Flemish liberal stance is complex because the Open VLD has to face new competitors on the right of the political spectrum: the far-right with the *Vlaams Belang* (VB), but also other right-wing parties such as the N-VA and *Lijst Dedecker*.[11]

The Flemish socialist family is much weaker than its French-speaking counterpart in Wallonia and struggles to embody a strong social democratic movement in Flanders. The electoral performance of the Flemish socialists was seriously affected in the 1990s and 2000s. In 2001, the SP (*Socialistische Partij*) added the "a" (which stand for "anders" or "different") and became sp.a (*Socialistische Partij Anders* and later *Sociaal Progressief Alternatief*) (Deschouwer, 2004, p. 196). In so doing, the party wished to open up to people from civil society as well as to the progressive separatist movement coming from the VU: *spirit*. This new name also reveals its wish to build a great left-wing Flemish and progressive movement (Dandoy, 2011, p. 83). The cartel between sp.a and the regionalist party spirit finally ended in 2008, leading different political elites to join the sp.a. The position of the socialists in the Flemish party system is ambivalent. On the one hand, they are rather weak electorally: they have progressively lost a good part of the traditional electorate and are struggling in the Flemish political landscape where the institutional evolution of the Belgian state and tensions between groups are central (Delwit, 2011, p. 23). On the other hand, the sp.a has participated in many federal and Flemish governments.

3.2 The Volksunie: Inheritance (spirit, N-VA) and dispersal

The *Volksunie*, a Flemish regionalist party, was founded in 1954: its electoral platform fostered Belgium's transformation into a federal state. It disappeared from the political scene in 2011. Its predecessors were the nationalist parties *Frontpartij* (founded after the First World War) and the *Vlaams Nationaal Verbond* (VNV), founded in 1933 (Deschouwer, 2009). The VU's electoral success has been mixed: the 1960s were successful; yet, the early 1970s were marked by a relative stagnation (Van Haute, 2005). A considerable step was taken at the end of the 1970s when the VU took part in the national government for the first time, under the leadership of its president, Hugo Schiltz (Delwit & Van Haute, 2002, p. 247). The VU's decision to join the government in 1977 and the government's collapse over

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[11]Founded in 2007 by Jean-Marie Dedecker (a well-known judo coach, former member of the VLD and N-VA), the *Lijst Dedecker* was a highly personalised, populist, anti-establishment, anti-immigration and quasi-independentist party and, from an economic perspective, radically liberal (Delwit, 2011, p. 25). In the 2007 federal elections, it surprised the observers by crossing the 5% electoral threshold and won 5 seats. However, the success was short-lived as, in 2010, Jean-Marie Decker was the only MP elected.

an attempt at decentralization led the party to lose its credibility as "anti-status quo" and "anti-parliamentarian party" (Hossay, 1996, p. 349). Moreover, "[m]ore militant nationalists denounced the *Volksunie* for betraying the Flemish cause and supporting reforms that would allow too much authority to remain in Brussels (Elbers & Fennema, 1993)" (Hossay, 1996, p. 349). For all these reasons, after enjoying a relative electoral success until the end of the 1970s, the political party faces an existential crisis: "With all other parties having fallen apart into two unilingual parties, the *Volksunie* was not the only party defending Flemish interests anymore. The other parties had taken over the regionalist demands, leaving the *Volksunie* in search of an ideological position that could differentiate it from the other parties" (Deschouwer, 2009, p. 86).

Following institutional reforms in the 1990s, many VU's voters turned to traditional political parties or even to the ecologists. The 1999 election contains the premises of its disappearance: while the VU obtained a slightly better performance than in 1995, the internal tensions and divisions were rising.

While the regionalist party faced many internal and external tensions (Delwit & Van Haute, 2002, pp. 19–22; Van Haute, 2005, p. 251), it finally split in 2001, giving rise to two new and distinct political parties. On the one hand, the conservative right-wing became the *Nieuwe Vlaamse Alliantie* (N-VA), which can be considered as the "hard wing of Flemish nationalism" (Delwit, 2011, p. 28; see also Abts et al., 2019; Beyens et al., 2017). On the other hand, the more moderate and left-wing faction became spirit[12] and formed an alliance with the socialists (sp.a) in 2002 (Deschouwer, 2004, p. 196). In addition, many political elites made the decision to individually join other Flemish political parties. Consequently, "in a very fragmented political landscape (...), this event is important as it contributes to a 'Flemishisation' [*flamandisation*] of the programmes of the Dutch-speaking parties with the aim of winning the electorate of the former VU"* (Delwit, 2011, p. 29).

The cartel between spirit and sp.a worked well in the 2003 federal elections: common lists were presented with spectacular results (almost 24% of the votes in Flanders) (Deschouwer, 2004, p. 196) before falling (16% of the Flemish votes in the federal elections of 2007). After having changed its name several times, the party ran alone in the 2009 Flemish regional elections but obtained only 1% of the votes and disappeared. On the other hand, the N-VA has had a difficult start: only one MP was elected to the federal parliament in 2003. From 2004 onward, Bart De Wever, the charismatic leader who helped to create the party, took the lead. That year, in the regional elections in Flanders, the party formed a cartel with the CD&V. This alliance enabled the N-VA to join the Flemish government. The idyll between the N-VA and the CD&V ended in 2008 as a result of tensions at the federal level (especially the scission of the Brussels-Halle-Vilvoorde district,

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[12]Which meant "Sociaal, Progressief, Internationalistisch, Regionalistisch, Integraal-democratisch, Toekomstgericht" (Trefois & Faniel, 2007, p. 5).

known as "BHV"[13]). In June 2010 federal elections, the N-VA ran alone again and was the big winner: it became the first party in Flanders, a position kept in 2014 (with even a bigger electoral success) and in 2019.

3.3 The far-right: From Vlaams Blok to Vlaams Belang

The *Vlaams Blok/Belang*[14] (VB), with its motto *eigen volk eerst* ("our people first") (Hossay, 1996), is a Flemish party that combines anti-Belgian separatist nationalism with an anti-immigration stance. The VB was created in 1978 as a breakaway from the VU to propose a more radical alternative; it brought together on the same list factions opposed to an institutional reform ("the Egmont Pact")—the VNP (*Vlaams Nationale Partij*) and the VVP (*Vlaamse Volkspartij*) (Hossay, 1996, pp. 349–350). The VB is a regionalist party as it defends a territorial-based identity, while advocating for the independence of Flanders (De Winter, 2004). It is a radical right-wing party and represents the classical ideology of the far-right: xenophobic, racist, and denouncing insecurity, while promoting a set of "ethnocentrist, authoritarian and anti-egalitarian values underpinning an essentially non-democratic ideology" (Swyngedouw & Ivaldi, 2001, p. 1). The party presents itself as anti-system through its dismissal of traditional parties, dominant elites, and democratic institutions deemed ineffective. VB's discourse frames immigration as closely linked to the themes of nation, national identity, and ethnocultural hierarchy (Swyngedouw, 2012, p. 124; Xhardez, 2017). One of the main demands of the VB is the full independence of Flanders. Yet, according to Deschouwer, its breakthroughs are not due to its separatist and regionalist discourse but rather to "its ability to combine national (regional) pride with themes related to immigration and security" (2011, p. 93).

   Electorally and politically, the party evolved in two stages. Firstly, between 1981 and 1988, the VB expanded from its initial center of gravity: the province of Antwerp. Secondly, from 1989 onward, it spread to the whole Flanders (Delwit, 2011, p. 25). In 1991, the party presented a "seventy-point programme aimed at establishing an independent, prosperous and ethnically pure Flemish homeland" (Hossay, 1996, p. 343): it obtained more than 400,000 votes in the federal election. In 2004, in the Flemish regional elections, it received almost a quarter of the votes (24.2%) and became the second largest Flemish party. The party has nevertheless always be constrained to the opposition because of a tacit "cordon sanitaire": a mechanism set up by the Flemish political parties to exclude the far-right party from any political majority as no party would enter into coalition or collaborate with the *Vlaams Blok* due to its extremist right-wing ideology (Erk, 2005, p. 406).

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[13]To have a good overview of the stakes regarding the split of the electoral district of Brussels-Halle-Vilvoorde (see Cetrà, 2019, pp. 133–37).

[14]Convicted in court for its use of racists arguments in its propaganda in 2004, *Vlaams Blok* was forced to create a new organization that was then named *Vlaams Belang* (Erk, 2005).

The party had been confronted with internal dissensions and weakened by the development of the N-VA. However, the VB remains a very strong party, as demonstrated by the 2019 federal election, which witnessed a new electoral increase of the far-right. In the last years, the VB has renewed its political strategy and communication, thanks to the arrival of a young and popular leader: Tom Van Grieken, 33 years, elected in 2014 as the youngest-ever head of a Belgian party. While data have indicated that the *cordon sanitaire* has been a contributing factor to a declining vote share (Pauwels, 2011), Van Grieken's strategy is to moderate and modernize VB's line to erode the cordon and take advantage of blurring lines between far-right factions and mainstream conservative parties in other European countries. Moreover, during coalition negotiations, the Belgian King decided to meet VB's leader—the first reception by the monarch of a radical right leader since the 1930s (Sijstermans, 2019). More generally, by keeping alive the demand for independence and due to its electoral strength leading to a strong "blackmail" potential, the presence of the VB in the Flemish political landscape has been decisive (Deschouwer, 2011, p. 81). While still being a "pariah party" (Van Spanje & Van Der Brug, 2007) and in a permanent opposition, the party has succeeded in putting considerable pressure on other parties over the years, especially the N-VA, and in influencing policy proposals, especially over immigration and integration.

4 Pro-separatist contemporary politics in Flanders: N-VA and VB at the top of their game

Today, Belgium's political fate is torn by sub-state separatist forces, claiming more and more autonomy for Flanders and ultimately the establishment of an independent state. The sub-state separatist key players are the N-VA and the VB. In the 2019 elections, these forces totaled about 45% of the Flemish votes (Biard et al., 2019). Yet, as underlined in the introduction, public opinion data have shown that the desire for independence remains marginal (Huysseune, 2017; Liñeira & Cetrà, 2015). Moreover, polls from the 2019 elections (survey "RepResent"[15]) have demonstrated that, despite different electoral results, public opinion and political values in Flanders and Wallonia are very similar—although the Walloons are a bit further to the left than the Flemings. Consequently, this section asks: what are the main reasons of sub-state separatists forces' success in Flanders? After summarizing the institutional factors at play (Section 4.1), the section explores the factors of success and the challenges of the first Flemish political party: the N-VA (Section 4.2).

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[15]"RepResent" (http://represent-project.be/) is a consortium of political scientists from five Belgian Universities. It is coordinated by Stefaan Walgrave and Jona Lefevere (UA). The consortium partenars are Sofie Marien (KULeuven), Karen Celis and Kris Deschouwer (VUB), Virginie Van Ingelgom and Benoît Rihoux (UCLouvain), and Emilie Van Haute and Jean-Benoît Pilet (ULB). RepResent is an EOS (Excellence of Science) project funded by the FNRS and the FWO.

4.1 Institutional factors: The rules of the game

The federalization process of Belgium has led to institutional asymmetries, while reinforcing political asymmetries and strengthening the divide between communities (Meier, 2020). For example, as highlighted in the second section, Belgium's double-party system has contributed to a further division between the Dutch-speaking and French-speaking groups. Consequently, the dialogue is very complex—if not impossible—as political parties have no institutional incentives to consider the interests or ideas of the non-voting group, nor do they have any incentive to build bridges or to foster common interests between the two groups (Deschouwer & Van Parijs, 2013). These settings are favorable to sub-state separatist forces: it increases "the likelihood of success for the separatist political parties," especially as "[i]n order to remain competitive in attracting voters, other parties are also likely to be willing to incorporate a separatist agenda into their own party programmes" (Baycan, 2016, p. 90). Moreover, the Flemish institutions have contributed to the strengthening of the Flemish identity and stimulated nationalism in Flanders (Béland & Lecours 2012, pp. 174–175; Lecours, 2001, 2002). Since the first installation of a Flemish government in 1981, the Flemish public discourse has "enhanced a regionalization of the Flemish political imaginary" which contributed to the rise of pro-independence parties (Huysseune, 2017, p. 353). To summarize, the institutional transformation of Belgium has also regionalized political identity and strongly contributed to the promotion of a Flemish identity by the Flemish institutions, which in turn triggered the likelihood of success for the separatist political parties.

4.2 The N-VA

The right-wing Flemish nationalist party—which proposes Belgium's gradual dissolution—has, in the last decade, reinforced its hegemonic position in the pro-independence camp. Beyond its separatist stance, other factors might explain its success in the Flemish political realm. First, the N-VA emphasizes in its discourse the rejection of interregional solidarity, criticizing transfers from the North to the South as well as the redistributive policies of the federal state. Through its discourses, the N-VA rearticulates the left-right cleavage by opposing "productive and unproductive classes that, in its turn, is explicitly communitarised: the productive Flemish middle class is opposed to the lazy Walloons who parasatise the economic value produced by the former" (Abts et al., 2019, p. 857). This offensive discourse on economic matters fuels the N-VA and is related to other trends of pro-independence politics associated with a "regionalism of the rich" (Huysseune, 2017, p. 355), mixing neoliberalism and ethnonationalism in the case of Flanders (Dirkx, 2012). On this dimension, the N-VA has moved away from the VU and positions itself closer to the liberal parties (Beyens et al., 2017).

Second, the N-VA has been built on the ashes of the VU, benefitting from its network, yet with the advantage of being perceived as a "new" party (Beyens et al., 2017). Today's N-VA highest positions are former members and politicians of the VU: Bart De Wever, its very charismatic and popular party leader since 2004; Geert Bourgeois, former Flemish Minister-President (2014–2019) and now European MP; Jan Jambon, who was federal Minister of the Interior and became Minister-President of Flanders in 2019; Jan Peumans, who chaired the Flemish Parliament for 10 years. Yet, other personalities have also emerged (e.g., Theo Francken, Ben Weyts, Sander Loones, or Zuhal Demir). Ideologically, the party follows the nationalists' footsteps of the VU: "it wants an independent Flanders and sketches the steps (confederalism) towards that end point" (Beyens et al., 2017, p. 393).

According to N-VA's perspective, "confederalism" assumes further decentralization with Flanders and Wallonia as two autonomous entities and a bilingual capital, Brussels. The federal state would become an "empty nutshell" and the Belgian state would progressively hollow-out as the N-VA proposes that: "the Belgian parliament and government would disappear and be replaced by a coordinating state authority that would not be directly elected. It would retain control over the army and diplomacy, but key issues such as social security, tax and labour policies would be transferred to Flanders and Wallonia" (Liñeira & Cetrà, 2015, p. 264).

While this notion of "confederalism" is heavily debated (Deschouwer & Poirier, 2015), it is presented by the party as the solution to current Belgium's governance problems and might be seen as a less radical option which electorally gathers more support—especially as only a minority of voters and even N-VA's members are eager to see an independent Flanders (Bouteca & Devos, 2013, p. 89). Moreover, the N-VA has adopted a strategy of "communitarisation" of every conflict in Belgium, which means framing all policy issues explicitly through the lens of sub-state nationalism: "all major conflicts on political power, social redistribution and cultural identity are systematically represented as being based on a unresolvable and overarching centre-periphery antagonism between Flanders and francophone Belgium" (Abts et al., 2019, p. 848).

However, the N-VA has also recently faced several challenges. In 2014, the N-VA decided to join the federal government as a way to promote a neo-liberal socioeconomic agenda. Yet, leaving its stance of opposition to the federal state and joining the federal coalition was a gamble, that is, to participate in a federal state that you want to hollow-out. The presence of the Flemish nationalists in the government led to many tensions in the federal government. This office-seeking strategy at the federal level ended in December 2018, when the party left the government over disputes about the UN Migration Pact. The N-VA decided to take a hard line on migration (especially as it felt threatened by its decline in the October 2018 local elections and decided to compete with the VB). Nevertheless, despite this

turnaround, its vote share was significantly reduced in the 2019 elections. It also faces leadership issues as its popular leader, Bart De Wever, now chairs the party since 16 years and the next generation has not been able to change the leadership yet.

5 Conclusion

Since May 2019, Belgium (again) faces a long-term government deadlock at the federal level—although an emergency and minority government was formed to face the COVID-19 health crisis (Bouhon et al., 2020). This minority government received support from nine Belgian parties—only the N-VA, the VB, and the PVDA objected. While the health crisis gave a break to the political crisis (Ganty, 2020), the situation is still very uncertain as the first Flemish political party (the N-VA) and the first francophone political party (the PS) do not seem able to compromise and rule together. How does the current situation influence pro-separatist politics? On the Flemish side, Bart De Wever claims that any federal government without a Flemish majority (i.e., which means without the N-VA, as the VB is excluded from any possibility of coalescence) is utterly inconceivable (N-VA 2020). Yet, the situation is also uncomfortable for the N-VA as they faced an electoral sanction after participating at the federal level and have to figure their strategy to compete with the VB.

The relations between the two pro-separatist political parties are as much complicated as they are intricate. In the past, the N-VA has expressly tried to differentiate its positioning from the far-right, by promotion a more "inclusive" nationalism (e.g., regarding immigrant integration, see Xhardez, 2017, 2019). However, according to many analysts, N-VA's discourse has moved closer to the far-right discourse (Gérard, 2015; contra: Jamin, 2014; RTBF, 2020)—for example, on immigration matters. Electorally, in the past elections, the N-VA succeeded in drawing blood from the far-right—which is not the case anymore, quite the opposite. What will be strategy of the N-VA? The N-VA has, at some point, imagined go beyond the *cordon sanitaire* and form a coalition with the VB at the Flemish level. Yet, the cordon has hold; however, for how long? As underlined by Sijstermans (2020), "coronavirus provides an opportunity for the *Vlaams Belang* to project its ability to make policy, to argue that it is ready for the transition from an opposition to a governing party." The VB has regularly accused the N-VA for insulting the entire Flemish Movement by refusing cooperation between the two sub-state separatist parties. The journey of Flemish nationalism will be determined by the (non)cooperation between these two parties. Only time will tell us how pro-separatist political parties' fates in Belgium are intertwined.

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Nunatta Qitornai: A party analysis of the rhetoric and future of Greenlandic separatism 6

ELLEN A. AHLNESS

1 Introduction

The year 2021 is fast-approaching. It will be the international year of several multilateral cooperative efforts, and the start of the decade deemed a critical year for garnering attention to the progress yet to be made on a variety of social and economic fronts. It is the year for the Elimination of Child Labor. It is also the year kicking off the United Nation's International Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030). In both regards, it is a year touted by international organizations and fora for bringing states and societies together in problem-solving. Yet, it is also a year that reflects the persistence of colonial structures. The year 2021 will mark the 300th anniversary of Danish colonial rule over Greenland (*Kalaallit Nunaat*, "Land of the Kalaaliit" in Greenlandic).

The 300-year anniversary features heavily in domestic Greenlandic political rhetoric and separatist movements. In 2008, Greenlandic independence campaigners suggested the year as a potential date for independence. Ana Andrade, an analyst at the Economist's Intelligence Unit with a regional expertise in Denmark and the Euro Zone, maintains that "independence has always been a recurring theme in politics in Greenland. Nevertheless, the central questions debated are not *if* independence should be pursued, but rather *how fast* and *under what terms*" ([emphasis added] Musaddique, 2018).

Yet, members of the international community and great power states frequently fail to recognize the significance of this 300-year anniversary, as well as the political independence that has been gained prior this point.Most notably, in 2019, U.S. President Trump expressed his interest in "buying" Greenland. His desire was brought up in several briefings and White House meetings before sharing the idea to the international community more broadly before a trip to Denmark. Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen responded that "Greenland is not for sale. Greenland is not Danish. Greenland belongs to Greenland. I strongly hope that this is not meant seriously" (Karni, 2019). Other Danish politicians joined the sentiment. Michael Aastrup Jensen of the center-right Ventre party said "The whole idea that another country could buy Greenland—like it should be a colony—is so strange to us," while former foreign minister and current chair of the Danish

parliament's foreign policy committee Martin Lidegaard shared, "The Greenlandic people have their own rights. I hope it is a joke—to not just buy a country but also its people" (Noack & Parker, 2019).

Efforts of the United States to buy Greenland are not new: in 1867, *Secretary of State William Seward* showed interest in purchasing the island. *President Harry Truman* dodged questions about his pursuit of control and American territorial ownership of the region, while the United States *tried to buy Greenland in 1946*. Yet what differentiates this latest "effort" is the high level of self-rule Greenland maintains as Trump directs his appeals to Danish authorities. The Greenlandic-Danish mentality is that such bolstering by the President of the United States is a call back to a colonial system of political organization, where dignities of great states broker the buying and selling of colonies. Yet for all the self-rule held by Greenland's domestic political system, and the notions expressed by Danish politicians, Greenland is not an independent nation.

Greenlandic independence movements, both social and political, have a long history, yet it is only within the past 70 years that separatism began to feature as a political ambition of major political parties. Parties enshrine a variety of perspectives on independence, as illustrated by three dominant parties: Atassut, which opposes Greenlandic home rule; Nunatta Qitornai, which advocates a speedy transition to independence; and Siumut, which favors a gradualist approach to independence.

As of 2019, Greenland's population is approximately 57,000, consisting of about 18,000 native Indigenous peoples (Nuuk) (Grønlands Statistik, 2019). Independence movements have largely grown from Indigenous self-determination political theories. The rhetoric such arguments contain are, as oft the case in separatist dialogues, highly context-specific, drawing from cultural experiences and histories, as well as socio-ethnic traumas and nostalgia for the future.[1] Since 1979, Greenland has been situated in a home rule governance arrangement with Denmark. This gave Greenland limited autonomy. Domestic operations were taken over by its own legislature. Select internal politics and politics were turned over for self-determination. Meanwhile, the *Parliament of Denmark* maintained full control of external policies, security, and natural resources. At the same time, Queen *Margrethe II* of Denmark remained Greenland's head of state. In 1985, Greenland left the *European Economic Community (EEC)* in practice of its home rule. In 2008, Greenlandic voters approved a referendum for self-rule, which was implemented in 2009. The Greenlandic government assumed responsibility for self-government of *judicial affairs*, policing, and *natural resources*, while Greenlanders were recognized as a separate people under *international law*. However, Denmark maintained con-

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[1]Two political psychology cognitive experiences which, at first glance, may seem to lead to different phenomenological outcomes. However, extensive work on ethnic minorities and their experiences with both historical trauma and nostalgia/nostalgia for the future illustrate the mobilization power and resilience both feelings may invoke (Kenny, 2017; Smith & Campbell, 2017; Sousa, Haj-Yahia, Feldman, & Lee, 2013).

trol of *foreign affairs* and *defense* matters while upholding its annual block grant of 3.2 billion Danish kroner (about 472 million USD and 429 million EUR) to Greenland.

Greenlandic society generally considers the repeated steps toward greater self-rule as steps toward the eventual full independence from Denmark. Domestic social support for Greenlandic independence is currently at an all-time high, with 67.7% of Greenlanders supporting full independence from Denmark (Breum, 2019). A 2016 poll found that a majority of Greenlanders (64%) favored full independence (Skydbjerg & Turnowsky, 2016), but another poll a year later communicated a majority of the population (78%) would withdraw support if it meant a drop in living standards (Bjerregaard, 2017). As part of the self-rule law of 2009, Greenland can declare full independence if they wish to pursue it, but it would have to be approved by a referendum among the Greenlandic people (Selvstyreloven, 2009). Conversations on separatism, therefore, have been seriously colored by economic feasibility and discrete visions of Greenland's economic future.

Greenland's recent political history is an interesting case in separatism studies for two reasons. First, Greenland's independence would make it the only Indigenous-governed state in Europe and North America. Second, Greenland's independence pursuits have been remarkably formal thus far, conducted largely through formal government processes and interstate dialogues. In 2009, Greenland gained self-rule in a "one country, two systems" structure, with control of its judicial affairs, policing, and natural resources while remaining under Danish control. Together, these developments open the possibility for Greenlandic independence within the next decade.

The very real possibility of Greenland's full separation from Denmark raises many questions on the political mobilization and political rhetoric that led to this situation. Greater self-determination was gained in stages as domestic sentiments consolidated in favor of separatism. Yet political parties in Greenland continue to espouse varied perspectives on the desirability and strategy of independence. The Atassut party opposes Greenlandic home rule, while Nunatta Qitornai advocates a speedy transition to independence and Siumut favors a gradualist approach to independence. How have the political rhetorics of each party evolved over time, in light of relationships with other members of the international community? How do they imagine and potential economic partnerships with China or the United States in regard to natural resources and their extraction? As a case study, how do domestic events like separatism among industrialized, Western societies have wide-reaching international consequences in political and economic realms?

This chapter first provides a brief overview of the implications of Danish colonization of Greenland. The chapter then traces the development of independence and separatist political platforms from the 1950s to the present. Particular attention is paid to political and social movements post-2000, as the dawn of

the 21st century brought an increased desire to separate from Denmark. Through this movement tracing, the chapter examines how separatism rhetoric evolves over time. Exploratory research suggests that separatism rhetorics have evolved from focusing on economic and welfare system self-determination to cultural autonomy, resulting in Arctic stakeholder status and ethno-cultural independence goals in the 21st century. The chapter concludes by presenting the dominant voices in the contemporary Greenlandic separatism movement and evaluates whether a Greenlandic independence referendum by 2021 is likely to occur.

2 Colonial narratives and soft law

The Danish claim to Greenland stems from Norse settlement of the southern part of the island, which lasted from the 1980s through the 15th century. These Norse settlements disappeared through the 14th and 16th centuries, at which point the Inuit once again became the sole occupants of the island. During this time, Inuit communities spread to the southern and western coasts of Greenland over the course of 200 years. European contact was not re-established until 1721, where colonial patterns continued with Danish attempts at missionizing the Greenlandic Inuit (Thomas, 2010). The state of Denmark–Norway retained Copenhagen as the political center of the union. Consequently, Denmark considered Greenland as part of its territory. As a result of the Treaty of Kiel, Denmark gained full colonial control of Greenland. From 1814 on, Greenland was a colony of Denmark. It was not independent, nor was it part of Denmark, but it was directly controlled by decisions made by the Danish government.

During the Second World War, Denmark was occupied and controlled by Nazi Germany from 1940 to 1945. During this time, Denmark agreed to hand defense and control over Greenland to the United States in 1941. Greenland was "effectively independent" during those years, able to conduct domestic affairs apart from the war-preoccupied Danish parliament (Thomas, 2010). After the war, Greenland became a de facto member of NATO through Denmark, as part of the Danish Kingdom. The decisions Denmark made regarding membership and alliances in the international community were equally binding for Greenland as a colony. In 1953, a new Danish Constitution incorporated Greenland in Denmark; the island thereby gained representation in the Danish Parliament and was recognized as a Danish province known as the County of Greenland.

The decade following the Second World War was a critical time period for the development of international law that took into greater consideration ethnic minorities and Indigenous peoples.

Post-war patterns of political cooperation opened space for deeper discussions of identity, including Indigenous identity, and were fostered through the proliferation of soft law in international relations. Soft law does not carry as stringent limita-

tions of who may bear rights and obligations as hard international law; in such an environment, circumpolar Indigenous peoples began to form Indigenous associations in which they could advocate their rights and assert their participation in the international community. International law was thus shaped in a way that granted more opportunities for Indigenous peoples. The body of international law present before the Second World War was borne of Westphalianism and treated states at the primary units of concern, while Indigenous peoples were objects, not subjects, of international law (Koivurova, 2008; Koivurova & Heinämäki, 2006). The soft law body of norms surrounding domestic and international politics in the Arctic consequently shaped the manner in which Greenlandic independence narratives have developed and the remarkably nonviolent manner through which greater and greater autonomy has been gained.

Greenlandic separatist movements have been largely peaceful, and its transition to independence became possible after a 1979 referendum and agreement with Denmark. Greenland's separation from Denmark, however, would be an economic shock to both nations and an upheaval to the geopolitical balance among Arctic nations. This would be caused by political figures who have indicated their willingness to engage in international relationships and activities upon independence that Denmark currently advocates against. These activities include working with China in natural resources extraction, partnering with other circumpolar Indigenous nations within international organizations (such as the Arctic Council), and conducting another referendum to re-enter the European Union independent of Denmark. Each of these cases demonstrates how domestic events like separatism can have wide-reaching international consequences in political and economic realms.

3 Separatism in Kalaallit Nunaat: Three stories

The dawn of the 21st century brought an increased desire to separate from Denmark; however, independence and separatist rhetorics used by Greenlandic political parties have shifted and evolved over time as they grew to encompass new concerns about political and social movements, economics, and cultural-ethnic concerns. Greenlandic political parties enshrine a variety of perspectives on independence. Within this chapter, three parties are examined: Atassut, Nunatta Qitornai, and Siumut. The origins, growth, and modernity's of each party are examined in turn, based on the founding year of each party. Of particular interest are the political rhetorics emergent in the 21st century within each party. Each party, although espousing general attitudes toward separatism, has experienced evolutions in their independence rhetoric over the course of their party existences. Of greatest interest is how such pivotal shifts from colony to home rule status or from home rule to self-rule status affected party rhetoric. Also of interest are the way Greenlandic

parties find themselves in opposition to—or agreement with—Danish interests in the international community of states.

Danish concerns center around the willingness of Greenlandic parties to partner with international investors in Greenland's shipping and natural energy resource industries. Since China's admittance into the Arctic Council as an observer in 2013, state representatives and scholars alike have expressed serious concerns over the extent of China's interest in the Arctic. China has an ongoing track record of using investments in industry infrastructure to inject influence in developing regions of the world. Such a comprehensive and diplomatic offensive challenges Western dominance in developing regions and is motivated by a desire to acquire vital resources and new markets to fuel its own economy. Work on China's investment foothold in Africa and Central Asia is extensive, the latest wave of which can be traced back to the burgeoning 21st century (Alden, 2005; Sheives, 2006); however, scholarship on China's interest and strategy in the Arctic has only taken off in the 2010s and relies a great deal more on conjecture from Chinese communications and promises, and a keen (if imperfect) ability to distinguish between expressed justifications and hidden motivations (Ingimundarson, 2014; Lackenbauer, 2014; Lackenbauer, Lajeunesse, Manicom, & Lasserre, 2018). Among the Greenlandic parties, different levels of willingness to partner with non-Arctic states are espoused.

It is challenging to explore the content of Greenlandic political rhetoric among parties, as little information is to be found in official documents (a challenge also recognized and more fully elaborated by Martínez Strömberg, 2019). The Greenlandic Government and Parliament have few documents explaining the strategies or guidelines of Greenland's foreign affairs—an understandable challenge given that security, defense, and foreign affairs are still in the hands of Denmark during self-rule. Instead, documents released to the Greenlandic public and international community, as well as public addresses, must be relied on to understand the evolution of independence perspectives in party discourse.

3.1 Siumut

Siumut (meaning *Forward*) is a political party in Greenland whose political tenants are similar to those of European social democracy tradition. Siumut was formed in 1971 as a political movement and became a party later in 1977. From the beginning, its policy platform contained domestic and international components. At the foundation of its international interests was the desire for eventual independence from Denmark. Since the establishment of home rule in 1979, it has been the dominant party in Greenland, and its party chairperson became the first prime minister of Greenland. The party is one of those more reluctant to engage in a fast-track independence process. Instead, members believe that it is important for Greenland to be stronger before ties to Copenhagen are finally cut. With the estab-

lishment of home rule, the first step of Siumut's platform was accomplished, and Greenland gained greater self-determination over its domestic affairs. From this point on, the conversation became more about accomplishing self-determination over *international* affairs.

Early political rhetoric centered on the importance of domestic decision-making among the Greenlandic people. Once this had been accomplished, the next consideration was whether Greenland could—and should—be capable of having autonomy in its interactions with the international community. Over time, independence became a mainstream political position, seen as inevitable (if over the horizon) rather than something to be contested and fought for (McGwin, 2018). While it was Siumut that popularized and normalized conversations about home rule in the political sphere, the 2018 Greenland election saw the overturning of its longstanding political dominance. Whereas Siumut had previously garnered majority votes and dominated coalitions, it "squeaked by" to win a plurality of 27.2% of votes [its coalition partner Inuit Ataqatigiit followed closely with 25.5% of votes (McGwin, 2018)]. Both the parties (the two largest in Greenland) which support independence from Denmark experienced declines of over 7% of their previous percentages of votes earned in the last election in 2014.

The continued dominance of Siumut's representation in Greenland's parliament has two notable implications, one for Greenland's international politics and one for the direction of its domestic policies. While Siumut is concerned about the environmental impacts of rapid independence, its members have expressed a willingness to explore international investment options with Arctic and non-Arctic states alike. Scholarship on the differences between the Greenlandic parties notes that a new government led by Kielsen and Siumut (but without Inuit Ataqatigiit) would create and signal more openness toward attracting investments, including from China (Bennet, 2018). Yet, the desire for self-determination in international affairs is not only for the sake of international partnerships. Delegates of the Siumut party also contextualize separatism through its ethnic components. An independent Greenland would be able to forge stronger relationships with Inuit societies around the world, such as those in the United States, Canada, and Russia. Such relationships can be challenging to build and maintain when the sovereign states the Inuit reside in have different forms of political regimes. In the case of Russia, the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON) is the largest and most influential of the country's domestic Indigenous associations. The association has benefitted from teaching/learning and mentoring partnerships with other Indigenous associations; however, its connections to similar associations within liberal states such as Norway, Canada, and the United States have led to challenges dealing with the Russian government (Ahlness, 2018). In 2014, RAIPON was temporarily shut down. While the Russian government maintained that the organization was shut down because of a failure to turn in yearly registration paperwork in a timely

manner, members of RAIPON and international observers are critical of this claim, instead suggesting that the state was threatened by RAIPON's strong international influences. Greenlandic Inuit separate from Danish ties seeking partnership with Russian Inuit would possibly be seen as less of a threat to Russian leadership.

Second, Siumut's domestic policy positions are colored by its ultimate goals for independence. The party strives to see English become the accepted second language in the country after Inuktitut, instead of the third language after Inuktitut and Danish. Such policy would enable Greenland to be a more effective and engaged international actor by developing the domestic skill set. Improving domestic education rates and dismantling narratives of dependence— rather than proclaiming independence tomorrow and seeing what happens—have become the rationale for gradual independence for Siumut members (Fleischer Johansen, 2018). Since the implementation of Greenland's 2009 self-rule, Siumut has focused its independence narrative to one point: independence should not come right away. Members assert that should independence come before the country is fiscally, socially, or politically ready, they "risk keeping the narratives of dependence even if we proclaim independence" (Fleischer Johansen, 2018).

The 1970s saw a broader conception of separatism: independence was desired, although the path to its fulfillment was less articulated. As home rule, then self-rule were ratified, the problem consequently became how to address the nuances and particulars of a transition to independence. The result was a greater emphasis on developing a comprehensive economic and social plan that would allow for a smooth transition to independence without a resulting drop in standards of living. Rhetoric in the 21st century was thus more concerned with securing the financial and political connections necessary for independence. Meanwhile, Siumut's pro-independence platform led to the development of reactionary parties: one in the 1970s against Greenlandic separatism, and one in the 2010s arguing for a more rapid independence than major parties were advocating. Each is explored in turn.

3.2 Atassut

This party's name, meaning *solidarity,* is also a term used to describe the roof that keeps a house together. Its symbolic name refers to the party's desire to keep the "Unity of the Realm" of Denmark together. Originally, one of the two largest and most influential political parties in Greenland, the Atassut, has seen its share of the popular vote consistently decline since the mid-1990s. With a political party platform that is liberal-conservative and unionist, Atassut was established as a political movement 5 years after Siumut (then also a movement) joining conservative and unionist forces in Greenland to oppose Siumut. For its first decade, Atassut was among the more conservative parties in Greenland, although it soon became more liberal than its initial platform suggested (Taagholt & Lyck, 1987). Its first program in 1977 stated that its purpose was to "promote Greenlandic home rule within the

Unity of the Realm" and "work against secession from the Danish realm" (Rasmussen, 1987).

It was not until 1978, right before the referendum for home rule, that Atassut became an official political party. The party was opposed to Greenlandic home rule, though Atassut later shifted to supporting home rule and greater autonomy, but without leaving the unity of the Realm (Kruse, 2018). In its first election, the party gained a large vote (41.7%). This pattern continued until 1991, when the party's voter support dropped significantly. The reactionary nature of Atassut in the independence debate obscures its domestic components. Atassut's general political outlook is cosmopolitanism, and support for private interests. The party supports privatization of Greenland's public enterprises, which has been argued to be an economic alternative to investment partnerships that other parties deem necessary for Greenland to thrive through the transition to independence. Notably, the first referendum to home rule in 1979 seems to have been recognized as a point of no return for the integrity of the Danish kingdom. The Atassut party is generally considered to represent the non-socialist alternative in Greenland. While it initially opposed Greenland's withdrawal from the Danish Kingdom—as well as withdrawal from full membership in the European Economic Community on the grounds that to do so might weaken its ties to Denmark—its current opposition to independence seems to be rooted less in weakened political roots than in a weakened economic state.

Atassut espouses many alternatives to the domestic and international policies that would further a Greenlandic capability for independence. The party platform supports lowering domestic taxes and introducing a system where the citizens pay for certain services from the state. The party stresses Greenland's international connections and warns against Greenland isolating itself—all but an assured reality should Greenland sever from Denmark. Independence is undesirable thus for three reasons. First, Greenland lacks domestic industries that are profitable enough to cover the country's expenses—it relies on block grants from Denmark. Second, Greenland's interactions with the international community have benefited from its connection with Denmark. To stand alone would introduce vulnerability to its negotiations (Gulløv, 1979).

Generally, the party finds it natural and beneficial to mimic good ideas and administrative practice from Denmark. Moreover, Greenland benefits from Danish association. On the issue of military security politics, Atassut supports NATO through the Danish membership and finds it therefore natural that the United States is stationed in the Thule Air Base as an integral part of the NATO defense (Skydsbjerg, 2000). Greenland's relationship with the United States could be threatened by independence, the mere conversation of which has attracted controversial interest from China. Third, Greenland benefits from its territorial status in international organizations such as the European Union. The Atassut party has

historically supported a Greenlandic membership in the European Union, particularly given its implications for fishery politics. Atassut argues that the lack of membership of the EU has been expensive for Greenland because it has denied Greenland's access to EU regional funds.

Overall, Atassut has persistently been an opposition party and has perhaps enjoyed the most persistent political profile within Greenlandic party politics. In 1994, the party adopted a new program, which contained a loyal confirmation of the old fundamental political principles that shaped the party at its origination—notably, an opposition to independence, and the consequential need to strengthen domestic industries and create more effective uses for Danish-given grant money. During the 1990s, Atassut witnessed an increasing turn in Greenland's political life toward the liberalization politics that it has been advocating for years (Lauritzen, 1989).

In the 21st century, Attasut's policy body underwent a drastic re-evaluation as the heart of its platform—opposition to independence—was dealt a severe blow with the 2009 ratification of the self-rule principle. In that year, the party dropped to 10.9% of the vote and lost 3 of its 6 seats in the Greenlandic parliament. In the following election (2013), the party was reduced to two seats. These two seats were maintained in the following 2014 elections despite fewer votes, however, but both of the party's members of parliament later defected to Siumut. As a result of the game-changing self-rule referendum, Attasut's domestic political platform became less about maintaining the kingdom and more about preventing the further progression of separation between Greenland and Denmark. Notably, environmental considerations (particularly as they relate to pro-independent party willingness to develop resource extraction industries) seldom feature in Atassut discourse and public addresses.

Atassut's partnerships with other political parties and public documents communicate a belief that Denmark's economic contributions and infrastructure investments are essential to Greenland's economic (and consequentially political and social) health. Greenland's reliance on annual grants from Denmark is less politically upsetting for the balance of the Arctic than Chinese investment (Gronholt-Pederson & Gjerding Nielson, 2018). The argument against independence is not so much rooted in social or ethnic considerations as it supposes itself to deal with economic realities: independence is not feasible if it comes at the expense of political security or economic well-being. Such opposition to "controversial" international partnerships support this view, as does a greater (if speculative) willingness to develop economic and military partnerships with the United States, given its military presence in the region and established infrastructure (in the form of two air bases) (Archer, 2003). Interestingly, it is concern over "controversial" and military relationships that feature most prominently of the last of the three political parties: the newest and pro-rapid independence party, Nunatta Qitornai.

3.3 Nunatta Qitornai

Nunatta Qitornai (*Descendants of Our Country* in English) is a Greenlandic separatist political party advocating independence at a faster transitory rate than any other party in or out of Parliament. The party was founded in September 2017 by Vittus Qujaukitsoq. Qujaukitsoq had previously served as the Minister of Business, Labour, Trade and Foreign Affairs and was previously a member of the Siumut party. More so than other political parties, Nunatta Qitornai developed a reputation by virtue of the dominant personalities that came to lead the party. Qujaukitsoq was initially let go from the Greenlandic government by Premier Kim Kielsen, leader of the Siumut party, due to his harsh criticism of the Danish and American handling of the environmental clean-up of the area around the Thule Air Base. Qujaukitsoq proceeded to challenge Kielsen for the chairmanship at Siumut's party conference in 2017. After losing a vote 19 to 48, Qujaukitsoq left the party (Hansen, 2017). Shortly after, former Siumut member Aleqa Hammond joined Nunatta Qitornai. Both she and Qujaukitsoq were advocates of a speedy transition to Greenlandic independence, whereas the majority in Siumut are in favor of a gradualist approach. In speaking of the differences between the parties at an international summit, Hammond reflected: "As I am talking very loudly about an independent Greenland, both politically and economically, a desire which has grown in the 12 years since I entered politics, a lot of people saw me as controversial. And I read a lot of negative articles about me in Denmark, and very often I was seen as a person who was radical to people from the outside. But it is not. It is not about the other side. It is about us. It is about us taking charge, and feeling ownership of all the decisions being made for the generations ahead (Hammond, 2018)."

The controversial nature of the party led many to believe that the party would not receive representation in the Greenlandic parliament. The party stood in the 2018 parliamentary elections, where one party member was elected to parliament. Apart from the speedy establishment of a Greenlandic state the party advocates decentralization of Greenlandic domestic administration, as well as the establishment of 17 municipalities based on population distribution.

Nunatta Qitornai's political rhetoric, while lacking the length of the previous two parties, is still revealing given the time period in which the party was founded. Discourses on separatism are centered around the importance of Greenlandic sovereignty in international relations. While domestic policy is not to be disregarded, such concerns fall secondary to the dangers facing Greenland if it is to be treated as a pawn in international conversation. As such, Nunatta Qitornai's rhetoric is highly critical of the fact Arctic development is happening without Greenlandic input, particularly as great states make decisions with environmental consequences that Greenland will be among the first to experience. In an opinion piece written in criticism of conversations that took place during Greenland's 2019

parliamentary season, Aleqa Hammond wrote critically on Siamut's supposed willingness to let Greenland be a pawn in international deliberations—something that is a blow for Greenlandic pride: "What I wanted to know, and which the Prime Minister obviously does not want to disclose, is what my country is currently used for purely military reasons. For the clues are scary and many suggest that we are heading into a new cold war...A cold war that, like the last time, will involve Greenland and make our country a potential military battlefield. Last time it happened, we knew virtually nothing. There were nuclear weapons both on land and over our heads that we knew nothing about before some of them fell into our fjord. There was a secret project under our inland ice that would have made the whole country a nuclear target in a new world war. There were radars and warning stations whose work we knew nothing about (Hammond, 2019a)."

The concerns of Nunatta Qitornai are thus centered around wanting to ensure Greenland controls what it can in the face of growing geopolitical and environmental uncertainties. If the Arctic is to be rebuilt, Greenland must be a player in the decision-making processes. It must not be a recipient of trickle-down information. Greenland must be a properly informed participant in international affairs; this cannot be done if Greenland is not even the sole (or primary) determinant of its international affairs. Recently, the Danish government banned an independent trade agreement between Iceland, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands. So long as Greenland lacks independence, it lacks sovereignty in international affairs (Hammond, 2019b). Since it emerged in the 2010s, Nunatta Qitornai's political rhetoric is heavily context dependent on the geopolitical and environmental challenges that are quickly gaining international attention. Because of the exponential feedback effects of climate change in the Arctic, Greenland must quickly gain independence if it is to have a real ability to exert influence over the changing Arctic. Moreover, it is a source of national pride for Greenland not to be used as a pawn between great state powers like the United States or Russia.

4 Reflections

Independence as a goal unto itself was the first rhetoric used by pro-independence parties—just as for opposition parties anti-independence was a foundation of their own platforms. Today, the independence conversation has become more nuanced. The question no longer seems to be whether Greenland should become independent, but what path shall be put in place for the transition? The bulk of the conversations within the Siumut and Nunatta Qitornai parties centers mostly around foreign policy and sovereignty over relationships with other countries. This makes sense because of the degrees of domestic autonomy already gained in the 1979 and 2009 referendums. At this point of time, most of Greenland's domestic decisions are made by the Greenlandic parliament. Control over domestic policies is no

longer a point for debate; the 2009 self-rule referendum determined that. The result is that the only thing left to be discussed is international politics. Whether Greenland is to negotiate its own membership in international organizations or its own bilateral relationships is the question. Thus, especially since 2009, parties are very concerned about the international implications of a sovereign Greenland.

Additionally, feasibility economics are a common denominator among party conversations. This thread goes hand in hand with Greenland's international presence, as most parties recognize that Greenland is incapable of meeting the economic demands of independence through its fishing, shipping, tourism, and other domestic industries alone. Consequently, *who* Greenland should partner with has become the predominant question. While Siamut members are more willing than Atassut delegates to partner with China to further their domestic infastructure, Nunatta Qitornai members are skeptical of any relationship where there is a sharp power imbalance. In this lens, Greenland is a willing partner for any state making a fair deal, with the environmental considerations of infrastructure development seldom addressed in party statement.

Interestingly, there are several topics which do not feature heavily in any of the parties' conversations. Indigeneity, while certainly a social quality that features into considerations on Greenlandic independence's implications in the Arctic region, does not feature as a predominant point by any of the three parties. It could be that ethnicity was a greater rhetorical focal point before the gaining of home rule or factored into paternal-settler discourse when Denmark colonized Greenland; however, contemporary pro- or anti-independence arguments put forward by Siamut, Atassut, and Nunatta Qitornai rarely, if ever, explicitly bring Indigeneity up as an argument for Independence. An alternative explication suggested by scholars considering Greenlandic influence is that while Indigeneity is certainly an important feature of Greenlandic society that features heavily in cultural and domestic discourses, conversations between the gradual and rapid independence movements have come to focus so intently on economics and infrastructure that these issues have become points of national pride and identity (Martínez Strömberg, 2019). When the majority of pro-independence Greenlanders are willing to forego independence if it means a sharp fall in their quality of living, parties recognize that as salient as ethnicity is, it is not a narrative thread that will compel members of society as much as assurances of economic safety. Such an argument challenges work on circumpolar Indigenous peoples that suggests that it is only after economic and welfare self-determination that groups have the mental and social capacity to fight for cultural autonomy.

5 Implications

This chapter is most concerned with the implications of Greenlandic separatism along two lines: regional and global. This section begins with directed relationships and moves outward to consider the regional and global and phenomenological implications of Greenlandic independence. Foremost of the regional implications of Greenlandic independence are those surrounding the Greenlandic–Danish relationship. Greenland would potentially see its Indigenous population represented in two direct ways in the Arctic Council, the premier organization in the mosaic of Arctic governance institutions. The Arctic Council is considered the predominant and most influential of the Arctic governance organizations because of its establishment in the region (founded in 1996) and its multi-tiered level that includes participants of Arctic states as members, Indigenous associations as Permanent Participants, and non-Arctic states, non-governmental organizations, and inter-governmental organizations as observers. Greenland's Indigenous peoples are currently and directly represented in the Arctic Council by the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) which is a Permanent Participant in the Council. If Greenland were to become an independent Arctic state that would trigger a serious and complicated discussion among the "Arctic Eight"[2] and five other Permanent Participants about what that would mean for Greenland's status in the Arctic Council (Gad, 2014). Would Greenland remain represented by the ICC? Would it become a state member? Moreover, what would this transition mean for Denmark? Currently, Denmark is a member state by virtue of Greenland being its territory. An independent Greenland would similarly prompt critical discussions about the place of Denmark in the Arctic Council, and whether it could still be considered an Arctic state (Jacobsen, 2016; Petersen, 2009).

Second, there are implications for Greenland's relationship with states seeking to increase their influence in the Arctic Region. Former Prime Minister of Greenland Aleqa Hammond has been vocal in her support for Greenlandic independence, not shying away from conversations on what this would mean for international partnerships and enterprises, particularly with China. At the 2018 Arctic Encounters Conference in Seattle, USA, she shared that Greenland looks forward to international partnerships: "There will be new sea routes for ships passing through the ice and northern waters. International ships will sail on our waters. What will that mean for us? Opening ports for these ships will be needed to meet the growth. We have to be able to set our plans together with the countries we want to work with. Co-financing is very important to us. Investments now reach the point where infrastructure is very important to us. We are living on the biggest island

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[2]The eight Arctic states: Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United States.

in the world where there is no economic growth without infrastructure growth (Hammond, 2018)."

In discussing infrastructure and investment, Hammond also expresses a willingness to engage in international investment and financing with China—a practice that has Canadian, Danish, and American industries and diplomats concerned. Hammond's view has been that Greenlanders know what kind of resource extraction investment they need to become economically self-sufficient—a necessity condition for independence—and if countries like Canada and the United States are unwilling to be industry partners, Greenland is willing and able to turn to a partnership with China. Hammond continued to discuss the importance of economic independence in Greenlandic political independence, bringing attention to the controversial investment partnership Denmark fears: "I see [Greenland as] a country that is going to be an important partner within the new sea routes, the northern sea routes, and I see a partner within the geopolitical issues regarding air routes and the possibilities that it will bring for mobility. Greenland geopolitically, is of great importance to the world economy... this requires that we change the economy and new jobs to create a new path to independency economically... for partnerships with Greenland today, we have China, and we have corporations together with mostly Nordic countries. We seek for greater cooperation together in this part of the world, and within the Northern part of our island (Hammond, 2018)."

The foothold southern states (like China) could gain in the Artic through Greenland has Arctic states and circumpolar Indigenous peoples concerned. Given that Arctic governance is largely normative, the influence of China could tip the scales toward greater incentives for non-cooperation or serve as an argument toward greater binding and treaty-based law in the Far North (Lackenbauer et al., 2018). This would have serious negative implications for the Indigenous peoples of the Arctic who benefit from a normative, soft-law system of governance.

At the global level, Greenlandic separatism has implications for the dialogue centering around ethno-cultural independence. Thus far, Arctic Indigenous nations have sought for self-determination without autonomy. Yet at the global level, we see a greater number of cases where ethnic minorities are seeking separatism and independence, such as the Catalan independence movement in Spain, the Nación Camba in Bolivia, and the proposed Republic of Cabrinda by the Bakongo in Angola. Greenland is an interesting case because of the gradual yet significant steps taken toward separatism. Can it be a good case to inform others? Maybe not by the exact steps taken, but certainly in how we look at the analysis of separatist rhetoric. Rhetoric is shaped by key events and evolves over time in response to the way the international community's discourse treats separatism, legitimate reasons for independence, and the rights of ethnic-cultural groups.

Rhetoric can be a highly specific form of political-social discourse that emerges from—and appeals to—specific cultural-ethnic contexts. As such, sociologists and political scientists have found themselves increasingly concerned with the power of rhetoric and the way it draws from historical contexts such as nostalgia (Wheeler, 2017) as well as other politico-emotive forces like historical trauma and inherited memories (Turbine, 2018) despite the challenges they pose for conceptualization and generalization. Political rhetoric stemming from Indigenous contexts is particularly important—although also challenging—for scholars approaching political movements and independence processes from a Western state-centric mindset. Within Indigenous political rhetorics, sovereignty may be understood to be inherent and fundamental to a peoples, rather than something territorial and dependent on external validation (Wieser, 2017). Scholarship seeking to de-center international relations has serious implications for the body of literature on state formation and maintenance in regard to its recognition of cultural and Indigenous contexts.

6 Conclusion

The majority of states existing in our current international system were created since 1950. Today, the United Nations recognizes 206 total sovereign states in the world.[3] In 1945, there were 49 sovereign states. In 2011, this number had risen to 193. While the concept of states as the basic unit of structure in the organization is far more recent and constructed than imagined in the public realm of international politics (Krasner, 1993), the relatively recent establishment of the majority of the world's states brings the constitutive processes of state creation into an even more critical lens of examination. Current polling trends and the success of pro-independence parties in Greenland highly suggest that Greenland is set to gain independence from Denmark in the 21st century (with many arguing it is possible—and even likely—even within the lifetimes of the middle-aged Siumut and Nunatta Qitornai delegates). The questions that follow in future explorations are thus centered not of *if* independence will be gained, but *what happens next*: for Greenland, Denmark, and the state players in the Arctic.

Pro-independence parties and individuals in Greenland have clearly communicated that they are confident and willing to step up and be a force in the Arctic. The attitude seems to be, among many figures, that questioning the Greenlandic maturity is anti-Greenlandic. In this scenario, few pro-independence figures wish to seriously be discouraged by the fiscal risks of embarking in such a large-scale project because it would put into question Greenland's "obvious right to be sovereign" (Kristensen & Rahbek-Clemmensen, 2018; Martínez Strömberg, 2019). An exploration of political rhetoric held by Greenlandic political parties as they

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[3]With 193 member states, 2 observer states, and 11 "other" states.

argue the feasibility and timeline of independence reveals interesting trends in the way different subsets of an already small population imagine the future of their society. Greater self-determination was won in stages as Greenlandic sentiments came to favor separatism over the course of a single lifetime. It is clear that for such a serious debate, the foreign policy dimensions of the conversation weigh heavily. The implications of independence for Greenland's relations with the international community feature in public fora and deliberative spaces to a much higher degree than the nuances of domestic policy. Such an overview of the narratives surrounding Greenlandic independence provides clarity about the specific interests and concerns of dominant political players in Greenland. Mover, such domestic debates should accompany international conversation about separatism and independence to better incorporate considerations of Indigeneity and colonial histories in political discourse.

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Italy's separatist and autonomous spots: Historical and economic overview 7

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1 Introduction

The history of the Italian peninsula has often been marked by regional social tensions and economic inequality. The unification of Italy on March 17, 1861, which resulted from the *Risorgimento*, was a watershed between the several battles of the Reigns and the Republics of the past and the national social cohesion brought about thereafter. The second half of the 19th century has of course been pivotal to the diffusion of the national sentiment, favored by notable figures such as Camillo Benso, Count of Cavour, and Giuseppe Garibaldi. Yet, regionalisms and calls for local autonomy have always been alive, especially in the aftermath of the Second World War, supported by a number of political parties from left to right. Regions such as Lombardy, Veneto, and Emilia-Romagna are the centers of important claims for more legislative and administrative powers. With few exceptions, such as in the case of Alto Adige/South Tyrol, the main reason of regionalisms usually appears to be not political, but economic. According to some politicians, through increased autonomy, certain regions would enjoy more financial independence than at present, maintaining for themselves the amount of money that flows to other, poorer regions. Through the decentralization of powers, regions, metropolitan cities, and provinces would have more powers to legislate and administer the local *res publica*.

However, in recent years, Italian regionalism has been struggling while also co-existing with nationalist forces and has thus seen the evolution of such regional "separatism" parties moving toward an increasingly "federalist" approach with a focus instead on regional fiscal autonomy. This chapter will seek to evaluate from a historical and economic perspective the evolution of regional autonomy within the Italian Peninsula since the aftermath of the Second World War to the current day, concluding with the cost of such autonomy to its regions. The reminder is the following. Section 2 provides a historical overview of those regions which were granted special autonomy by the Constitution of 1948 and other, more recent constitutional laws. Section 3 deals with separatist and autonomy movements in contemporary Italy, with a particular eye on Trentino-Alto Adige/South Tyrol, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Lombardy, Veneto, Sardinia, and Sicily, and also proposes an analysis of differentiated autonomy of ordinary-statute regions, such as Lombardy,

Veneto, and Emilia-Romagna. Section 4 analyzes the attempt of Italy's major regional party, the League, to increase its controls on the Bank of Italy. Finally, Section 5 proposes an overview of the costs of regional fiscal autonomy.

2 Regional autonomy and the Italian lawmaker: Historical overview

The term "region" appeared for the first time in Italy in the Statistical Yearbook (*Annuario Statistico Italiano*) of 1912 (published in 2013). Nowadays the Italian territory is made of 20 regions, which, from North to South, are the following: Aosta Valley (*Valle d'Aosta*), Piedmont (*Piemonte*), Liguria, Lombardy (*Lombardia*), Trentino-Alto Adige/South Tyrol, Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Emilia-Romagna, Tuscany (*Toscana*), Umbria, Marche, Lazio, Abruzzo, Campania, Molise, Basilicata, Apulia (*Puglia*), Calabria, Sardinia (*Sardegna*), and Sicily (*Sicilia*). Of these regions, Aosta-Valley, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Sardinia, Sicily, and Trentino-Alto Adige have been given special statute by the law, which attribute them special autonomy to legislate and administer their territories. Special statute was also granted to a couple of provinces, out of 80 provinces: the autonomous provinces of Trento and Bolzano (*Bozen* in German).

During the Second World War, regions, provinces, and municipalities were significantly controlled by the fascist regime. At that time, indeed, power was entirely in the hands of the central authority in Rome. After the War, however, regional and provincial autonomy began emerging as a way to counterattack separatist tendencies, as in the case of Sicily. The Royal Decree (*Regio Decreto*) of May 15, 1946, gave autonomy to Sicily, where Enrico Di Natale had developed a separatist project (*Progetto Messinissa*). The decree paved the way to a series of laws establishing the special autonomy of certain regions in this new, democratic era. On June 2, 1946, a popular referendum sanctioned the people's willingness to end with the monarchy and establish a republic. Consequently, a constituent assembly (*Assemblea Costituente*) was formed. New parties were created, including the Action Party (*Partito d'Azione*), the Christian Democracy (*Democrazia Cristiana*), the Communist Party (*Partito Comunista*), the Republican Party (*Partito Repubblicano*), and the Socialist Party (*Partito Socialista*). The Constitution of the Republic of Italy was signed in 1948 by the founding fathers. Special autonomies were granted by a series of constitutional laws to Sicily, Sardinia, Aosta Valley, Trentino-Alto Adige/South Tyrol, and the provinces of Trento and Bolzano on February 26, 1948. A fifth region, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, obtained special regional status under constitutional law number one of January 31, 1963.

It must be remarked that the process of distribution of certain legislative and administrative powers, from the State to local entities, has not met the likes of a great number of Italy's top authorities and hidden power. In this regard, the case of the Plan of Democratic Renaissance (*Piano di rinascita democratica*) was

secretly promoted by the masonic lodge *Propaganda Due* (*P2*), led by the Venerable Master (*Venerabile Maestro*) Licio Gelli. The plan, which to a certain extent has been implemented over a number of years, foresaw the creation of a bipartisan system, the control of mass media, the distribution of competences between the two Chambers, the reform of the judiciary (of the Italian *magistratura*), as well as the reduction in the number of members of Parliament, and the abolition of provinces. It can then be observed, that certain socio-political forces represented during the Cold War by the anti-communist P2 (with many connections with the members of OTAN-directed Operation Gladio) had always sought to preserve the concentration of powers in the hands of the central authority.

Yet, more than 50 years after the end of the Second World War and more than a decade since the fall of the Berlin Wall, Italy's calls for increased autonomy have increasingly been supported by legislators. Indeed, the constitutional reform of 2001 has established more regional competences. For instance, constitutional law 3/2001 includes, to a certain extent, federalist features in the Constitution, among which the equivalence of State, Regions, and local authorities is on the legislative and administrative levels. Art.114 lists the subject matters of the State, attributing the remaining ones to the Regions. Constitutional Article116, third clause (*terzo comma*), even states that further subject matters may be granted to regions with balanced accounts:

> Art. 116. Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Sardinia, Sicily, Trentino-Alto Adige/ Südtirol and Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste have special forms and conditions of autonomy pursuant to the special statutes adopted by constitutional law. The Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol Region is composed of the autonomous provinces of Trent and Bolzano. Additional special forms and conditions of autonomy, related to the areas specified in art. 117, paragraph three and paragraph two, letter l) - limited to the organisational requirements of the Justice of the Peace - and letters n) and s), may be attributed to other Regions by State Law, upon the initiative of the Region concerned, after consultation with the local authorities, in compliance with the principles set forth in art. 119. Said Law is approved by both Houses of Parliament with the absolute majority of their members, on the basis of an agreement between the State and the Region concerned.

Article 117, second clause (*secondo comma*), clearly states those subject matters that are exclusive to the State; the third clause (*terzo comma*) lists those subject matters belonging to the regions, according to fundamental State principles; the fourth clause (*quarto comma*) states that those subject matters not included in the second and third clauses are regional matters:

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Art. 117. Legislative powers shall be vested in the State and the Regions in compliance with the Constitution and with the constraints deriving from EU legislation and international obligations. The State has exclusive legislative powers in the following matters: a) foreign policy and international relations of the State; relations between the State and the European Union; right of asylum and legal status of non-EU citizens; b) immigration; c) relations between the Republic and religious denominations; d) defense and armed forces; State security; armaments, ammunition and explosives; e) the currency, savings protection and financial markets; competition protection; foreign exchange system; state taxation and accounting systems; equaliation of financial resources; f) state bodies and relevant electoral laws; state referenda; elections to the European Parliament; g) legal and administrative organisation of the State and of national public agencies; h) public order and security, with the exception of local administrative police; i) citizenship, civil status and register offices; l) jurisdiction and procedural law; civil and criminal law; administrative judicial system; m) determination of the basic level of benefits relating to civil and social entitlements to be guaranteed throughout the national territory; n) general provisions on education; o) social security; p) electoral legislation, governing bodies and fundamental functions of the Municipalities, Provinces and Metropolitan Cities; q) customs, protection of national borders and international prophylaxis; r) weights and measures; standard time; statistical and computerised coordination of data of state, regional and local administrations; works of the intellect; s) protection of the environment, the ecosystem and cultural heritage.

Concurring legislation includes:

International and EU relations of the Regions; foreign trade; job protection and safety; education, subject to the autonomy of educational institutions and with the exception of vocational education and training; professions; scientific and technological research and innovation support for productive sectors; health protection; nutrition; sports; disaster relief; land-use planning; civil ports and airports; large transport and navigation networks; communications; national production, transport and distribution of energy; complementary and supplementary social security; harmonisation of public accounts and co-ordination of public finance and taxation system; enhancement of cultural and environmental properties, including the promotion and organisation of cultural activities; savings banks, rural banks, regional credit institutions; regional land and agricultural credit institutions. In the

subject matters covered by concurring legislation legislative powers are vested in the Regions, except for the determination of the fundamental principles, which are laid down in State legislation.

The Regions have legislative powers in all subject matters that are not expressly covered by State legislation. The Regions and the autonomous provinces of Trent and Bolzano take part in preparatory decision-making process of EU legislative acts in the areas that fall within their responsibilities. They are also responsible for the implementation of international agreements and EU measures, subject to the rules set out in State law which regulate the exercise of subsidiary powers by the State in the case of non-performance by the Regions and autonomous provinces. Regulatory powers shall be vested in the State with respect to the subject matters of exclusive legislation, subject to any delegations of such powers to the Regions. Regulatory powers shall be vested in the Regions in all other subject matters. Municipalities, provinces and metropolitan cities have regulatory powers as to the organisation and implementation of the functions attributed to them. Regional laws shall remove any hindrances to the full equality of men and women in social, cultural and economic life and promote equal access to elected offices for men and women. Agreements between a Region and other Regions that aim at improving the performance of regional functions and that may also envisage the establishment of joint bodies shall be ratified by regional law. In the areas falling within their responsibilities, Regions may enter into agreements with foreign States and local authorities of other States in the cases and according to the forms laid down by State legislation.

3 Separatist and autonomous movements in contemporary Italy

The most active regionalist groups are located in Alto Adige/South Tyrol, Sicily, Sardinia, Aosta Valley, Veneto, Friuli, and Lombardy (see, for instance, Gagliardi & Marini, 2017).

3.1 South Tyrol/Alto Adige

The territory of Alto Adige (literally high or northern Adige), in the north-east of Italy, lays at the south of the Germanic region of Tyrol. At the end of the First World War, South Tyrol was annexed to the Reign of Italy following the defeat of the Austria–Hungary (*Österreichisch-Ungarische Monarchie*). It was so that a number of German-speaking towns, within a short time, became subject to the laws of Italy, yet their customs and culture have still been preserved until the present time

and have always been more Austrian than Italian. This is why, depending on the perspective, that area is known either as Alto Adige or as South Tyrol.

Benito Mussolini carried out a cosmetic operation that was aimed to Italianize the region, translating geographical names from German to Italian and building new fascist-style buildings. Yet, despite this make-up *escamotage*, the German roots of many were kept intact. Long negotiations began between Italy and Austria, in particular in September 1946, when Alcide De Gasperi on behalf of Italy and Karl Gruber on behalf of Austria met in Paris to discuss the future of South Tyrol. Over the years, with the intervention of the United Nations in the early 1960s, minorities were granted special rights by Italian lawmakers through the creation of special statutes in the new-born region of Trentino-Alto Adige and in the provinces of Bolzano-Bozen and Trento. Special autonomy should favor the integration of three linguistic groups in Trentino-Alto Adige: German, Italian, and Landon speakers. In 2011, more than 300,000 people, out of a region of 500,000, spoke the German language in Alto Adige/South Tyrol. Special autonomy acts as a support to the Constitution of the Italian Republic, whose Article 6 states that linguistic minorities are protected by apposite norms (*La Repubblica tutela con apposite norme le minoranze linguistiche*).

It must be observed that special autonomy has not been enough to turn off separatist movements and calls for the allocation of further powers from the State to South Tyrol. One well-known example of these movements is *Süd-Tiroler Freiheit* (STF). As the official website states (2018), members of this movement argue that special autonomy is not a sufficient guarantee against potential reduction in financial contributions coming from the State. The party is also arguing that Alto Adige/South Tyrol should be returned to Austria, given that many German traditions, inherited by the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, are still distinctive features of the region. On its part, the Italian State conceived the special statute of Trentino-Alto Adige and the provinces of Bolzano and Trento as guarantor of their administrative and financial autonomy. In fact, subject matters provided by special regional and provincial statutes cannot be modified by ordinary laws, but only through a complex procedure of constitutional law. In 2014, 6100 voters voted in favor of a popular consultation, with no legal value, indicted by Eva Klotz, from STF; 92% of voters turned out to be in favor of the self-determination of Tyrol. Another movement in favor of independence is led by *Die Freiheitlichen*, established in 1992, which joined the League's national coalition in 2014. Exclusively seeking special autonomy is instead the *Südtiroler Volkspartei* (SVP), the first party in Alto Adige/South Tyrol. In the Italian Parliament, SVP supported the government led by Paolo Gentiloni, a key figure of the Democratic Party.

The very cultural and political nature of Alto Adige/South Tyrol's separatist and autonomous movements are a very special case in Italy's regionalism, a case that was characterized by a number of violent episodes over the years elapsing from

the 1960s, when military forces were deployed in response by the Italian government, to the late 1980s (see Gruber, 2018). There have been 361 murder attempts from September 20, 1956 to October 30, 1988. In total, 21 people were killed, 57 wounded, and 157 condemned. Terroristic groups include the *Befreiungsausschuss Südtirol* (*Comitato per la liberazione del Sudtirolo*, Committee for the Liberation of South Tyrol), active between 1956 and 1969, and *Fin Tirol*, in the second half of 1980s. Between 1986 and 1988, 40 terrorist attacks were made on RAI (*Radiotelevisione italiana*) buildings in Bolzano, *Banco di Roma*, SIP (*Società italiana per l'esercizio telefonico*), IRI (*Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale*, now *Telecom Italia*), and UPIM (*Unico Prezzo Italiano Milano*, great malls) in Bolzano.

3.2 Sicily

In Sicily, *Siciliani liberi* (Free Sicilians) has been in favor of the independence of the island since 2016. The party's goal is to transform Sicily into a special economic zone (SEZ), obtaining "fiscal advantages, the abolition of duties on non-agricultural imports, reduced VAT, the option to adopt a complementary currency, and the administrative simplification for productive sites" (Siciliani Liberi, 2019). Special economic zones represent "at the same time the maximum possible level of autonomy within the reach, today, with no institutional split, and the essential instrument of economic reconstruction" (Siciliani Liberi, 2019). "In case *Siciliani liberi* were able to gain the absolute majority of valid votes, a negotiation would be immediately started with the Italian State to arrange the forms and the ways to carry out [...] a referendum for the full independence of the State of Sicily, transforming the SEZ Project into a transitory decennial project of fiduciary administration of Sicily from Italy, at the end of which this would acquire full international law subjectivity" (Siciliani Liberi, 2019). Another party, social-democratic *Nuova Sicilia* (New Sicily), established in 2001, is in favor of regional special autonomy.

3.3 Sardinia

Partito Sardo d'Azione (*Partidu Sardu*) is a separatist Sardinian Party which obtained 4.7% of votes in 2014 regional elections. "*Partidu Sardu – Partito Sardo d'Azione* is the free association of the proponents, through political action, to establish the sovereignty of the Sardinian People on their territory, to drive the Sardinian Nation to independence" (Partidu Sardu, 2019). In 2018, it joined the coalition with the League in political elections.

Progres—Progetu Repu'blica, another separatist party, got 2.7% of votes at the regional level in 2014. "The Sardinian Nation [...] has the historical aspiration and the current necessity of political emancipation defined and acknowledged at the international level, on the basis of its own geographical, historical, cultural, linguistic, social, and economic prerogatives. In no way and in no case, has any such

prerogatives coincided or superimposed with those of Italy, beyond the political and institutional facets of the Italian State. In the current historical moment, it therefore seems more than indispensable for the Sardinians to endow with their own representatives and subjectivity, informed, sovereign, pacific, and free" (Progres, 2019).

Indipendenza Repubblica di Sardegna—Indipendèntzia Repùbrica de Sardigna is a separatist, non-violent, progressive, and republican party. Created in 2001, it obtained 1.7% of votes on regional basis and 3.7% in the province of Sassari in 2005 elections. In regional elections of 2014, together with centre-left parties, it got 0.82% of votes. Other parties include *Rossomori* (2.6%), *Fronte Indipendentista Unidu*, and *Sardigna libera* (Free Sardinia). The latter, created in 2012, is a social-democratic party in favor of the independence of the island. *Sardigna Libera* had close ties with SEL (Left Ecology Freedom, *Sinistra Ecologia Libertà*), dissolved in 2016 and merged into Italian Left (*Sinistra italiana*).

3.4 Aosta Valley

Founded in 1945, the *Union Valdotaine* (Valdostan Union) is a center political party that promotes regional autonomy and federalism. It represents the French-speaking minority in Aosta Valley. Remarkably, in 2018, the party obtained 19.2% of votes in the Regional Council.

3.5 Veneto

Autonomous and separatist movements are particularly strong in the region of Veneto, where a number of people feel nostalgia of the Republic of Venice (*La Serenissima*), which lasted from 697 to 1797. Venetian Independence, which obtained 2.5% of votes at the regional elections in 2015, is a "political movement born in 2012 with the sole aim of announcing a referendum for the independence of Veneto through the institutional way [...] pacifically (no act of violence), legitimate (through the use of the law), and democratic (with consent, manifested in vote)" (Venetian Independence, 2019). The party, which has no ties to any political party, is based on the idea that "[i]ndependence is the aim, self-determination if the means" (Venetian Independence, 2019).

3.6 Friuli-Venezia Giulia

In the aftermath of the Second World War, new borders were drawn between Italy and Yugoslavia. As a result, still at present, a number of Slovenian-speaking individuals still live nowadays in Northeastern Italy, for instance, in the provinces of Gorizia, Trieste, and Udine (Friuli's Slavia). According to ISTAT (the Italian National Institute of Statistics), at the end of 2016, about 2500 Slovenian people were living in Italy. *Slovenska Skupnost* (SSk) represents the Slovenian community

in Italy. SSk, founded in 1963 in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, is a left-centered party that favors autonomy, progress, and social-democracy.

3.7 Lombardy

The Northern League for the Independence of Padania (*Lega Nord Per l'Indipendenza della Padania*), or put briefly the League North, was founded in 1991 by Umberto Bossi, who led the party until 2012. From then, the party was shortly led by Roberto Maroni and, since 2013, by Matteo Salvini. The League North was a separatist movement from its founding year until 2001. The members of the party have usually sought secession of Padania from the rest of the Italian peninsula. Padania, whose name comes from *Padus*, Latin for Po River, is the name usually attributed to Northern Italian territories, including Tuscany, Umbria, and Marche. Starting in 2001, the League North joined the right-centered coalition led by Silvio Berlusconi and started changing its political goals, gradually abandoning the quest for Padanian independence and calling for national federalism. Indeed, the League North started looking for the allocation of certain powers in the hands of the Italian government and of other powers in the hands of regions. In 2005, aiming to make proposals for constitutional reform, Umberto Bossi succeeded in indicting a popular referendum on this issue. Bossi attempted to define new State and regional subject matters, a process known as "devolution." The proposal failed the referendum, which was held on June 25–26, 2006.

One of the most active members of the party, Matteo Salvini, was elected Member of the European Parliament for the first time in 2004. He became Federal Secretary of the League North on December 15, 2013. Under the lead of Matteo Salvini, the party was renamed as the League in December 2017. No longer the League North, the party underwent a series of actions to change its brand image, in an attempt to increase its popularity not just in Northern territories but also in the other Italian regions, particularly in the South. For instance, the League stopped using its typical flag party symbol, the six-petal rosette known as "Sun of the Alps" or "Celtic Rose." In the 2018 Italian general election on March 4, the coalition led by Matteo Salvini obtained 37% of votes at the Chamber of Deputies (hereafter called the Chamber) and 37.5% at the Senate. Led by Luigi di Maio, the Five Stars Movement (5SM) obtained 32.7% at the Chamber and 32.2% at the Senate. Matteo Renzi led the left-centered coalition, which obtained 22.9% of votes at the Chamber and 23% of votes at the Senate. Salvini was appointed Senator of the Italian Republic in March 23, 2018. He was elected vice-president of the Council of Ministers (*Consiglio dei Ministri*) of the Italian Republic and Minister of the Interior on June 1, 2018. Salvini and Di Maio served as vice-ministers in the new government, led by Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, from June 1, 2018 to September 5, 2019.

Since its founding days, the League has developed increasingly political and communicative features typical of nationalism, populism, and sovereignism. Indeed, the party has been able to wake up in a considerable number of Italians, a sense of primacy over foreigners, in particular immigrants (e.g., war refugees) coming from Africa and the Middle East. The League's strategy has been to target the "common" person as its main voter and supporter, fueling the contrast between the masses and the elite, with particular regard to the technical government of Mario Monti and the social security reform of Elsa Fornero. It is also known as highly Eurosceptic, seeking to maintain or restore, according to the case, the independence of Italian institutions from European institutions. These goals have been shared by other movements such as Brothers of Italy (*Fratelli d'Italia*) and CasaPound, a neo-fascist political party.

At the present time, the objectives of the League have been the strengthening of fiscal federalism and the increase in regional autonomies, not just in special-statute regions and provinces but also in regions with ordinary statutes. As a matter of fact, the League-5SM-led coalition promised a number of regions to concede them legislative and administrative autonomy through the Ministry for Regional Affairs and Autonomies. On the contrary, political opponents such as Matteo Renzi have opposed the distribution of more powers from the State to the regions.

4 Differentiated autonomy of ordinary-statute regions

The constitutional reform of regional autonomy has allowed any Italian region with ordinary statute to ask for a particular form of autonomy, called "differentiated" (*autonomia differenziata*), as clearly stated by Article 116. In 2017, initiatives came from three Italian regions, Veneto, Emilia-Romagna, and Lombardy in this regard. That year, on October 22, Veneto and Lombardy led two consulting referendums on regional autonomy. In Veneto, approximately 98% of valid votes were in favor, with a participation rate of around 57%. In Lombardy, around 96% of valid votes turned out to be in favor, with a participation rate of around 38%. The initiative of Emilia-Romagna, Lombardy, and Veneto was followed in 2018 by other regions, including Campania, Liguria, Lazio, Marche, Piedmont, Tuscany, and Umbria, also interested in gaining autonomy from the central authority (Il Post, 2019a).

As well as this, Article 117 of the Italian Constitution lists 23 subject matters whose fundamental principles are established by the State but which details are decided upon by Regions. Examples of such subject matters include, for instance, health, labor, infrastructure, environment, cultural heritage, and civil security. Regions, as established by Article 116 of the Constitution, may ask the State for further autonomy forms and conditions. This means that regions can ask for more powers to legislate and to administer their territories. Further autonomy is granted

to them by the State following negotiations between the interested parties, provided that a law in this regard is passed by an absolute majority at the Chamber of Deputies and at the Senate. Lombardy asked for 11 administrative and legislative subject matters. Veneto asked for 14. For instance, they aim to have more powers in the administration of highways, hospitals, and the health care system (Trovati, 2019).

According to an analysis published by *L'Espresso* (Occorsio, 2019), regions are asking for several billion euros. Lombardy gets 39.942 million euros and wants to keep 15.508 (532 for health, 2.446 for the environment, 117 for labor, 5.557 for education, and 1.856 for other sectors). Emilia-Romagna gets 15.705 and wants to keep 5.062 (214 for health, 1.014 for the environment, 27 for labor, 2.759 for education, and 1.048 for other sectors). Veneto gets 16.888 and wants to keep 5.933. Financial sources would come from VAT (*imposta sul valore aggiunto*), Irpef (income tax), and Ires (corporate tax).

Negotiations began by the interested regions and the Italian government in February 2018, when preliminary agreements were taken. The number of subject matters negotiated has increased over time. On February 14, 2019, the Minister for Regional Affairs and Autonomies reported on parties' intentions to the Council of Ministers (Chamber of Deputies, 2019a). Nevertheless, government parties have not always agreed on the extent and characteristics of regional autonomies. The League and the Five Stars Movement have indeed fought about local pay scales (*gabbie salariali*). The Five Stars Movement fought against the Leagues' proposal of introducing pay scales, that is, a wage increase in Northern Italy and a decrease in the Centre and the South. Erika Stefani, Minister for Regional Affairs and Autonomies, has justified the League's proposal arguing that "[t]he difference is pale between someone who works near home and someone else who needs a flat in Milan" (La Repubblica, 2019a). The debacle has been a source of anger in Regional Councils, especially in Veneto, governed by Luca Zaia, and Lombardy, governed by Attilio Fontana (La Repubblica, 2019b).

Yet, differentiated autonomies have spurred the concerns of many observers. According to an analysis made by Svimez, the association for industrial development in Southern Italy (*Associazione per lo Sviluppo dell'Industria nel Mezzogiorno*), autonomies in Lombardy, Veneto, and Emilia-Romagna would be a source of financial trouble for the whole country. According to Massimo Cacciari, former Mayor of Venice, the reasons for opposing regional autonomies are economic and political: "[d]ifferentiated autonomy in Veneto, Emilia, and Lombardy is just a way to get more money and more power. An organic reform of Regions is required." Indeed, certain regions need State financial transfers more than others. Northern regions, in particular Emilia-Romagna, Lombardy, and Veneto, wish to contribute to a lower extent to central State finances, even though in some cases their benefits

are higher. For instance, as remarked by Cacciari, oil price in the North-East is cheaper than in other Italian regions (Sannino, 2018).

In a letter addressed to Zaia, President of the Veneto Region, through *La Repubblica*, Senator Paola Nugnes (Five Stars Movement) opposed differentiated autonomies arguing that "[t]he share of ordinary resources of the central Public Administration that are aimed to the South amounts to a bit more than 28%, out of 34.4% of the population. At the Centre and the North [the percentages] are 71.6%, out of 65.6% of population" (Nugnes, 2019). The 5SM fears that certain regions, especially in the South, may be impoverished by a distribution of legislative and administrative powers from the State to the richest regions of the North. The mayor of Milan, Giuseppe Sala, has also opposed the autonomy process, stating that "[t]he brand of Milan is 'Development and Solidarity'" (Sala, 2019). According to M5s, the South may be impoverished by differentiated autonomies (Sala, 2019). On February, 2019, the President of the Deputy Chamber, Roberto Fico, publicly stated that, according to the Constitution of Italy, resources must be distributed equally. This implies that every region must contribute in proportion to its financial capacities (La Repubblica, 2019c).

As reported by *Il Fatto Quotidiano* (2019), Italy's Court of Audit has conducted a study on reinforced autonomy whose outcome has been the following. Contents of subject matters must be thoroughly investigated. Autonomies must be granted in compliance with constitutional principles such as equality, unity, indivisibility of the Republic, and the sustainability of public finances. Should all regions be endowed with more administrative and legislative powers? The criterion set by the Court of Audit is straightforward. "The attribution of further functions and competencies should be acknowledged to those Regions that prove to be able to implement them with a higher grade of operative efficiency than the central management" (Il Fatto Quotidiano, 2019). The co-management of certain functions is likely to be unfeasible. These include, for instance, "the coordination of public finances and of the fiscal system" (Il Fatto Quotidiano, 2019). The issue raised by the Court of Audit is substantial. That is, as a result of the distribution of powers, regions may obtain more financial resources than those obtained at present. "The risk must be assessed by extra costs originating from this process, being the level of the service unaltered" (Il Fatto Quotidiano, 2019). It must also be determined whether the distribution of powers leads to an increase in the quality of regional services. The principle of spending constancy (*principio di invarianza della spesa*) must be respected. Also, a commission of peers, representing the State and the interested region (*Commissione paritetica Stato-Regione*), shall determine the amount of financial resources to be conferred to each Region. The subsidiarity principle must also be taken into account. "Administrative functions are conferred to Municipalities or, if required to ensure a unitary management, to Provinces, Metropolitan

Cities, Regions, and State, on the basis of the principles of subsidiarity, differentiation, and adequacy" (Il Fatto Quotidiano, 2019).

As stated by Nicola Pini for *Avvenire* (2017), the heart of the matter is about the financial costs of autonomy. As he points out, the increase in regional autonomies would likely increase regional inequalities, and at the same time, regions like Lombardy and Veneto would not necessarily be better off. A certain amount of taxes coming from northern regions are transferred to the State and, ultimately, to other regions that are often accused, by the richest regions, of being inefficient and unproductive. Northern regions usually argue that, through autonomy, they would pay fewer taxes to the State, and hence, they would be better off. According to Fabrizio Tuzi, quoted by Pini (2017), Lombardy loses 5600 euros pro capite, Veneto loses 2000 euros, Lazio loses 3670 euros, Emilia-Romagna loses 3300, Piedmont loses 1160 euros, Tuscany loses 800 euros, and the Province of Bolzano loses 7005 euros; a tax surplus is enjoyed instead by the other regions and the Province of Trento, above all in Umbria, Aosta Valley, Campania, Trentino-Alto Adige, Sardinia, and Calabria. If the tax surplus/deficit were cancelled off, there would be an increase in public spending or a decrease in taxes in the North; there would be a decrease in public spending or an increase in taxes in the South. This would result in an increase in inequality between richest and poorest regions (Pini, 2017). But in the end, it is not certain that northern regions would be better off. As pointed by Paolo Balduzzi from the Catholic University of Milan (Pini, 2017), following the increase in autonomies, State transfers to those regions would decrease. This would mean that autonomous regions should reduce the costs of services, to enjoy some benefits from increased autonomies.

In need for financial resources, the League and the Five Stars Movement have remarkably put an eye on the gold of the Bank of Italy (Section 5) and have backed fiscal federalism (Section 6).

5 The attacks on the Bank of Italy

Over history, the gold reserves of central banks have been yearned for by a number of politicians. Famous is the example of William Pitt the Younger, who stopped the convertibility of the gold of the Bank of England with banknotes and coins, aiming to finance the war against Napoleon's France. At the present time, however, central banks are usually independent from a country's government and its daily and long-run policies do not fear interference from public authorities. Today, independence at the Bank of Italy is guaranteed, for instance, by the little role played by political actors in the election of the directors of the central bank. The Board of Directors of the Bank of Italy provides an opinion about a potential governor of the Bank, who is proposed by the Prime Minister and appointed by decree by the President of the Italian Republic. The other managing directors are appointed, renewed, or

replaced by decree by the President of the Republic, upon approval of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Economy and Finance. It must be observed that the advice given by the Council of Ministers is not binding (Gagliardi, 2019).

Now, to the eyes of many observers, the Five Stars Movement and the League have tried to intrude upon the activities of the Bank of Italy, through a series of proposals intended to regulate the appointment of the bank's managing board and to lay claim to the bank's gold. As pointed out by Gagliardi for *Il Sole 24 Ore* (Gagliardi, 2019), the Five Stars Movement and the League have proposed the appointment of the Board of Directors of Italy's Central Bank to be made partly by the Council of Ministers and partly by the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. Also, if the proposal were to pass, the Statute of the Bank would be changed by law. As a result of the reform, many of the Bank's managing directors would be appointed by the government (Il Sole 24, 2019b). This can be seen as political intrusion, relative to the current Bank customs and regulations, in the affairs of the Central Bank (Gagliardi, 2019).

This is just part of the story, though. As observed by *La Repubblica* (2019d), the League and the Five Stars Movement have put an eye on the gold at the Bank of Italy, proposing a motion to the Senate that aims to clarify information about gold reserves held abroad and the process required to possibly bring them back to the peninsula. According to the Bank of Italy (2019), in fact, only 44.86% of Central Bank gold is stored in Italy, the rest being kept in the United Kingdom (5.76%), in Switzerland (6.09%), and in the US (43.29%). If a public investigation were to assert State ownership on the gold at the Central Bank, the same gold could be then used by the Government, for instance, to avoid tax increases aimed at facing the debt burden. This is why the Democratic Party has counterattacked, proposing a motion aimed to impede any action that may lead to a reduction in gold reserves at the Bank of Italy "to reduce public debt, deficit, or in support of other interventions, whose systemic costs would be far higher than expected benefits" (La Repubblica, 2019d).

Worth almost 90 billion euros, Bank of Italy's gold bars and coins (2452 metric tons) constitute the fourth largest world reserve, following the reserves held by the United States' Federal Reserve System, by Germany's Bundesbank, and by the International Monetary Fund. Through exportations, Italy has always earned foreign currencies that have been largely exchanged for gold until 1973 (Il Post, 2019b). As remarked by Dario Stevanato, professor of Fiscal Law at the University of Trieste, for *Il Foglio* (Stevanato, 2019), the European Central Bank, the Bank of Italy, and the Prime Minister of Italy have commented on the motion by the League and the Five Stars Movement. According to the European Central Bank, by controlling reserves, the Bank of Italy can "make decisions in full autonomy, concerning the management, the conservation, the disposition, the negotiation, and the daily and long-term management of gold reserves" (Stevanato, Il Foglio, 2019). The Bank's

stand on gold is clear: as stated by Governor Ignazio Visco, "[c]apital holders of the Bank of Italy do not have any right on gold and currency reserves of the Bank of Italy, the possession and management of which does constitute one of the fundamental functions given to central banks by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union" (La Repubblica, 2019d). According to the official website of the Central Bank, "[t]he Bank of Italy holds and manages national reserves of currencies and gold. The law system confers ownership over reserves to the Bank of Italy" (Bank of Italy, 2019).

Even Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte intervened in February, 2019, arguing that "the ownership of national gold reserves belongs to the Bank of Italy." Further, the ownership of gold reserves has been attributed to the Bank of Italy also by past governors. As observed by Stevanato (2019), for instance, Law 102/2009, under the government of Silvio Berlusconi, regulates taxation on the gold reserves of the Central Bank. This is to be interpreted as a clear sign that the lawmaker has conceived the Bank of Italy, and not the State broadly speaking, as the owner of gold reserves.

6 The costs of fiscal federalism

Since June 2001, when it joined the right-wing coalition led by Silvio Berlusconi, the League North has been trying to transform Italy in a federalist Republic. In particular, the party has been endorsing the idea of fiscal federalism, aiming to decentralize the fiscal administration of Italian regions. As remarked by Giovanni Tria, Minister of Economy and Finance in the League-Five Stars Movement government, Article 119 of the Constitution establishes autonomy of regions as concerns of local financial inflows and expenditures. In turn, citizens should be better off as a result of the increase in regional autonomy (Department of the Treasury, 2019).

Law number 42 of 2009 contributes in this regard, establishing that economic and financial roles of the central State and the Regions shall go beyond the system of derived finance (*finanza derivata*), in compliance with constitutional principles of solidarity, equilibrium, and social cohesion (Chamber of Deputies, 2019b). Law number 42 implements Article 119 of the Constitution, creating a technical commission (*Commissione tecnica paritetica*) for the implementation of fiscal federalism (Ministry of Economy and Finance, 2019). The tasks of the Commission include the following: (1) Its members are called to provide all the information on fiscal federalism required by all interested parties; (2) It provides expertise to establish a new financial system of regions, metropolitan cities, provinces, and municipalities; (3) It also provides information to the Chambers and to regional and provincial Councils (Chamber of Deputies, 2019b). A further legislative step toward federalism has been taken through Decree number 126 of August 10, 2014, which modifies Decree

number 118 of June 23, 2011, and makes homogeneous bookkeeping practices of regions and local entities (Chamber of Deputies, 2019b).

Law number 42 of 2009 deals with important issues (Department of the Treasury, 2019): (1) higher autonomy of decentralized entities; (2) the dismantling of the historical expenditure principle (*principio della spesa storica*), which has been 'source of imbalances and distortions in the allocation of resources' (Department of the Treasury, 2019); (3) procedures for the allocation of resources in specific local entities; (4) coordination tools concerning public finances. Regions and local entities establish their own taxation, "in harmony with the Constitution and according to the principles of public finance and the fiscal system" (Department of the Treasury, 2019). The process "must ensure the reduction in territorial imbalances due to different fiscal capacities [...] and public spending needs" (Department of the Treasury, 2019), favoring the equal distribution of resources and taking into account the needs and the fiscal capacity of the region. The State defines the essential performance levels (*Livelli Essenziali delle Prestazioni, LEP*) on the national territory.

Law number 42 of 2009 has been partly implemented in ordinary-statute regions. Shifting from the historical expenditure principle to the standard expenditure principle should have economic repercussions on any single region. For instance, according to the Department of the Treasury (2019), historical expenditure in Piedmont amounts to 476 euros per capita, while standard expenditure would amount to 500 euros per capita. In Lombardy, historical expenditure amounts to 520 euros per capita, while standard expenditure would be 499 euros per capita. Historical expenditure in Veneto amounts to 427 euros per capita, while standard expenditure would be 460 euros per capita. Historical expenditure would amount to 547 euros per capita, versus 547 euros per capita in standard expenditure. Historical expenditure amounts to 383 euros per capita in Calabria, versus 411 euros per capita in standard expenditure. In Molise, historical expenditure amounts to 357 euros per capita versus 461 euros per capita in standard expenditure. This taking into account that fiscal capacity per capita differs from region to region (for instance, according to the Treasury [2019], it amounts to 474 euros in Abruzzo, 268 euros in Basilicata, 253 in Calabria, 571 in Emilia-Romagna, 502 in Lombardy, 481 in Veneto, 776 in Liguria).

Overall speaking, through fiscal federalism, tax surpluses should amount to 23 billion euros that could be spent in investments: 14.6 billion euros in communalities, 3.3 billion euros in the provinces and metropolitan cities, and 5.5 billion euros in the regions (Department of the Treasury, 2019). Yet, as argued by Tria, the current state of affairs is such that an evaluation of the impacts of differentiated autonomies seems hard to be made (Department of the Treasury, 2019).

7 Conclusion

The history of Italian regions is variegated, and historically, it has been influenced by a number of political events and cultures. South Tyrol, for instance, was annexed to Northern Italy following the defeat of the Austrian–Hungarian Empire in the Great War. Slovenian territories were instead annexed to Italy in the aftermath of the Second World War. Autonomy was granted by the Italian Constitution of 1948 and, later, by a series of constitutional laws to a few regions and provinces that, since then, have been administered in compliance with their special statutes.

Since then, regionalism has evolved in many regions, taking the form of separatist political movements, such as in the case of South Tyrol, Sicily, or Lombardy, or the form of regional calls for more legislative and administrative autonomy from the hands of the central government. Such calls have led to the Constitutional reform of 2001, which established the right of regions with ordinary statutes to ask the State for increased autonomy on certain subject matters. This is why rich northern regions like Lombardy, Veneto, and Emilia-Romagna, followed by others, have started negotiations with the State in order to obtain powers to legislate and administer, for instance, on infrastructures and the health care system.

It must be observed that the process toward regional independence or autonomy has been struggling and coexisting with nationalist and federalist forces. The case of the League party is straightforward in this regard. Indeed, the League, established in the early 1990s as a separatist party, has been seeking national federalism since 2001, when it joined the right-centered coalition led by Silvio Berlusconi. The party has also gradually abandoned its regionalist nature in favor of a more nationalist-populist approach, being usually hostile toward the European Union and toward illegal immigration. The calls for autonomy on the part of many regions have been favored by those members of national parties, such as the League and, to a certain extent, the Five Stars Movement, which seek fiscal federalism.

Fiscal federalism consists in the decentralization of the fiscal system through the distribution of fiscal powers from the hands of the central government to regional and local administrations. Therefore, with the exception of a few cases, like the separatist movement in Alto Adige/South Tyrol, regions and provinces have sought independence not simply for cultural-historical reasons, but mainly in search for economic advantages. Northern regions have in fact argued so far that part of their financial contributions through taxation is transferred by the Central State to other, less efficient and less virtuous regions, mostly located in Southern Italy. Through fiscal federalism, richest regions aim to stop or reduce financial transfers to the State, in order to increase regional public spending or to lower taxes. Yet, fiscal federalism has often met the opposition of certain political forces, including far-right and left-centered parties. Indeed, the effects of fiscal federalism are hard to determine, the main arguments against it being two at least: on the one hand, the decentralization of the fiscal system would increase regional inequalities, especially

between the North and the South; on the other hand, richest regions would not necessarily be well-off, since, for instance, they would receive no more State transfers when needed. Long and winding is the process toward the full implementation of fiscal federalism and the increase in regional autonomy on a number of subject matters.

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The Turkish Cypriot quest for statehood: From a religious minority to a de facto state

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1 Introduction

In November 1967, large crowds were gathered in Istanbul (Turkey) and at the Turkish Cypriot quarter of Nicosia (Cyprus) to protest against the arrest of Rauf Denktaş for illegally trying to enter the island. Two weeks later, he was released and sent back to Turkey where he was in exile since 1964. Denktaş eventually returned Cyprus and emerged as the de facto leader of Turkish Cypriots, elected (unopposed) as vice-president of the Republic of Cyprus replacing Dr. Fazıl Küçük in 1973 and then the President of the de-facto state (1975 onward) in the northern part of the island for a very long period of time and with a huge support from the Turkish Cypriot electorate. During that time, his main political strategy has been Turkification of the northern part of the island and as much separation as possible from Greek Cypriots. More than 35 years later in 2002 when a chance for reunification with Greek Cypriots emerged, this time crowds as large as one-third of Turkish Cypriots on the island protested against Denktaş's longstanding separatist ideology and voted overwhelmingly in favor of reunification with the Greek Cypriots in a referendum. This chapter discusses the journey of Turkish Cypriots and their quest for statehood.

The roots of the Cyprus problem can arguably be traced to ethnic and religious differences on the island. When Ottomans conquered the island, as they did in other newly conquered territories, they forced migration from Anatolia to the island which sparked the Muslim–Christian (Orthodox) division. With the emergence of Greek and Turkish nationalism, this division has transformed into Greek–Turkish division. Yet, another division emerged after the physical separation of 1974, this time within the Turkish Cypriot community; the discussion in the North transformed into "Turkish Cypriot" versus "Cypriot Turk" labeling. Given the complicated and mixed anthropological history of the people on the island, these discussions are prone to manipulation as tools for justifying reunification as well as separatist and regional movements.

After the geographical division of the island, the Turkish Cypriot (henceforth TC) administration embarked on a self-functioning (federated state, the Turkish Cypriot wing of the future federation of Cyprus) state-building process. However,

given the illegal status of the breakaway state, TC leadership had to strategize in order to gain extensive public support. To that end, they focused on the inter-communal conflicts of 1963–1974 to bring out the identity of "Turkishness" and suppress "Cypriotness" so as to better advance their cause. According to Denktaş, Turkish Cypriots were "not Turk enough," so they should become "more Turk" (Kızılyürek, 2005, p. 257), and he added "if we are deceived into thinking we are Cypriots we shall boil in the Greek Cypriot pot" (cited in Dodd, 1993, p. 149). By denying the element of Cypriotness in the identity of "Turks in Cyprus," Turkish Cypriot nationalists tried to show the impossibility of a future common state with Greek Cypriots because of "identity differentiations between the two communities" (Vural & Rüstemli, 2006, p. 332). It is worth noting that similar notions were also present among Greek Cypriot nationalists which enormously helped Denktaş' efforts to justify Turkification and thus separation of the North. However, the journey was not very smooth due to both domestic and international obstacles.

There is probably no straightforward rule for achieving a successful separatist movement, but some of the key ingredients are universal. First of all, the post-secession policies have to be consistent with its legitimizing ideologies—whether ethnic discrimination, unfavorable economic conditions, or political self-expression. Probably a more significant requirement is the legitimacy and acceptability of the separation under international law, thereby assuring continued territorial security (Horowitz, 1981). TC leadership has had certain problems with providing these ingredients, and instead, they focused on personal greed, political clientelism, and rentierism so as to enhance their own domestic power instead of laying foundations for a strong self-sustaining entity (Ekici, 2019). Ethnic discrimination has shifted direction but still remains, economy has been growing but not developing, and political ideologies have been replaced by individual ambitions. The de facto state of northern territories known as Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) is farther than ever being recognized by international actors, but territorial security thanks to the presence of the Turkish army is guaranteed in exchange for significant economic, political, and social concessions given to Ankara.

The chapter talks about the roots of separatist movement among Turkish Cypriots in the colonial and independence periods and the developments after de facto separation/division where the course of action became more complicated as a result of the emergence and strengthening of a pro-reunification movement. In the next section, we are going to talk about a brief history of the roots of nationalism on the island in pre-1974 period. One of the key political figures in history of Northern Cyprus, Rauf Denktaş, assumed a crucial role in the late 1950s and, to a large extent, shaped the faith of the TC community in many years to come. Once the separation between Greek and Turkish Cypriots had begun, although it was thought to be temporary still continues today, the TC political elite led by Denktaş created a patronage system in the north that gave him and his party the

political and financial power in order to ensure the continuation of their secessionist project (see Sonan, 2014). We will discuss the developments in the North during 1974–2004 in the second section. The last section before conclusion is allocated to discussing post-2004 period also known as the post "Annan plan" period. This was the first time Cypriots were given an actual opportunity to vote on the Cyprus conflict which ended in a disaster and maybe sealed the fate of Turkish Cypriots.

2 Background and roots of Turkish nationalism in Cyprus

The issue of identity in Cyprus is rather complicated. The island has suffered culture shocks continuously from Roman Empire to Byzantines, from Venetians to Lusignans, and from Ottomans to British Colonial Empire. The current occupants of Turkish and Greek Cypriots[1] have also received their share of these influences. Given these various influences, we believe that the discussion of "who was here first" is irrelevant. A more relevant issue for us is how Cypriots identify themselves. On both sides of the spectrum, there are people who consider themselves first and foremost being a Cypriot who happen to speak a different language or affiliate with a different religious denomination. There is also a sizeable population on both sides who consider themselves descendants from their respective "motherlands" of Turkey and Greece. In other words, those people consider themselves as "Turks/Greeks living in Cyprus" and prioritize the ethnic element of their identity. This distinction has been the key element in the beginning of intercommunal conflict and breakup of the Republic of Cyprus (henceforth RoC) during 1960s.

The roots of Greek Cypriots can probably be traced back to Achaean and Mycenaean Greek settlers c. 1500 BC (Ker-Lindsay, 2011, p. 2). When Ottoman Empire conquered the island, the Orthodox Church welcomed the religious flexibility offered by the new rulers (Luke, 1973). The relations soured when the Greek war of independence against the Ottoman rule started in 1821, and suspicious of the intentions of the Church of Cyprus, the Ottoman governor massacred the Archbishop and three Bishops, which was followed by "a general massacre" (Luke, 1973, p. 82, 1989, p. 132). This can probably be seen as the beginning of the development of Greek nationalism on the island. By the time Britain took over the island from Ottomans in 1878, among the majority Greek Cypriots, Greek nationalism was already strong and they were agitating to become a part of Greece (*enosis*, i.e., union with Greece). Upon his arrival in the island in 1878, the first British governor of the island was greeted by the Bishop of Kition with the following words: "We accept the change of Government, inasmuch as we trust the Great Britain will help Cyprus, as it did the Ionian Islands, to be united with Mother Greece, with which it is naturally connected" (Luke, 1973, pp. 173–174). As another sign of strong

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[1]There is also a small minority of the population in Cyprus who belongs to other ethnicities such as Armenians, Latins, and Maronites.

national consciousness, as early as in 1880, there were Greek Cypriot volunteers leaving the island to fight for Greece against Turks, although nominally they were still Ottoman subjects (Loizos, 1972, p. 300). Ultimately when British interests did not correspond to these wishes, Greek Cypriots would turn against the colonial power.

Development of Turkish Cypriot identity is less straightforward. Nevzat (2014) claims that "[t]he modern predicament for the Moslem Turks of Cyprus, till then more Moslem than Turkish in their professed identity, had roots in the Ottoman transfer of the island's administration to Britain in 1878" (p. 47). It is important to note that the Turkish Cypriots who were the descendants of Muslim Turks who came to the island following the Ottoman takeover in 1571 from Southern Anatolia were scattered around the island and not concentrated in a geographical area (Crawshaw, 1978, p. 21). It is estimated that around 46,000 Muslim Turks were forced to migrate to Cyprus during 300 years (1571–1878) of Ottoman rule (Kızılyürek, 2001, p. 18). Despite their co-existence on the same island, the two communities of Greek Orthodox and Muslim Turks were never really intermingled (Crawshaw, 1978). It is also the case that many non-Muslims converted to Islam in order to avoid paying high taxes as part of Ottoman rules. There are also examples that these two communities were united in uprisings against Ottoman rulers on the island (Kızılyürek, 2001). Similar joint uprisings by labor unions against authority also happened during British rule. Nevertheless, the common interests were cast aside by nationalistic principles in the years to come. It is argued that "communal and institutional division was already an established fact *before* the British occupation" (Nevzat, 2005, p. 113).

When the British arrived, the Muslim Cypriot community's consolation was that the Ottoman Empire was still the legal owner or sovereign of the island and the deal was only temporary (Orr, 1972, p. 43; see also Kızılyürek, 2003, p. 217). The situation got more complicated when the First World War broke out and the British and the Ottomans found themselves fighting on opposite sides. This led to the annexation of the island by the former in 1914. Ironically, this was welcomed by the Turkish Cypriot elites as the alternative idea being floated at the time was a Greek takeover of the island (see also Kızılyürek, 2003, p. 215). Indeed, in 1915, the British offered the island to the Greek government to entice them to join the war on their side, but luckily for the Turkish Cypriots, this was rejected by the Greek government. Yet, the offer was enough to raise expectations of the Greek Cypriots about the prospects of Enosis after the war, and when this did not materialize, the Greek Cypriot agitation for Enosis gained momentum in the 1920s (Faustmann, 2008, p. 46).

The Muslim community of Cyprus found themselves in a state of limbo when the Ottoman Empire was forced to cede the administration of the island to the British Empire in 1878 in the face of growing Russian threat. According to the

first population census held under British rule in 1881, Muslim population constituted only 24.4% of the island's population, while Greek Orthodox population was 73.9% (St John-Jones, 1983, p. 60). The British rule meant for the TCs losing their political, legal, and economic privileges who, until then, were the members of the ruling group in the Ottoman *millet* system (Loizos, 1972, pp. 300–301). As there was not a coherent Turkish nationalism and a modern Turkish state until the 1920s, at this point, there was no ground for Turkish nationalism to develop among Muslim Cypriots (Attalides, 2003, p. 38) but they knew well what they did not want. As Attalides (2003, p. 43) put it, they "were opposed to enosis with the Greek Christian State, but had no alternative motherland other than the Ottoman Empire, or the world of Islam. Neither were units which were able to develop nationalist sentiments." Therefore, being downgraded by the British did not lead to resentment; the only option they had was being loyal to the British administration and so they did. As Crawshaw (1978, p. 24) points out, "even the smallest move in favor of Enosis was guaranteed to provoke reaction on the part of the Turkish Cypriots" and there were "no less than twenty examples between 1882 and 1931 counter-agitation [to Enosis] by the Turks."

Another critical turning point for development of Turkish Cypriot identity was 1923. On the one hand, the sense of abandonment among Turkish Cypriots became even more palpable after the signing of the Lausanne Treaty in 1923 where the Turkish government recognized the British sovereignty over the island leaving the Turkish Cypriot community out in the cold. This led some Turkish Cypriots to leave the island for Turkey but many came back only a few years later (Attalides, 2003, p. 44). The British was also in favor of their staying although they gave them the chance to leave by including a clause in the Lausanne Treaty because they considered the Turkish Cypriot presence as a counter-balance against the Greek Cypriots and their demands for Enosis (Attalides, 2003, p. 44). On the other hand, the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in the same year threw a lifeline to the Turkish Cypriots. "In this period of deep insecurity, the emergence of modern Turkey and the personal cult of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, were the main sources of national pride for the Turkish Cypriots in response to the 'national other', which was the Greek Cypriot community" (Kızılyürek, 2006, p. 320).

Turkish nationalism continued to flourish during 1930s. First, after the Greek Cypriots' 1931 uprising against the British rule, which was led by Enosis agitators, British suspended the Constitution and became more repressive. Even though the Turkish Cypriots were also subject to the same harsh rules, this was good news for them as it also led to a "decline in public agitation for Enosis" (Attalides, 2003, p. 44; Crawshaw, 1978, p. 27). Later, in the eve of the Second World War, British slowly realized that Turkish nationalism among Turkish Cypriots was not necessarily a bad thing for them, and this led to a reconciliation of Anglo-Turkish interests in Cyprus (McHenry, 1987, pp. 178, 188, 220–226 cited in Nevzat, 2014, p. 54).

With the growing influence of Turkish nationalism, toward the end of 1930s, the transition from a traditional Islamic community to an ethnic secular one gained pace (Kızılyürek, 2006, pp. 322–323). By the end of 1940s, the British administration started to call them Cypriot Turks not Muslims and "set up a 'Special Turkish Committee' to strengthen the ties between mainland Turkey and the Turkish community on the island" (Faustmann, 2008, p. 52).

It was inevitable that these two ethnic groups with growing nationalistic ambitions would soon confront each other violently. In 1943, various Turkish Cypriot notables around the island came together to form the short-lived Association of the Turkish Minority of the Island of Cyprus (KATAK, *Kıbrıs Adası Türk Azınlığı Kurumu*). In 1947, one of the then Turkish Cypriot leaders, Dr. Fazıl Küçük, a medical doctor and the owner and editor in chief of an influential newspaper (*Halkın Sesi*), who would eventually become the leader of the community, asked Cyprus to be returned to its previous owner should the British decide to leave the island (Attalides, 2003, p. 46; see also Kızılyürek, 2003, p. 229). Later in 1955, Greek Cypriot nationalists formed a militia group called *EOKA* and began armed struggle against the British rule to achieve Enosis by force that pulled the Turkish Cypriot community further together. After a long struggle and infighting, Turkish Cypriots managed to politically organize and speak with one voice under the leadership of Küçük thanks to the support from both Turkey and Britain (Attalides, 2003). As Küçük put it in an interview decades later, "Within the next 3 years, a community political structure was developed as a result not only of efforts of Turkish Cypriot leaders to oppose enosis, but also of encouragement from British and Turkish officials who were seeking to safeguard their countries' strategic interests" (cited in Attalides, 2003). By then, Turkey was also fully engaged in the Cyprus problem.

These developments by ethnic groups caused unrest among colonial rulers. By the end of 1956, there was another, more reasonable option (than the previous Turkish Cypriot demand of returning the island to Turkey), on the table brought about by the British: Partition or *Taksim*. In a speech made in the House of Commons, the Secretary for the Colonies, Alan Lennox Boyd said: "it will be the purpose of Her Majesty's Government to ensure that any exercise of self-determination should be effected in such a manner that the Turkish Cypriot community, no less than the Greek Cypriot community, shall, in the special circumstances of Cyprus, be given freedom to decide for themselves their future status. In other words, Her Majesty's Government recognize that the exercise of self-determination in such a mixed population must include partition among the eventual options" (cited in Faustmann, 2008, p. 53). According to Faustmann, this was a tactical move to dissuade Greek Cypriots from insisting on self-determination, in other words, Enosis, thinking that the continuation of the British rule would be perceived as a better option than partition. But before long, the idea of *Taksim*

became the official position of the Turkish side (Attalides, 2003). Although, one important element, regional basis, was still missing, this did not prevent the Turkish side from insisting on the partitioning of the island between Turkey and Greece along the 35th parallel. According to Küçük, this would not lead to a "compulsory exchange of populations" as everyone "will be able to live in his own place feeling assured that his country is next door to protect his rights and interests" (1957, n.a.).

The next step for Turkish Cypriots was setting up an armed organization to work for their new national cause of *Taksim* while resisting Enosis. The Turkish Resistance Organization (*Türk Mukavemet Teşkilatı*, TMT) was established in late 1957. One of its three founders, Rauf Denktaş, an ardent Turkish nationalist, who was until 1957 working for the British administration at attorney general's office as a lawyer, was propelled to be the strongest man in the Turkish Cypriot community with the support of the Turkish military authorities whom the TMT was attached (Kızılyürek, 2003). In June 1958, violence erupted between the two communities throughout the island which lasted until the end of July and further deepened the mistrust between the two communities. In the British Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd's words, the Turkish Cypriots who were responsible for starting the clashes "appeared to be deliberately attempting to create the impression that it was impossible for the two communities in Cyprus to live together harmoniously" (cited in O'Malley, 2006, p. 484). As a result of the violent clashes, for the first time, some Turkish Cypriot villages started to relocate. As Crawshaw put it "some were motivated by genuine fear of the Greeks on the basis of experience; others succumbed to the pressures of the TMT which aimed at reinforcing the Turkish communities in the northern sector of the island in order to facilitate partition" (Crawshaw, 1978, p. 304; see also O'Malley, 2006, p. 484). Eventually, the violence came to an end following an appeal from the British, Greek, and Turkish prime ministers.

When the tension reached to a level where the future of the NATO's southern flank seemed to be jeopardized, in a matter of months, with the US encouragement "the Greek and Turkish Foreign Ministers agreed on a solution based on the independence of Cyprus," and the Zurich and London agreements paving the way for the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus were concluded in February 1959 (Attalides, 2003, p. 12). As Bülent Ecevit (who later became the Prime Minister of Turkey) put it at the time, "for the first time in history in order to protect the aspirations and interests of three states, i.e. Britain, Greece and Turkey a [fourth] state was founded" (cited in Kızılyürek, 2008, p. 96). However, the deal, which banned both *Enosis* and *Taksim* and envisaged a consociational constitutional design, was far from satisfying the Cypriot communities. The power-sharing envisaged in the agreements gave Turkish Cypriots considerable powers: a vice-president with veto power, three seats in the cabinet, the requirement of separate majority in the House of Representatives on important issues, 30% representation in the civil service and alike. The Treaty of Guarantee, on the other hand, gave Turkey a unilateral right to

intervene if the constitutional order of the Republic came into danger. In the view of the Greek Cypriots who saw the agreements as a defeat, Turkish Cypriots "from a religious minority ... had become co-rulers of Cyprus" (Attalides, 2003, p. 51). This clearly created some resentment among Greek Cypriots. Furthermore, there were some unresolved issues and difficult to implement clauses in the agreements (Faustmann & Ker-Lindsay, 2008, p. 63). "While the Greek side tried to delay or prevent the implementation of some of the most disliked aspects, both for practical reasons as much as for power politics, the Turkish Cypriots were adamant on the strict implementation of the agreements, irrespective of any practical difficulties" (Faustmann & Ker-Lindsay, 2008, p. 63). Against this backdrop, only 3 years after independence, the intercommunal clashes broke out again when the Greek Cypriot president of the Republic, Archbishop Makarios, proposed 13 amendments to the constitution and the Turkish side rejected them.

The years of 1963–1974 are very controversial in Cyprus's history. GCs claim that the amendments mentioned above were necessary for the healthy functioning of the Republic, and they blame TCs for leaving their positions in the government. TCs on the other hand claim that the proposal was a move toward Enosis and annihilation of TCs on the island; thus, their withdrawal from government institutions was forced and therefore justified. We are not going to get into these discussions but instead mention some key moments that shows the development of Turkish Cypriot identity and administrative structure.

As a first step in 1964, TC administrators immediately formed a General Committee that would administer TC affairs independent of official RoC government structure, and significant number of Turkish Cypriots living in disconnected enclaves all around the island began to be relocated to areas where TCs constituted majority. There were many instances of violent inter-ethnic clashes during 1964–1967, which have further solidified the notions of nationalism among both communities. On 28 December 1967, in consultations and conformity with Ankara, TC leaders declared the establishment of the Turkish Cypriot Provisional Administration which was a solid step toward separation.[2] The Makarios government declared the administration "unlawful," and lodged a protest at the UN with special protest on Turkish interference on the matter. On the international front, the UN Secretary General also expressed his concerns about the declaration in his report to the Security Council (Sonan, 2014, p. 64). This did not stop TC leadership and Turkey.

In the meantime, different rounds of negotiations have been conducted to resolve the conflict. In the Cold War context, the main concern was maintaining the NATO alliance, and initially, rather than the two Cypriot sides, it was Turkey and Greece which were involved in talks. The Turkish position in this period was

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[2]TCs also held elections for vice-presidency position of the Republic. Although there was another candidate, due to intervention by Turkish officials, only Dr. Kucuk ran in the elections (Ekici, 2019, p. 24).

forming a federation: "At the NATO Foreign Ministers conference in May 1964, the visualized form of a Cypriot Federation was spelt out by the Turkish Government" (Attalides, 2003, p. 85). This was hoped to be achieved with relocation of 20,000 to 25,000 families. Later, inter-communal talks between the two communities started in 1968 in Beirut and continued in Cyprus until 1974. During this period, the TC side gave up its insistence on retaining the rights granted by the Zurich constitution as they were and indicated that the Turkish Cypriot side would be ready to accept "some degree of local autonomy," and indeed, the two sides came very close to agreement in November 1973, but eventually an agreement could not be struck (Attalides, 2003, pp. 100–103).

The final push for geographical separation came in the summer of 1974. The military junta in Greece orchestrated a coup d'état on July 15, 1974, to overthrow the President of Cyprus. This gave the Turkish government the pretext to exercise its right as a guarantor of RoC to interfere on July 20, 1974. TCs referred to the intervention as "the Peace Operation" and GCs called it "occupation." Condemned by the international community, this event marked the beginning of permanent division of the island and forced almost 200,000 people on both sides to relocate. As a result, for the first time, a geographical basis for federation was secured by the Turkish side. Before long, in 1977, with the High-Level Agreement concluded by Makarios and Denktaş, federation has become the UN parameter to solve the Cyprus problem. This was reaffirmed in 1979 by another High-Level Agreement between Makarios' successor Kyprionou and Denktaş.

When Turkish interference took place in 1974, it was a new beginning for everyone. In the south, GC nationalists would blame Turkey for "invading" the island but would prefer to continue governing the Republic alone instead of reaching a compromise solution based on a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation. In the north, on the other hand, TCs would argue that Turkey acted according to her legal right as a guarantor to end the ethnic conflict on the island, but at the same time ignoring the fact that Turkish army not only stayed (as opposed to leaving after restoring the constitutional order of the RoC) but also Turkey initiated with changing the demographics of the northern part of the island. In a sense, both nationalists have achieved what they have been dreaming of: Greek Cypriots, a polity which they did not need to share with Turkish Cypriots, and Turkish Cypriots, separation. In the next section, we only focus on developments in the Northern part of the island after 1974.[3]

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[3]In this chapter, we are not going to talk about the details of 1963–1974 bi-communal conflict as this topic has been exhausted significantly. The interested readers are asked to refer to Ker-Lindsay (2011) and references therein for a detailed analysis.

3 Regionalism or separatism?

As we have shown in the previous section, the idea of *taksim* has been on Turkish Cypriot leadership's agenda since colonial period. After the collapse of the RoC in 1963, TCs start experimenting with regional autonomy within the borders of the Republic of Cyprus. After the intervention of Turkey in July–August 1974, the island was physically separated into two regions for the first time. The leaders of the North, in consultation with Turkish counterparts in Ankara, had to prove to the world that they could function as a self-governing region (but not yet an independent state), and hence as first order of business, they have declared the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus (TFSC, *Kıbrıs Türk Federe Devleti* KTFD) in February 1975. By this time, Denktaş was the Turkish establishment's favored Turkish Cypriot leader. Given Denktaş's strong adherence to Turkish nationalism and the idea of *taksim*, TFSC can only be thought of as an intermediate step toward achieving union with Turkey. To achieve the ultimate goal of *taksim,* he adopted two main strategies: first, strengthening the relationships with Turkey in every imaginable dimension (financial, social, cultural); and second, stalling the Cyprus negotiations as long as possible trying to convince the international community of the impracticability of re-unification. Although initially they seemed to work, both of these strategies would eventually backfire.

We will discuss the evolution of key events in the North that ultimately led to exhaustion of support on separatist ideology. The first set of developments revolves around domestic matters. Although there were considerable "spoils of war" at their disposal in post-1974 period, the governments' inability or unwillingness to capitalize on those opportunities to invest in economic development has created many resentment and inequality among the public.[4] The power gained by Denktaş and his party, National Unity Party (*Ulusal Birlik Partisi*, UBP), through clientelism became under attack, and inter-party disputes alleviated the problem further. On the international front, several decisions by European courts have put financial burden on Turkey and caused concerns among TCs about the sustainability of the status quo. Developments in those two fronts carried TCs until 2002 when an opportunity for re-unification presented itself in the form of the Annan plan.

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[4]The discussion of ownership of property in Cyprus is very complicated. These "spoils of war" or *ganimet* obviously belonged to the Greek Cypriots under the international law and we do not approve of their illegal and unethical utilization by the TC leadership over the years. What we are referring to here is the fact that these could have been utilized in accordance with international law in order to contribute to the economic development.

3.1 Domestic politics

The North had seen some political division in the immediate aftermath of 1974. With the establishment of TFSC, Denktaş had further consolidated his power as the natural leader. Not only he was the President and the communal leader representing Turkish Cypriots in the negotiations with Greek Cypriots, but also he initiated the establishment of a political party (UBP) to compete in the parliamentary elections. Although President is required by constitution to stay neutral in domestic matters, Denktaş's involvement through his own party has been visible over the years. This involvement has been criticized openly and fiercely by the main opposition party, Communal Liberation Party (*Toplumcu Kurtuluş Partisi*, TKP) and Republican Turkish Party (*Cumhuriyetçi Türk Partisi*, CTP) who had leftist ideologies and supported a federal solution for the Cyprus problem. The domination of UBP only diminished later in 1990s due to intra-party conflict rather than success of the opposition parties. This diminished Denktaş's popularity and provided an opportunity to the other parties to come to power at least as junior coalition partners.

Let's first look at the beginning of the state building process in post-1974 period. The Constituent Assembly of the TFSC started working on key issues such as having general and local elections and drafting a new Constitution. In the preamble of the new constitution, the Turkish Cypriot community was referred to as "Cyprus Turkish Community (people)" and emphasis was given to "being part of greater Turkish Nation." The Constituent Assembly was to consist of 50 members with Denktaş as the President and 25 existing members from the previous autonomous parliament also present. The remaining representatives would be from different associations, political parties, and unions. However, Denktaş himself also appointed four members directly (Sonan, 2014, pp. 114–115).

When the constituent assembly started working on the law regulating the political parties, a bill with some questionable articles came to the agenda. One of the articles, still in effect today, prohibits civil servants from becoming party members. Given that most of the educated population have been working as civil servants, the ban undermined the development of opposition parties. The first set of elections resulted in Denktaş (candidate from UBP) getting elected with overwhelming majority as the President of TFSC and UBP receiving majority of seats in the general elections in 1976. Both of the elections confirmed the power of Denktaş and his party and indicated public's support regarding separation from the RoC.

The popularity of Denktaş started to decline in 1981 elections. His support went down to 52% and the opposition contested the integrity of the election results. The UBP's support fell down to 43% and the party lost its majority in the parliament. However, the UBP managed to stay in power after the opposition failed to form a coalition government. But there was another potential problem for the power struggle coming up in the near future. According to TFSC constitution, the

president could not serve for more than two consecutive terms. This meant that Denktaş would not have been able to run for presidency in 1986 elections.

On November 15, 1983, Turkish Cypriots declared Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). This unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) was a step toward changing temporary regional status of a federated state to a permanent one. Although not recognized internationally by any country in the world to this date, except by Turkey, this de facto state has operated since 1983. The leftist parties that were pro-reunification also supported this decision although in later years Özker Özgür (the leader of CTP at the time) explained that they would have been banned from politics if they had not supported Denktaş's decision. This decision was neither politically unanimous nor publicly transparent. But after it has happened, general public was very enthusiastic with disregard to the consequences. Regardless of the possible reasons, Turkish Cypriots have converted overnight from a regional government (TFSC) into a de facto separatist state.

According to Denktaş, the UDI required a new institutional structure such as a new constitution, a new set of elections, and a whole new set of opportunities for political favoritism. Accordingly, a new constituent assembly was formed, which gave Denktaş an opportunity to appoint new members to the existing parliament. But the incumbent players from the ruins of TFSC had a comparative advantage while they were still serving in the office. MPs, however, did not bother to update most of the laws, and TRNC still uses some of the laws from 1975 to 1983 period (and some even from colonial period) with minor amendments.

Remarkably, the new constitution had no term limits for the President opening the way to Denktaş to run indefinitely. It was not only Denktaş who took advantage of this transition period, his opponents within the UBP also managed to get elected one of their own as the leader of the party: Derviş Eroğlu, a medical doctor with a strong grassroots base in Famagusta, who served a short stint as minister of education in the first UBP cabinet formed after 1976 election (Sonan, 2014). Denktaş ran as an "independent" in 1985 Presidential elections and obtained 70% of the votes. Once again, this proved as a support for his separatist strategy. Yet, the new constitution was far from obtaining the support enjoyed by the TFSC constitutional referendum. His dominance would continue in 1990 elections with 66% electoral support.

Denktaş faced a serious competition in 1995 elections. The friction between Eroğlu, who proved to be a talented politician, and Denktaş led nine members of UBP, including the son of Rauf Denktaş (Serdar Denktaş), to leave and form their own political party called Democratic Party (*Demokrat Parti*, DP) in 1992. This has weakened the power of Eroğlu in the parliament and gave some of the control back to Denktaş through DP. Although DP never gained the highest percentage of votes in general elections, they have always remained the kingmaker during searches for coalition governments. Eroğlu ran against Denktaş in 1995 and received 24% of the

votes in the first round and forced the elections to go into the second round which resulted in Denktaş's victory.[5] He caused a similar "problem" in the 2000 elections but this time he withdrew before the second round was held due to pressure from Turkey (Sonan, 2007). Although Denktaş continued to serve as the President, his popularity was waning.

The power struggle within the nationalist camp also affected the equations in the parliament after the splintering of the DP from the UBP. The key opposition party CTP had an opportunity for the first time since 1974 to be in the government. It was surprising when CTP first formed the government together with DP in 1994. Since the division, CTP was vocal about worker rights, corruption accusations in the government and the presidential palace, bad government policies, Cyprus negotiations and relations with Turkey. Given that some of the members of DP had already served with UBP in the previous governments and most likely criticized at some point by CTP members, it was odd to see these two form a coalition government. But probably for the greater good of being able to serve to the people, CTP took any opportunity to be in the government. Yet, this was a short-lived attempt, and after only 36 months, the DP-CTP government came to an end due to pressure coming from Ankara (Sonan, 2014). This was not the last time when parties with different political ideologies formed governments in North Cyprus. After 1994, almost all governments in TRNC were coalitions. We have seen CTP, UBP, and DP forming coalition governments with each other over and over again and not delivering most of the promises they included in their own government programs. This was no longer about political ideologies or Cyprus negotiations or even relations with Turkey. This was simply quest for power in order to expand their own clientele base.

3.2 International developments

After the proclamation of TRNC, GCs were less eager in meeting with Denktaş. Negotiations on Cyprus issue had been continuing on and off but with not enough political will on both sides to bring an end to the Cyprus conflict. The payback for the UDI happened when RoC submitted an application on July 4, 1990, to become full member of European Union. This action was condemned by the political parties in the North from all sides of the spectrum. The leftist parties still believed in re-unification even after 16 years of unsuccessful negotiations, so a unilateral membership of one side of the island was unthinkable and probably considered an act of betrayal. What was more interesting though is how the right-wing parties have also criticized Greek Cypriots for their membership application on the grounds that it violates the founding agreements of the RoC and "political equality." It was interesting since it was them who favored and initiated separatism and insisted

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[5]If no candidate receives majority of the votes in the first round, then the top two contenders go into the second round.

international recognition of TRNC. In the eyes of international law, Cyprus as a nation had a region not under its control. No nation with border disputes has ever been accepted to the EU. On the other hand, Turkish Cypriots, although declared their own republic, insisted that the Constitution of RoC from 1960 still existed, and if Cyprus' membership is accepted, all of its people living in the north and the south should be included in the deal. EU interpreted the situation differently and started the official accession process with Greek Cypriot leadership alone in March 1998.

During the same decade of 1990s, several decisions by European courts have created the foundations for extreme pressure to be exerted on Turkish Cypriot administrators. After the division in 1974, Turkish Cypriots were able to export their produce anywhere in the world. A European Court of Justice (ECJ) (now the Court of Justice of the European Union Justice Court) decision in 1994 resulted in significant reduction of the sale of Turkish Cypriot products to countries that are members of European Economic Area (EEA) (Ekici, 2019, p. 220). During 1977–1994, on average, 70% of the monetary value of total exports were to EEA countries and only 17% to Turkey (TRNC, 2018, Table 23). The share of exports to Turkey increased rapidly after this decision and averaged 45% during 1995–2000. This meant a lot less foreign currency coming into the northern part.

This decision has been used as an excuse by all the political actors: for the right-wing, this was not only an excuse for the lack of economic progress but also a reason to further ties with Turkey. For the left-wing, this was a political tool to attack Denktaş and UBP for their inability to prevent this from happening. TRNC parliament unanimously formed two Parliament Research Committees on investigating "the possible consequences of this decision on local economy" and "whether the TC politicians had any wrongdoing that led to this decision," but by 1997 they had not produced any report.[6] It was only meant to be for showing off. In the meantime, the already fragile economy of the North was forced to become even more dependent on Turkish support.

There were two other court cases in the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) that began during this period whose outcomes had significant impacts. The first one was where a Greek Cypriot refugee applied to the court in 1989 with the claim that she was not allowed to use her property that was left on the northern part of Cyprus (*Loizidou vs. Turkey*). The second one was where a Turkish Cypriot accused Turkey of not letting him to cross the southern part of the island to attend to bi-communal events (*Ahmet Djavit An vs. Turkey*). The court ruled much later in 1998 and in 2003, respectively, in favor of the plaintiffs and condemned Turkey to pay 835,000 and around 40,000 euros, respectively. The compensation amounts are of course negligible for a country to pay but both of these cases could have served as a landmark case for future cases against Turkey. The court also

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[6]We are also not aware of any publicly available report after this date.

officially acknowledged the involvement of Turkey in North Cyprus which gave Greek Cypriots another tool to pursue their agenda.[7]

3.3 Relationship with Turkey

Turkish involvement in the island during post-1974 period has been apparent. The kinship between Turkish Cypriots and mainland Turks and the interference of Turkey in 1974 in a sense obligated Turkey to help Turkish Cypriots both financially and otherwise such as sharing their expertise in business or sending human capital. First of all, Turkey encouraged extensive migration to the island in an attempt to Turkify the north although the official justification by Denktaş was demand for labor force to jumpstart the economy of the breakaway state. Many families from suburban regions in Anatolia were given favorable opportunities (housing, land, stipend) to come to Cyprus (Morvaridi, 1993). Ironically, however, during the same time, many TCs migrated out of Cyprus mainly to England because of economic hardships on the island.

Nobody in the North denies that without financial aid from Turkey, the north would not be able to sustain itself. However, there is some disagreement about what kind of strings are attached to this support. Denktaş and his supporters have always seen Turkey as their liberators and "motherland"; thus, any interference from them in domestic politics is understood and even welcomed. The left, on the other hand, welcomed the financial support but not the interference of Turkish government in domestic political matters or involvement of Turkish firms in management of state-owned enterprises and even the naturalization of Turkish immigrants. Despite these two opposing views, any government in the North has welcomed and demanded aid from Turkey.

The financial aid by Turkey has been substantial but not necessarily efficient. The aid has been in the form of grants until 1997. Until 1993, all the aid was allocated directly to balance the budget deficit. Well at least that was the intention, but since it was provided as grants to the budget, it was under the authority of incumbent governments. There is no reason to believe that these grants were allocated in the best interest of the TC community. Turkey also started giving loans first to the private sector (starting in 1993) and then to the public sector (starting in 1998) which were 50% of the total aid during 1993–2015. This implies that the money is to be paid back at some point, but to this date TRNC never paid anything back. In fact, total public debt has surpassed 140% of GDP as of 2017 (Kalkınma ve Ekonomik İşbirliği Ofisi, 2017, p. 83), which makes TRNC the second most indebted country in Europe after Greece. On top of the grants and loans, there

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[7]The Court specifically acknowledged the "effective control of an area outside its national territory" as the "consequence of military action—whether lawful or unlawful" through "a subordinate local administration." All this is hinting "invasion" instead of separation.

has also been additional funding for specific projects (roads, dams, electricity plant, municipality projects) that were managed by Turkish Aid Office in Nicosia.

Financial stability is a necessary condition for the survival of a separatist movement. Due to lack of international recognition and economic isolation, the only way for the North to sustain itself was through the aid they receive from Turkey. North actually had higher per capita aid than RoC during 1974–2004. But the Turkish Cypriot governments were busy trying to secure their political power instead of ensuring sustainable growth, so most of the aid were utilized inefficiently. The economic development of the North should have been an easy progression given their initial endowment and continued financial aid. Unfortunately, that has not been the case.

3.4 Economic developments

One thing that could justify and ensure public support on separatist movement is financial wealth and security. According to official statistics, per capita GNP in TRNC in 2017 was $14,187, which would classify it as a "high-income" country according to World Bank classification. Even if the reliability of official statistics is questionable, anyone who visits TRNC can easily realize that wealth is not the problem. The same, however, cannot be said about economic development which includes quality measures within health, education, infrastructure, environment, and public utilities. We cannot assess these measures in this chapter, but we are confident that they will not measure up to standards of an average "high income" nation in the world. Here we just want to provide some key events that contributed to lack of a positive economic development.

After the division of the island and the forced displacement of the Greek Cypriots from the north in 1974, Turkish Cypriots had inherited significant "spoils of war." These included plenty of agricultural land, factories and tourism facilities, and residential areas. In the aftermath of intervention, 150,000–180,000 Greek Cypriots and 60,000 Turkish Cypriots have been relocated from their homes (Morvaridi, 1993) and were forced to take refuge on respective sides of the island. The total area of land that belonged to Greek Cypriots in the North and to Turkish Cypriots in the South are believed to be, respectively, 1,228,838 *dönüm* and 679,057 *dönüm*[8] (Gürel & Ozersay, 2006). Given these inequalities in the numbers, the readers are likely to think that resettlement of Turkish Cypriot refugees (or internally displaced) in the North should have been very smooth, but to this date there are still some people who never claimed/received compensation for the lands they left on the south side. About 68% of total bed capacity of touristic accommodations were also under TC control in post-1974 period (although half of these were left in Varosha area which was never opened to public use till this day). Most of

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[8]*Dönüm* is a unit of area measure for land in Cyprus and is approximately equal to 1,000 square meters.

these establishments were given to the control of a semi-state-owned enterprise that was poorly managed and finally liquidated. Agriculture was an important part of the economy in Cyprus, and citrus fruit exports comprised a huge part of that. Most of the citrus fruit groves were in a region mostly owned by Greek Cypriots who were forced to leave in 1974. Those areas were either allocated to TC immigrants from the south or given under the control of another semi-state-owned enterprise which was managed very poorly.[9] Finally, the manufacturing sector mainly owned by Greek Cypriots also shifted many of small workshops/firms to the control of TCs, but the sector disappeared in mid-1990s. All of these could have been utilized in order to jumpstart the economy of the TFSC and TRNC, but instead TC governments opted for clinging to the principles of political clientelism instead of economic efficiency squandering an important opportunity.

Finally, there were two banking crises in late 1990s and early new millennium that created public discontent. Many banks emerged in North Cyprus during 1990s with very minimal capital requirement and regulation. Some of them were nothing but fronts for money laundering activities but they offered high interest rates that enticed the public to deposit their savings. Mainly due to a banking crisis in Turkey (followed by devaluation of Turkish Lira), already fragile banking sector in North Cyprus also collapsed and 18% of deposits in the banks were lost and more than 10 banks declared bankruptcy (Sonan, 2007). TRNC did not have the means to compensate the losses of the depositors but Turkey stepped in once again but the support came with conditions in the form of meddling in the domestic politics.[10] Turkey also used this as an opportunity to force TC government to take some fiscal measures. The interference of Turkey in domestic politics and the inability of local government to pay the lost deposits created social unrest and several mass demonstrations against status quo were organized. All the years of clientelism, corruption, and mismanagement created an economically unstable and dependent state which caused its people to question the legitimacy of its very existence.

Post-1974 period was a chance for the TC leadership to create a sustainable, if not internationally recognized, entity but they failed to do so miserably. The economy of the North could have developed mainly due to assets left behind by the Greek Cypriots, Turkish aid, and small, urbanized, educated population. Unfortunately, both domestic and international events that we have described in this section hindered such an achievement. It is also likely that some of the TC leadership would not have minded creating a failed state so that they could later justify complete Turkification of the North. This completely backfired because the outcome was

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[9]For a discussion of the many semi-state owned enterprises in North Cyprus, please refer to Chapter 7 in Ekici (2019).

[10]Sonan (2007) suggests that Turkey released the funds necessary for bail-out only after Prime Minister Eroğlu withdrew his candidacy in 2000 Presidential elections.

not welcomed by the public, and there was a growing anxiety about both the economic and political future of TRNC. When an opportunity presented itself that could eliminate these concerns, the idea of separation came under scrutiny.

4 Reunification versus annexation

All of the developments during 1990s we discussed above placed a huge responsibility on Denktaş and the UBP-dominated governments in terms of sustaining economic activity and enforcing political stability both domestically and internationally. With the public growing anxious and the South's EU accession going smoothly, Denktaş, after consultations in Ankara, withdrew from the ongoing inter-communal negotiations on 24 November 2000 in order to achieve his long-desired goal of integration with Turkey by derailing the negotiation process that could have resulted in reunification and EU membership (Kızılyürek, 2005, p. 269).

In an attempt to ease the unrest among TCs and solidify Turkey–TRNC relationships, the Turkish government took some measures in early 2001 that led to an article by Turkish daily newspaper *Sabah* entitled "Cyprus, the 82nd Province." This created more anger among TC public and paved the way for reunification voices to be heard louder. When the so-called Annan Plan had emerged in November 2002, CTP embraced the plan and used it to mobilize masses. This coincided with the government change in Turkey which brought a single-party pro-EU government in power. Eventually, Denktaş accepted to go back to the negotiation table, which paved the way for the process which would culminate in the secretary general of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, submitting a comprehensive plan for reunification of the island in November 2002. The plan envisaged a bi-zonal federation where constituent units would be in charge of their own domestic affairs. However, because of Denktaş's delaying tactics, the referendum could not be held before the signing of the accession protocol between the EU and RoC (April 2003). By the time that Denktaş was sidelined and the referendum was held, the EU application of RoC had already been accepted under the condition of *Acquis Communautaire* (the application of all EU treaties and EU law, including rights) would not extend to northern Cyprus in the absence of a final and comprehensive peace agreement. The public opinion in the North had switched from Denktaş's vision of separation toward a desire for a federal partnership in the EU.

There were other significant developments before the referendum date. On April 23, 2003, Denktaş decided overnight to allow crossings of civilians between the two regions after nearly 30 years of blockade. This was surprising for all the Cypriots, Greek, and Turkish alike, and there was no groundwork preparation beforehand. The decision only allowed crossing at one checkpoint but the police officers on both sides were not really sure what to do in terms of who to allow or what kind of paperwork to require. Nevertheless, this action allowed interaction

of Cypriots with each other from different backgrounds. For some, it meant going back to their homes which they fled during 1963–1974; for others, it meant finding their old friends/neighbors; and for younger generations, it meant discovering the "other" side for the first time. As the number of crossing points and number of interactions have increased, some negative/positive feelings were confirmed, and some new friendships were found. The opening of crossing points in 2003 would at first glance seem humanitarian. But that begs the question of why Denktaş had waited so long to take this step. One explanation could be the outcome of the court case we talked earlier (*An vs. Turkey*). The case was concluded in February 2003, and Turkey was ordered to pay within 3 months of notice. After borders were opened in April 2003, Turkey appealed to ECHR on the grounds that the appeal had no legal grounds since the situation no longer persisted (crossing points now being open), but the court denied the appeal since An's case involved 1992–1998 period (Ksanthuli, 2003). But at least Turkey prevented any further cases as long as the checkpoints remained open.

The outcome of the referendum on Annan Plan was a huge disappointment for the pro-reunification camp while the proponents of the status quo celebrated the result. Then leaders of Turkish and Greek Cypriots, respectively, Rauf Denktaş and Tassos Papadopoulos both addressed their respective constituents and asked them to reject the plan. Any kind of "solution" to the Cyprus Problem had to include some compromises from 30-years old political stances on each side and this plan was no different. But neither leader was willing to give up their political visions. The Greek Cypriot president Tassos Papadopoulos convinced his citizens that newly acquired EU membership would make reaching a more favorable agreement possible. Indeed, once they secured the EU membership, for Greek Cypriots, there was not enough economic, financial, or political motivations to agree to this plan. For Turkish Cypriots on the other hand, the prospect of becoming part of EU had many positive economic and social consequences, and a more stable and internationally recognized status. In the end, the plan was accepted in the North by 65% of the votes and rejected in the South by 76%.

Obviously, the outcome of this referendum changed political balance in the North. The EU had accepted RoC's membership, and now since there was no solution to the Cyprus problem, Turkish Cypriots would be left out of the EU. CTP used this against Denktaş and with the sympathy from the new government in Ankara, Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AKP), a pro-reunification politician, Mehmet Ali Talat (leader of CTP) was elected in the first round (with 56% of the votes) as the next President in 2005 elections. Denktaş did not run; the candidate of the right (Eroğlu) received only 22.7% of the votes which showed a shift in Turkish Cypriot's will. The EU had hoped that Cyprus would be admitted as a whole and felt betrayed by the Greek Cypriot government. They pledged direct financial aid to Turkish Cypriots for the first time. The hope

of the island for reunification, if there was such a desire in the first place, was left for another time.

Since 1974, majority of Turkish Cypriots had electorally supported Denktaş's pro-*taksim* vision and close ties to "motherland" Turkey. The progression of Turkish Cypriot economy during 1974–2000 cannot be characterized as real economic growth but simply an increase in national wealth mainly due to inflow of financial support from Turkey but with very poor economic development. When the Annan plan surfaced, many people became hopeful with the prospect of EU membership that was considered to bring in the most desired economic and social development. Denktaş's project was no longer making sense, especially among the younger generations who never had the memories of the past conflict. Of course, most of this momentum and hope was lost with majority of Greek Cypriots rejecting the Annan plan. After the rejection of the plan, the EU had pledged financial aid to Turkish Cypriots. With a leftist leader whose party had defended the idea of reunification for many years in the negotiation table, Ankara expressing desire for the solution of Cyprus problem, and EU assisting Turkish Cypriots financially, Turkish Cypriots became hopeful again. But the hope disappeared when negotiations stalled and economy once again slowed down mainly due to 2008–2009 global economic recession and then austerity policies (Sonan & Gökçekus, 2020; Sözen & Sonan, 2019). It was during this time that UBP came to power again in 2009, and a year later, Eroğlu was elected as the President in 2010. The public had become more distant with reunification dreams and started to re-embrace UBP's clientelistic distribution.

4.1 AKP relationship with TRNC governments

Once the Turkish government shifted its policy on the island and became involved in the Cyprus problem in the 1950s, Ankara had assumed the role of patron and the Turkish Cypriot leadership the role of a client in an asymmetrical relationship. Ankara was involved in organizing the Turkish Cypriots making it possible for them to speak with one voice in the mid-1950s. TMT was in effect an extension of the Turkish deep state and its commander was always a Turkish officer. The close ties have been solidified after Turkish military intervention in 1974 and have secured a geographical basis for a Turkish Cypriot entity in the north ever since. But there are various views on the intent and outcome of the assistance extended to Turkish Cypriots over the years.

The political science literature identifies several reasons for foreign aid. One line of argument focuses on humanitarian and altruism explanation where the donor countries extend aid in order to help the economic and social development of the recipient country without expecting any favors in return. Alternative view is that donors expect something in return such as exclusive rights for natural resources, if any, or some kind of strategic alliance and ability to interfere with domestic

politics. Looking at the case of Turkey and North Cyprus, we can see examples of both of these possibilities. It is of little doubt in many people's mind that when the intercommunal conflict began between the two ethnic communities, the leaders in Ankara truly were worried about the minority Turkish Cypriots. And when they decided to interfere in 1974, many of the soldiers who participated in the military campaign were recruited with the idea of going to help ethnic brothers and sisters in Cyprus. However, after the division of the island, the examples proved the latter of the two theories described above. When Turkish Cypriot administration started utilizing "spoils of war" (hotels, factories, agricultural lands), they called upon entrepreneurial expertise of Turkish experts but also made them favorable shareholders to many enterprises and when some of these enterprises were liquidated later, some of the parts were taken by Turkish businesspeople to Turkey (Ekici, 2019). We have already seen cases of Turkish involvement in leadership elections of 1968, 1973, 1981, and 1990. There is also the case of Turkish military never having to pay for the use of electricity until 2003 and alleged involvement of high ranking officials in antiquities smuggling in 1990s (Ekici, 2019, p. 110) which showed distinct and privileged status of Turkish military in the North. Denktaş and UBP never saw a problem with any of this since they truly believed in the greatness of "motherland" and her right to be involved given how they saved TCs from intercommunal conflict. Denktaş was very effective in talking to Turkish officials and portraying the Cyprus problem as the "national cause" of the Turkish nation which secured continuous financial support to North Cyprus. What is more remarkable is that for a very long time Turkish officials never held the Turkish Cypriot governments accountable for the money sent to the island. They might have known how the money was utilized, and sometimes even complained about it, and from time to time ask the local government to make reforms, but in the end the aid did not stop for a long time despite TC politicians never making the necessary changes.

The relationship between Ankara and Northern Nicosia changed when AKP came to power in 2002. At first, AKP seemed to support Cyprus negotiations and the Annan Plan which probably contributed to Denktaş losing his popularity and Presidency in 2005. After the failing of the Annan Plan, however, AKP in consultation with the CTP-led coalition government had a change of policy and made financial support conditional on signing of financial protocols (Sözen & Sonan, 2019). This meant allocating aid not directly into central government's budget, but based on a viable project by the government, municipalities, or the private sector. They have also successfully "convinced" TC governments to have some legislative changes such as lowering the entry salaries of civil servants, increasing the retirement age, and making changes in the social security system (Sözen & Sonan, 2019). These changes, which had been on government programs for many years but never implemented and probably economically sound, have sparked protest by labor unions and leftist parties. CTP also protested but only when they were

not in the government. Ankara under AKP also had visible impact in social life of northern Cyprus by trying to incorporate religious teachings into the school system, or even making UBP-DP government in 2016 to set up an office in TRNC that would be in charge of coordinating the projects in the areas of 'youth and sports' and financed completely by Turkey.[11] By this time, TC governments were in no position to oppose to Ankara's demand even if they wanted to, because governing would have been almost impossible without the financial aid coming from Turkey. In 2015, Cyprus was literally connected to Turkey by submarine pipelines bringing water to the island. As always, the cost of the project was financed by Turkey and with exclusive ownership rights of the water once delivered to the island including guaranteed minimum buying agreement and its sale to a "third" party in the future. TC governments had no input in these contracts.

The political friction between Turkey and North Cyprus peaked when Mustafa Akıncı was elected as the President of TRNC in 2015 on a platform, which was not only strongly pro-reunification but also called for a less asymmetrical relationship with Ankara. During the first month of his election, he referred to the relationship between Ankara and Nicosia as "two sisters" instead of mother–baby relationship as referred to by Denktaş and his followers, and this attracted a strong criticism from Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The tension did not last long, and the Turkish and Turkish Cypriot sides worked to a large extent in harmony during the reunification talks between the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, which culminated in the five-party conference in *Crans Montana* in June–July 2017.

However, when the talks collapsed in *Crans Montana*, a wider rift emerged between Ankara and Akıncı because Akıncı insisted on continuing further negotiations on the basis of the UN parameters, that is, bi-zonal, bi-communal federation, while Ankara wanted to put other options on the table. Ankara's changing political trajectory of getting away from EU and Erdogan's continued power in Turkey did not help Akıncı's situation. Later in 2019, Akıncı was targeted by Turkish nationalists (and some CTP supporters) when he criticized Turkey's military operation in Syria. Although Akıncı's popularity in Ankara declined, his popularity among Turkish Cypriots increased due to his openness, transparency, and personality. In the midst of conflict between Erdogan and Akıncı, not surprisingly right-wing parties kept attacking Akıncı and sided with the Turkish government. However, the main opposition CTP chose a more neutral path so as to not offend Turkey and own political base. The support for Akıncı has come from other sources such as unions and associations. As we are writing these lines, 2020 election campaign has begun, and Akıncı has decided to run for a second term. The outcome of the elections could be an indication of the degree of division among TRNC citizens (not necessarily TCs) and power of Turkey in domestic politics.

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[11]This proposal was later dropped due to enormous protest from the public but such attempts continued in other formats.

The new millennium has shown many firsts in Turkish Cypriots' post-1975 history. TCs were allowed to cross to the other side of the island for the first time in 2003, and they were able to obtain RoC passports after this date (they were also able to do this beforehand, but it was difficult and possibility of being declared as traitors), which allowed many to visit European countries without visa for the first time in their lives. CTP was able to have its leader elected as the President and obtain the highest share of votes in general elections. For the first time, TCs received financial aid directly from EU channels although the money was not given to the central government (which is probably a better means of distributing aid according to foreign aid literature). And for the first time, Cypriots were asked to vote on a plan regarding the future of the island. In 2019, a Turkish Cypriot academic based in the southern part of the island has won a seat in the European Parliament after running on the ticket of one of the two biggest Greek Cypriot parties, AKEL, with votes from both Turkish and Greek Cypriot voters.

All of these firsts were consistent with the regionalism view where TCs can live and control the northern part of the island but still be accepted as equals in Cyprus and members of the EU. But as time continued, without any success on Cyprus negotiations and AKP's falling out with the EU had shifted the momentum toward the side of separatism and maybe unification not with the south but with Turkey. The structure of AKPs financial aid has also shifted with added conditions, social implications, and project-based financing. It also increased Turkey's hand given their significant control over supply of electricity and water and execution of public goods by firms from Turkey instead of local firms, management of airport, and significant direct aid to municipalities. The relationship between Ankara and northern Nicosia has transformed from a mother's watching over her new born baby to a mother who controls the life of her adult children. Turkish foreign aid has made TRNC completely and utterly dependent. With the social structure of the northern part also changing, it is unknown how many "original" Turkish Cypriots are currently residing there. The actions of incompetent local governments also keep frustrating many Turkish Cypriots and even make them express the desire for annexation/secession.

5 Conclusion

Turkish Cypriot search for recognition and political identity has been uneven. Under Ottoman rule, the minority population of Muslims enjoyed privileges without any concerns. After the establishment of modern day Turkish Republic and emergence of Turkish nationalism, Turkish Cypriots gradually adopted this ideology, and the transition from Ottoman Muslims to Turkish Cypriots was completed without much resistance in the following few decades. By that time, however, the island was a British colony, and the previous privileges of the Ottoman era

were no longer accessible. Turkish nationalism took a more militant shape in the mid-1950s in response to growing Greek nationalism on the island. Despite such nationalistic tension and even intercommunal violence, these two communities found themselves as partners in the Republic of Cyprus but the delicate constitutional design cracked into pieces at the first sign of disagreement. After that, TC community in Cyprus systematically fought for territorial autonomy but with always emphasizing their Turkish roots and relationship with motherland Turkey. Political recognition of the separation that was achieved in 1974 was not possible under international law. The leaders both in North Cyprus and Turkey were aware of this fact very well. On the one side, Denktaş continued to "negotiate" with GC administration but on the other side, his domestic policies have created barriers against any possible solution. But this was not surprising for someone who did not believe in the existence of identity of Cypriotness and focused on Turkishness of his constituency. He did everything possible to keep relationships with Turkey as close as possible and change the demographic and political culture in de facto state of TRNC.

What about the will of the people? Denktaş's popularity lasted until the beginning of the new millennium until the TCs had become furious with the status quo. Decades of incompetent governments using tools of clientelism instead of working toward achieving a strong economy did not support the idea of a strong independent state that was promised in 1983. The people responded to this frustration by opting for "reunification" in Annan Plan of 2004 despite the fact that Annan plan required certain sacrifices (loss of territory, gradual withdrawal of Turkish military, EU standardization which many businesses were not ready for, less opportunities for clientelism). Denktaş's decades long policies of separation were exhausted at this time.

What about after the Annan plan? Having found out that GCs were not willing to accept to reunite the island and increased daily interaction with the "other" side, many TCs were now more convinced that Cyprus Problem was never to be solved. Research has shown that Cyprus in general suffers from very low generalized trust levels compared to other European nations (Yücel & Ekici, 2014) but there is also lack of inter-group trust on the island (Ekici, Ergun, & Rivas, 2016). But if there is ever going to be a reunification, trust is probably more important than politics and economics for sustainability of a solution even if it involves bizonal bi-communal federation. It is also shown that in the case of Cyprus, increased inter-group contact achieved after the partial removal of borders in 2003 has contributed positively to willingness for renewed cohabitation of the Cypriots (Yücel & Psaltis, 2019). Cyprus negotiations have lacked the consideration of social and psychological impacts of a possible "solution" on Cypriots. Only after the Annan plan, bi-communal committees were formed on different issues whose impacts on policy-making are limited. Many people use possible positive economic outcomes

as motivation tools for reaching a solution, but other aspects of bi-communal living are unfortunately downplayed by the politicians and negotiators.

What about the future? Turkish presence on the island has now been more visible than ever before, especially AKP's relationship with TC governments. But more troubling has been the increasing social and political involvement of Ankara in domestic matters. For example, in January 2017, a Turkish public figure, *Barbaros Şansal*, while staying in North Cyprus, has criticized Turkish government online, and in a matter of days/hours, he was arrested and put on a plane to Turkey. Similarly, when a local newspaper in North Cyprus criticized Turkish military operation in Syria in 2018, the main office of the newspaper was vandalized after Turkish President Erdogan explicitly "encouraged" locals to take action against the newspaper. Local police kept on watching the acts of vandalism from afar along with some political figures who later had pictures taken with the perpetrators (these people were later arrested and convicted but then pardoned). Finally, in April 2020, a private TV channel/broadcaster in TRNC was suddenly excluded from Turkish satellite by orders from a regulating agency in Turkey because they were criticizing President Erdogan. TRNC Prime Minister later announced that he has "heard about the incident in the news." Such examples show the inability of local TC governments to step up against any Turkish requests. And the reason is simply the complete financial dependence on Turkey (including Turkish ownership of water, electricity, exports, etc.).

There are some people who now consider the option of annexation of North Cyprus to mainland Turkey. They are arguing that GCs are not willing to reunify (rejection of Annan Plan and the collapse of the talks in Crans Montana in 2017), and domestic policy-makers are corrupt and incompetent. Furthermore, the day-to-day reality is already Turkish involvement in domestic matters. Vural, Sonan, and Michael (2018) referred to this as the "Turkish Cypriot dilemma" where TCs need to choose between "partnering with the Greek Cypriots or attaching themselves to Turkey" (p. 80). We are, however, suggesting that it may no longer be a "choice" of Turkish Cypriots. So, in a referendum in North Cyprus, this time about annexation, is it hard to imagine a majority "democratically" opting for this outcome?

Is it then possible to suggest that North Cyprus is heading toward being a regional territory within the Turkish nation as has been envisioned (and desired wholeheartedly) by Denktaş and his compatriots all along? Hopefully not...

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The Scottish independence movement in the 21st century 9

Nathalie Duclos

Perhaps counter-intuitively, the moment when Scotland lost its political independence, in 1707, is not when Scottish separatism was born. For more than two centuries after it entered into a voluntary parliamentary union with England, the dominant form of political nationalism in Scotland was resolutely "unionist" (Morton, 1999) and not separatist. By "unionist nationalism," what is meant is that even those who could be described as nationalists did not challenge the legitimacy of the Anglo-Scottish union, a union that was widely seen to have vastly improved Scotland's economic prospects, while allowing it to retain a large degree of institutional autonomy within the British State. Rather, Scottish nationalists wished to improve the working of the Union by defending Scotland's place in it as an equal partner to England (equal in dignity if not in power). Hence, the Scottish Home Rule movement that was born in the late 19th century was not a pro-independence movement: quite the reverse, as it was argued that the setting up of an autonomous Scottish parliament within the UK was the best way to strengthen a union threatened by the bad governance of Scotland in the existing institutional framework (Duclos, 2018a).

The first political and cultural organizations to take up the cause of Scottish separatism (or rather "independentism," to use a less contentious word in the Scottish context[1]) were only born in the interwar years. After just a few years of existence, those first pro-independence organizations merged to form the Scottish National Party (SNP) in 1934. However, the SNP remained a tiny, fringe party until the late 1960s, and it remained the only significant pro-independence organization in Scotland for many decades after that. In fact, it is here argued that, as a political ideology embodied in a wide movement rather than just a single party, Scottish separatism is only as old as the 21st century and that it was born as a result of the Scottish independence referendum of 2014—to this date, the only independence referendum ever organized in Scotland, although it belongs to a post-1970s international "cluster" of referendums on "disintegrative reallocation of sovereignty"

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[1]In the Scottish context, independence supporters, especially in the Scottish National Party (SNP), have long argued that the word "separatist" is politically loaded, as well as being inadequate to describe the SNP's independence prospectus. See for instance a speech given by the then SNP deputy leader Nicola Sturgeon in London on 13 February 2014, in which she stressed that "it is important for us to be crystal clear to the people of England, Wales and Northern Ireland that our case is not - emphatically not - separatist or insular" (Sturgeon, 2014).

(Mendez & Germann, 2018, p. 155). The long referendum campaign of 2012–2014 was notable in that it saw the birth of several separatist organizations, most of which carried on existing, and even experienced a massive growth, after Scotland failed to become an independent country in 2014. Moreover, since that date, opinion polls suggest that the proportion of Scots ready to vote for independence has never gone down the level reached in the referendum, that is, 45%, which is evidence of a deep change in Scottish constitutional attitudes. In recent decades, levels of support for independence had generally stood at 30–39%, and before the referendum campaign, it was rare for independence to attract the support of more than 40% of the population.

Today, the Scottish independence movement has two major characteristics which distinguish it from other, comparable independence movements such as the Catalonian one. First, it remains strongly dominated by one party, the SNP, which is still the only organization for whom Scottish independence is the primary *raison d'être*, as well as remaining the "public face" of Scottish separatism, both internationally and domestically. Second, it is ideologically coherent, being almost exclusively made up of left-wing organizations which are ideologically compatible. Those two characteristics beg the following question: to what extent is there room for difference in the Scottish independence movement? Behind this question, which has been at the heart of debates within the movement since the independence referendum of 2014 and even more since the "Brexit" referendum of 2016, lies a concern over the potential impact of ideological and strategic divergence on the on-going independence campaign.

Independence supporters have mainly disagreed over what the movement's overall strategy should be, especially, in recent years, over what its strategy should be in relation to Brexit. One major hope was that the results of the 2016 referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union, in which Britons as a whole had voted in favour of "Brexit" against the wishes of a majority of Scottish people, would result in a pro-independence surge. For most of the Brexit process, this did not materialize, with support levels comparable to that reached in 2014. This could finally be changing in 2020: polls held since Brexit Day (31 January 2020) have suggested that levels of support for independence could today be around 50% (ScotCen 2020). However, it is too soon to say whether this is the beginning of a new trend, and what Brexit has mainly done so far creates new fault lines within the independence movement, despite the SNP's unambiguous support for EU membership.

This chapter will aim at evaluating the internal cohesion of the Scottish independence movement, especially since the UK's EU referendum of 2016. It will start by presenting the different strands of the movement: the nationalist strand, embodied by the SNP (by far the main separatist organization), whose ideology and electoral appeal will be presented; the radical left strand, made up of several organizations such as the Scottish Socialist Party (SSP) and the Radical Independence Campaign

(RIC); and the ecological strand, represented by the Scottish Green Party. It will then examine the independence strategy that the SNP-led Scottish Government has adopted since the "Brexit" referendum and compare it to the alternative strategies put forward by some within the SNP itself and in the wider independence movement, the aim being to assess the impact which Brexit could have on the independence movement's internal cohesion.

1 A Scottish independence movement dominated by the Scottish National Party

The SNP is by far the main organisation within the Scottish independence movement. As of December 2018, the SNP had around 125,500 members (House of Commons Library, 2019), making it into the third biggest British party in that respect (behind the "big two," Labour and the Conservatives). Even more significantly, SNP members make up around 3% of the party's potential electorate, by which standards it is the biggest party in the UK (House of Commons Library, 2019). Today, the SNP is also the party of government in Scotland, as well as the third biggest party in the British House of Commons. Strikingly, the SNP has won every single election in Scotland since the failed independence referendum of 2014.

How can the party be characterized, and to what party families can it be said to belong? As suggested by its name, the SNP is a nationalist party, that is, one that subscribes to nationalist ideology, defined as "one which claims that there exists a unique nation, that this nation has a special value and therefore right to existence and recognition, and that to secure this right the nation must possess autonomy, often understood as a sovereign nation state" (Breuilly, 2016, pp. 1–2). Within the nationalist family, the SNP can be described as a "peripheral," "minority," or "substate" nationalist party (Cetrà & Liñeira, 2018; Keating, 1996; Keating & McGarry, 2001). This is because the nation whose interests it claims to defend does not correspond to an independent state, but is part of a wider, pluri-national state, namely the United Kingdom. As an organization, the SNP only exists at the territorial level of the minority nation it speaks for, and it only seeks to mobilize electoral support within that nation. However, it does not just compete for seats at the Scottish national level: like other minority nationalist parties, it "seek[s] representation at several different political levels" (Elias & Tronconi, 2011, p. 4), namely the local level (local councils), the Scottish level (the Scottish Parliament), the State-wide level (the British House of Commons), as well as, until Brexit, the European level. The SNP has competed in all Scottish local elections and all British general elections since becoming a mainstream political party in the 1970s, in all European elections since those were first held in 1979, and in all Scottish Parliament elections since that Parliament was established in 1999.

The SNP can also be described as a "counter-state" nationalist party (Brubaker, 1992/1998), as its primary objective is Scotland's secession from the state to which it belongs. Contrary to other parties such as its Welsh counterpart, Plaid Cymru, which was founded at about the same time as the SNP, the latter did not hesitate for long between supporting the extension of Scottish autonomy within the UK and supporting full independence. Only for the first 8 years of its existence (from 1934 to 1942) was there an internal debate over how to define "self-government for Scotland," which was at the time the party's first and primary aim as stated in its constitution (Finlay, 1994). After the party split of 1942, when the more moderate members left to form another organization, the SNP became clearly committed to full independence, although the word "independence" only replaced the word "self-government" in the party's constitution in 2004.

Two labels commonly used in the literature on party families are here discarded. First, the SNP is sometimes categorized as belonging to the "autonomist" party family, defined by its "shared advocacy of the reform of the territorial structure of the state in which they operate, in the direction of restoring some degree of autonomy to the periphery, although the precise nature and extent of the reform demanded varies from party to party" (Elias & Tronconi, 2011, p. 20). There are two problems with the "autonomist" label as applied to the SNP: not only does it obscure the fact that the SNP's primary aim has almost always been full independence but also it obscures the extent to which being for or against a form of political autonomy short of independence was a source of internal divisions within the party for much of its history. While it is true that the SNP campaigned for the setting up of an autonomous Scottish Parliament in the late 1990s, the question of whether to support what is known in the UK as "devolution" was one over which the party had torn itself apart in the decades before that, as evidenced in the two-volume history of the SNP by former party leader Gordon Wilson (2009, 2014).

It is therefore more enlightening to describe the SNP as a "separatist" party, although the SNP itself has always rejected this label (e.g., Johnson, 2010; Sturgeon, 2014), which it takes to be disparaging. In a "canvasser's manual" dating back to 1975, the SNP advised its members to give to anyone who said that "the SNP means separatism" the following reply: "Nobody calls it the 'American Declaration of Separatism.' The SNP wants independence, not separatism" (SNP, 1975, p. 27). What's more, the SNP believes the word "separation" ill-suited to describe its political project in which independence is envisaged "not as a separation but as a new form of partnership with the rest of the UK which would maintain institutional, economic, cultural and inter-governmental connections" (Cetrà & Liñeira, 2018, p. 725). At the time of the Scottish independence referendum, in 2014, the SNP's prospectus notably included "a currency union; a common British Isles travel area, defence and security co-operation; cross-border public bodies; a strategic energy

partnership; and a joint venture between the BBC and a new Scottish broadcasting corporation" (Cetrà & Liñeira, 2018, p. 725).

Second, the sub-state nationalist party family to which the SNP belongs is often characterized as "ethnoregionalist" (e.g., De Winter & Gomez-Reino Cachafeiro, 2002). This is an ill-fitting way of describing the SNP for two reasons. The first is that, although, from an international perspective, the word "regionalist" is generally taken as a synonym for "sub-state," its use in the British context confuses more than it clarifies, as Scotland is not considered as a region —not by the nationalists, nor by anybody else, whatever their political leanings. More importantly, it conceals one of the major specificities of Scottish nationalism compared to other nationalisms to which it is generally likened (such as Quebecois or Catalonian nationalism). Unusually, Scottish nationalists have never had to fight for Scotland to be recognized as a nation, rather than a mere region. This has always been a given, and even the most strident of "Unionists" (such as former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher) have never denied that Scotland is a nation in its own right.

The word "ethnoregionalist" is also here dismissed because of its prefix, which implies that the SNP defines the Scottish nation by ethnic criteria (ancestry or race), when it has long been at pains to define it along civic lines. Despite the longstanding popularity of the ethnic/civic dichotomy in nationalism studies, it has increasingly been noted that all forms of nationalism include both ethnic and civic elements (e.g., Brubaker, 1998, p. 299). However, in the case of the SNP, the balance is clearly tilted toward civic nationalism, even if cultural elements such as language are weighed in on the ethnic side. In other words, the SNP's understanding of the nation is one based on criteria such as a common territory, common political institutions and rights, as well as, crucially, will and consent, more than on common ancestry or even a common language and religion. Former party leader Alex Salmond, for instance, liked to define "the people of Scotland" as "the people who live, work and bring up their families in Scotland" (Duclos, 2016). As noted by political theorist Tom Nairn as early as the 1970s, the SNP's nationalism is "overwhelmingly a politically-oriented separatism, rather exaggeratedly concerned with questions of state and power, and frequently indifferent to the themes of race and cultural ancestry" (Nairn, 1981, p. 71).

It is here argued that the ideal-type which the SNP most closely approximates is that of the mass-based, pluralist-nationalist party, to use the terminology adopted in Gunther and Diamond's typology of parties (2003). In organizational terms, the SNP is clearly a mass (or mass-based) party, that is, one "characterized by a large base of dues-paying members who remain active in party affairs even during periods between elections" (Gunther & Diamond, 2003, p. 178). In terms of its ideology and belief system, it is not just a nationalist party, but also a pluralist-nationalist one, as opposed to a proto-hegemonic, ultranationalist one. Gunther and Diamond (2003) define pluralist-nationalist parties as ones that "seek to win

elections as the principal avenue towards achieving their programmatic objectives"
and whose "vote-mobilizational strategy relies heavily on the development and ac-
tivation of a mass-membership base" (p. 178); by contrast, ultranationalist parties
are proto-hegemonic in that they "advance an ideology that exalts the nation or
race above the individual, detests minorities and openly admires the use of force
by a strong, quasi-military party often relying upon a uniformed party militia"
(p. 181). Interestingly, Gunther and Diamond (2003) distinguish the nationalist
party family from the ethnic (or ethnicity-based) party family, first, because "un-
like nationalist parties, [the] programmatic objectives [of ethnic parties] do not
typically include secession or a high level of decision-making and administrative
autonomy from the existing state," and second, because, while nationalist parties
"seek to expand their electoral base by convincing ever larger numbers of citizens
that they should identify with the national group and its mission, and often define
the 'nation' in a flexible manner that facilitates this objective", the ethnic party
"takes the demographically defined boundaries of the group as 'given', and seeks
to represent its interests exclusively" (p. 194). By these standards, the SNP is unar-
guably a (pluralist-)nationalist party, rather than an ethnic one.

What has been the party's electoral history, and what impact has that history
had on its ideological evolution? The SNP remained a fringe party until the late
1960s or early 1970s. It did not manage to reach the threshold of 1% of the Scottish
vote before the 1960s and did not capture more than 5% of the vote in that decade.
Outside of the specific Second World War circumstances which allowed it to hold
a seat in the UK House of Commons for a few months in 1945,[2] the party won
its first parliamentary seat in 1967, on the occasion of a by-election, and its first
seat in a UK general election (on 11.4% of the Scottish vote) in 1970. From then
on, it never lost its representation in the House of Commons, winning at least two
seats and over 10% of the Scottish vote in all subsequent general elections. Only
with these first electoral victories did it become organizationally strong enough
to field candidates in all Scottish constituencies. In the two general elections that
were organized in 1974, it managed to win, respectively, 7 seats on 21.9% of the
vote and 11 seats on 30.4% of the vote. Those were to remain "the SNP's best
electoral results—by far—until the introduction of devolution in 1999, and its best
general election results until 2015" (Duclos, 2017). It was only in the wake of the
failed Scottish independence referendum of 2014 that the SNP was able to reach and
surpass its general election record of October 1974: in 2015, it won an astonishing
95% of Scottish seats (56 out of 59 Scottish constituencies) on exactly 50% of the
popular vote. Its latest general election results (of December 2019), although not as

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[2]The SNP won the Motherwell by-election of April 1945 in highly unusual political circum-
stances. The major political parties having agreed to a truce for the duration of the war, the SNP was
the only party to compete for the seat against the Labour Party, which had held the seat until then.
The SNP lost the seat in the post-war general election of the same year.

astonishing, were still outstanding since it managed to win 81% of seats (48 seats) on 45% of the Scottish vote.

Even though the SNP stopped being a fringe party in the late 1960s, it "would remain outside the political mainstream until the establishment of the Scottish Parliament" in 1999 (Mitchell, 2009, p. 31). Only such a development could give it governing potential, or even coalition potential (Sartori, 1976). The SNP does not stand a chance of ever winning a majority in the British House of Commons since it does not contest seats across the UK, and to this date, it has never been considered as a suitable coalition partner by any of the British parties of government due to its support for Scottish independence. The introduction of devolution in 1999 allowed the SNP to move from the status of a minor party in the UK political arena to the more enviable status of main opposition party in the Scottish political arena. This would remain until 2007, when it first became a governing party. Since then, that is, for the past 12 years, the SNP has been in office continuously. Even more strikingly, it has won all electoral contests in Scotland since the failed independence referendum of 2014, be they local, Scottish, State-wide, or European. To use Sartori's terminology, Scotland has long been a country with a predominant-party system, that is, "a more-than-one-party system in which rotation does not occur in fact" (Sartori, 1976, p. 173). For many decades, the mantle went to the Labour Party, which came first in Scotland at every single general election from the 1960s to 2015. Since then, the SNP has unarguably replaced the Labour Party in the role of the predominant party.[3]

What impact has this electoral history had on the SNP's ideological evolution? The 1970s was the decade when the SNP stopped being a fringe party; it was also the decade when it started its shift from claiming to be a "non-ideological" nationalist party, that is, one that was neither left- nor right-wing, to being clearly left-wing. Before then, the party denounced as "untrue" both class-based politics—or "the doctrine of class war which is the dividing line between Tory and Socialist" (SNP, 195-[?])—and "the false divisions of society" which such politics created (SNP manifesto, 1959). As late as 1974, the party saw itself as a "coalition of left, right and centre brought together by the urgent need for self-government" (SNP, 1974a); in other words, a "coalition in which the interests of the whole people of Scotland are put first before any kind of sectional interest" (SNP, 1974b). However, 1974 was also when the SNP started describing itself as a "social democratic" party for the first time (SNP, 1974c). Yet, at the time, not all in the party accepted this shift to the left, and the SNP's left-wing identity was only cemented a decade later, through its opposition to Thatcherism. Since then, the party has been comfortable in its left-wing, social democratic identity. A very recent study of the main British parties has confirmed that today, "the bulk of Scottish Nationalist members fall into

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[3]However, it should be noted that the SNP did not manage to win an absolute majority of seats in every election, which is part of Sartori's definition of "predominant parties."

either the socially liberal- or the socially conservative-left category" (Bale, Webb, & Poletti, 2020, p. 63).

What of the independence movement beyond the SNP? The Scottish independence movement is dominated by that one party in a way that other separatist movements are not. However, two other independence-supporting parties, both of which are left-wing, have managed to get some of their candidates elected to the Scottish Parliament, continuously since the parliament's creation in 1999 in the case of the Scottish Greens, and from 1999 to 2007 in the case of the Scottish Socialist Party (SSP). Moreover, the Scottish Greens currently have bargaining power beyond their meager parliamentary presence, due to the SNP's lack of a total majority in parliament, which has made the Scottish Government dependent on the support of the 6 Green MSPs (Members of the Scottish Parliament) to carry its legislative programs and pass its budgets. Both the Scottish Green Party and the Scottish Socialist Party officially became pro-independence in the early years of devolution, at the very beginning of the 21st century. This allowed them to experience a huge boost in the wake of the 2014 independence referendum, which saw all separatist parties gain a great many new members. The SNP went from 25,642 card-carriers on referendum day to 102,000 members 6 months later, and the Scottish Greens from around 1500 to around 9000; as for the SSP, in the weeks that followed the referendum, it added 2500 members to its existing 1000 members (Duclos, 2018b, pp. 60–61). This trend was all the more striking as it contradicted the "general decline of party membership numbers across the democratic world," for which, in the words of three political party specialists, the evidence is "overwhelming" (Poguntke, Scarrow, & Webb, 2016, p. 667). In electoral terms, however, the Scottish Greens and the SSP have remained minor parties, and they cannot be put on the same level as the SNP which has dominated the political landscape in Scotland for more than a decade. However, what is unique in the case of Scottish separatism is that all of the main pro-independence parties are (more or less) left-wing.

The independence referendum campaign of 2012–2014 also saw the birth of several non-party-political separatist organizations, the most prominent among which are Women for Independence and the Radical Independence Campaign, both of which are also left-wing. Women for Independence, which was founded in 2012 and formally constituted in 2015, describes itself as a network of women whose first two aims are, according to its internal constitution, to "promote the causes of Scottish independence and other constitutional changes likely to contribute to greater home-rule for Scotland" and to "campaign for fair and equal gender representation in public and political life in Scotland, and for other causes likely to further the interests of women in Scotland and enhance democracy" (Women for Independence, retrieved 2020). Like Women for Independence, the Radical Independence Campaign was founded in 2012 but formally constituted in the wake

of the independence referendum in 2015. It was originally launched so as to pull the campaign for independence in a more socialist direction, but decided to carry on campaigning after the referendum as it believed that there was still a "need for a broad, radical social movement of the left" (Duclos, 2018b, p. 64). Its internal constitution states that its main purpose of "working for democracy, social justice, environmental sustainability and peace [...] can best be met in an independent Scotland." In addition to supporting independence, it also stands for a Scotland which is "for a social alternative to austerity and privatisation; Green and environmentally sustainable; a modern republic for real democracy; committed to equality and opposition to discrimination on grounds of gender, race, disability, sexuality or age; internationalist and opposed to war, NATO and Trident" (RIC, retrieved 2020). In summary, the main separatist organizations in Scotland, party-political and otherwise, are all both pro-independence and left-wing. This has given the Scottish independence movement greater ideological coherence than other separatist movements. However, its internal coherence has been put under great strain by the SNP's change in independence strategy since the 2016 "Brexit" referendum.

2 Sources of unity and division in the Scottish independence movement since the "Brexit" referendum of 2016

All the political parties currently represented in the Scottish Parliament, whatever their views on Scottish independence, campaigned to remain in the EU during the 2016 referendum campaign—even the Scottish Conservatives. A clear majority of independence supporters also support EU membership, and both the SNP and the Greens are pro-European parties: the SNP has supported a policy of "independence in Europe" since the 1980s and the Greens have been pro-EU ever since the party's foundation. However, "[f]ar from being united in their determination to keep Scotland in the EU, supporters of independence are divided on the subject, much like almost every other political party and movement in the UK": it is estimated that 38% of people who had voted Yes to Scottish independence in 2014 voted to leave the EU in 2016 (Curtice, 2016). Divisions over European membership have always existed but, as it is here argued, they have been compounded by the SNP's reconfiguration of its independence strategy at the time of the 2016 EU referendum. This change in strategy and each of the tactical choices which it has led the SNP to make in the past few years have all come under criticism from the independence movement, including from SNP members. In other words, the SNP leadership's post-Brexit independence strategy has been a constant source of division within the independence movement since the days that followed the 2016 referendum.

First, the Scottish Government's—in fact, the SNP leadership's—change in independence strategy in view of the EU referendum will be presented. Then, the SNP leadership's evolving positions on Brexit and on the issue of a second independence

referendum since 2016 will be examined. At every critical moment, each of which triggered a controversy in the independence movement, the range of strategies that were theoretically available to the SNP leadership will be presented through an analysis of the main alternative options defended in the independence movement. The main conclusion will be that the EU referendum has given birth to new divides which threaten the internal cohesion of not just the independence movement but also the SNP itself.

2.1 The reconfiguration of the SNP's independence strategy in view of the 2016 EU referendum

The EU referendum and its results led the SNP leadership to make two major strategic decisions: the first was to inextricably tie the timing of, and the rationale for, a new independence referendum to Brexit, and the second was to prioritize campaigning against Brexit (or against a "hard Brexit") over campaigning for independence. These choices and all their offshoots would come under repeated criticism on the part of a wide section of the independence movement.

A few weeks before the 2016 EU referendum, the SNP had won its third consecutive Scottish Parliament election on the basis of a manifesto which had clearly stated that:

> [t]he Scottish Parliament should have the right to hold another [independence] referendum if there is clear and sustained evidence that independence has become the preferred option of a majority of the Scottish people – or if there is a significant and material change in the circumstances that prevailed in 2014, such as Scotland being taken out of the EU against our will (SNP, 2016a, p. 23).

This would become a major plank in the SNP's case for a second independence referendum. In wake of the EU referendum, the Scottish First Minister and SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon (2016a) stressed that winning the election on the basis of that manifesto gave her government a democratic mandate to organize a new independence referendum if Scotland was "taken out of the EU against [its] will." In addition to the argument of the democratic mandate, two other points were stressed. First, Brexit constituted a "significant and material change in the circumstances" that had prevailed at the time of the first independence referendum, so that the UK in which Scotland had voted to remain in 2014 would no longer exist after Brexit. Second, imposing Brexit on Scotland would reinforce the "democratic deficit" from which it has long suffered as part of the UK. The democratic deficit argument has been at the heart of the Scottish independence case for several decades. For independence supporters, one of the main advantages of independence is that Scotland would be guaranteed to always get the government it votes for, which can

never be the case in a UK where it is home to only 8% of the total population. Central to the 2014 independence referendum campaign was the idea that Scotland was—yet again—being ruled by a Conservative government against its will (most Scottish people having voted Labour or SNP at every general election since the 1960s). Brexit was seen as yet another example of a crucial political choice being imposed on Scotland against its majority wishes. The timing of a new independence referendum was also linked to Brexit, with the SNP leader saying that Scotland should be able to organize one in the (then) 2-year timescale between the triggering of article 50 of the Treaty on European Union and the UK's official exit from the EU.

However, Nicola Sturgeon did not say that she *would* ask for a second independence referendum to be organized in that timescale. What also became clear in the immediate wake of the Brexit vote was that obtaining a new independence referendum was not going to be the Scottish Government's priority. Rather, its "overriding priority" would be "to protect Scotland's relationship with, and our place in, the European Union" (Scottish Parliament, 2016). As for an independence referendum, it was presented as an "alternative optio[n] to ensure our place in the single market in the event of a hard Brexit" (SNP, 2016b). In Sturgeon's own words (2016b), her first concern was to "explore all possible options to give effect to how Scotland voted and to protect Scotland's interests to avoid us being taken out of the European Union against our will [...]. I'm not starting from the premise of saying it's got to be independence."

How did the independence movement react to the SNP's post-referendum strategy? In the immediate aftermath of the referendum, opposition to the SNP's new strategy was muted, and it was mostly limited to longstanding nationalist Eurosceptics such as Jim Sillars and Jim Fairlie, both former deputy leaders of the SNP. As argued by Fairlie (2016), who had left the SNP in 1990 over the party's commitment to the EU, traditional nationalists such as himself could not support the Scottish Government's strategy of fighting Brexit because they objected to EU membership, for the very same reason that they objected to Scotland being part of the UK: because both meant a loss of sovereignty for Scotland. As for the decision to tie the independence issue closely to EU membership, it would "divide the National Movement, with those Yes supporters whose devotion to the EU is unlikely to change, ranged against Traditional nationalists who see the EU as another incorporating political union." Like him, Eurosceptics within the independence movement have argued since 2016 that the SNP leadership should give up on its "devotion to the EU" so as not to lose the votes of the estimated 440,000 Leave voters who were also regular SNP supporters, and thereby "lose the 2IndyRef [*second independence referendum*] so many Yes supporters so desperately want." However, the extent of internal divisions over the SNP's post-referendum strategy on Europe and independence would only become obvious later.

At the time, those Eurosceptic voices were drowned out by the more vocal pro-European independence supporters. In the wider independence movement, the SNP's new strategy was (unsurprisingly) accepted by the strongly pro-European Scottish Green Party (Scottish Parliament, June 28, 2016), as well as by organizations such as Women for Independence (2016) and by the pro-independence press (*Sunday Herald*, 2016). Perhaps more significantly, it was not immediately opposed by leftist collective Radical Independence Campaign (RIC) despite there being many Eurosceptics in its ranks. Rather than criticize the SNP's new strategy, RIC's (2016) first reaction was to avoid taking a stand on the merits of EU membership, preferring to see the results of the referendum as confirmation of an "untenable" constitutional divide between Scotland and the rest of the UK. However, its skepticism regarding both the EU and the SNP's strategy of linking independence and EU membership was made clear a few months later, during its special conference of October 2016, when it agreed to:

> [...] think very carefully about the EU in relation to the next [independence] referendum. While it is likely that Brexit is the trigger for the referendum, we need to ensure we have a broad and radical policy platform that can appeal to the hundreds of thousands of Yes voters that also voted to leave the EU. The question on the ballot paper should be word for word the same as 2014 and should not be tied to the EU. Our movement should not be afraid to debate and discuss openly a prospectus that is radical and offers a real alternative to the stagnation of the failed neoliberal experiment, and that includes the role of the EU in this process (Shafi, 2016).

As can be seen in those statements, RIC disapproved both of linking a second independence referendum to EU membership, for instance, in the wording of the question asked, and of linking the case for independence to Brexit, arguing that it should instead be based on a radical, anti-liberal programme. However, even then, they did not frontally oppose the SNP, instead appealing to radicals to think "very carefully" about its new strategy.

2.2 The SNP's Brexit strategy since the EU referendum and its critics in the independence movement

The SNP leadership's Brexit strategy was made clear in December 2016 with the publication of the Scottish Government's first official White Paper on Brexit, entitled *Scotland's Place in Europe*. The Scottish Government reaffirmed that it remained "committed to EU membership as an independent nation" (Scottish Government, December 2016, viii). As a reminder, "independence in Europe" has been the SNP's official position since the 1980s. However, "short of continuing UK

membership of the EU or independence within the EU for Scotland," its preference went to continued membership of the single market, either of the whole of the UK or of Scotland only, should the rest of the UK opt for a "hard Brexit" (p. 45). The chapter was thus largely devoted to, first, defending continued membership of the single market in principle, and second, explaining how a "differentiated" approach for Scotland might work out in practice. In other words, the SNP's preferred option of "independence in Europe" was ignored in what the Scottish Government described as an attempt to "find common ground with the UK Government" (vi), although the First Minister was careful to preface the document with a reminder that "[i]f the real and substantial risks that Brexit poses to Scotland's interests cannot be mitigated within the UK, the option of choosing a better future through independence should be open to the Scottish people" (viii). In summary, in the autumn that followed the EU referendum, rather than campaign for independence in the EU, the Scottish Government chose to focus on campaigning for Scotland to remain in the single market as part of the UK.

The wider independence movement was not opposed to Scotland remaining in the single market. This was because most independence supporters were also "Remainers," even on the far left: at the Radical Independence Conference of January 2017, participants overwhelmingly supported Scotland's membership of the EU (Jamieson, 2017). However, this was the period when internal divisions in the SNP started resurfacing over the merits of sticking to its long-held "independence in Europe" policy. Most notably, this was when the SNP's best-known figurehead, namely Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond, started proposing an alternative to it. As reported in the press, in November 2016, Salmond, acting independently of the Scottish Government, had talks with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) to explore the possibility of an independent Scotland joining that association, rather than becoming a full EU member. A year later, Salmond (2017) officially confirmed that he now supported an "independent Scotland as a member of EFTA." Membership of EFTA offered what he described as a quick and effective way for Scotland to remain in the single market and had the further advantage of being a possible prelude to full EU membership, although he made it clear that he now supported membership of EFTA in its own right. In other words, Alex Salmond used the Scottish Government's post-referendum decision to campaign for membership of the single market to try and get the SNP to give up on its "independence in the EU" policy in favor of membership of EFTA.

The proposals made by the Scottish Government in *Scotland's Place in Europe* were formally rejected by the British Government in March 2017, on the day that UK Prime Minister Theresa May officially notified the European Council of the UK's intention to leave the EU, thereby triggering article 50 of the Treaty on European Union. Despite this rebuttal, the Scottish Government's priority regarding Brexit remained to campaign for continued membership of the single market

until late 2018, when its European strategy took a new turn. This new turn coincided with the publication in October of the Scottish Government's second post-referendum White Paper on Scotland's place in Europe, this time entitled *Scotland's Place in Europe: Our Way Forward*. The White Paper confirmed that the Scottish Government's first preference went to full EU membership and that short of that, it would continue to campaign for membership of the single market as a compromise solution (Scottish Government, 2018). However, what was new in that same period was that the Scottish Government started offering cautious endorsement of the UK-wide campaign for a second EU referendum, colloquially known as a "People's Vote."

Until late 2018, the SNP's position on a People's Vote had been (in the words of SNP MEP Alyn Smith) "open but not persuaded": as suggested by Smith (2018), the SNP would only commit to supporting the campaign when it had already gained ground in England. Their support started coming at the time of the SNP annual Conference of October 2018, with Nicola Sturgeon (2018a) telling SNP members that "[i]f there is a proposal for another EU referendum, SNP MPs will vote for it," which she confirmed in a message sent to the participants to the first big "People's March" in London, on 20 October. For several months, however, the SNP leadership would remain very cautious in its support. At the official launch of the Scottish Government's second European White Paper, also in October, Sturgeon (2018b) noted that a People's Vote "wouldn't necessarily protect Scotland from the same outcome as in 2016," and the White Paper itself stated that it was not clear how a new EU referendum "would guarantee that Scotland would not, yet again, face exit against our will" (Scottish Government, 2018, p. 5). Similarly, on 7 November, all SNP MSPs bar one supported a parliamentary motion "providing unequivocal support for a public vote on the final terms of the Brexit deal," but they also repeated the line that another EU referendum "would not necessarily protect Scotland from the same outcome as that of the 2016 referendum" (Scottish Parliament, 2018). Only in March 2019 did the SNP start offering unconditional support for a People's Vote, with Sturgeon actually attending the second People's March in London, on 23 March, and most of the SNP group supporting the option of a confirmatory vote on Brexit when it was put to an indicative vote in the British House of Commons, on 27 March. Support for a People's Vote was also included in the SNP's (2019, p. 4) manifesto for the European election of May 2019.

The SNP leadership's decision to support the People's Vote campaign was a hugely controversial one within the independence movement. Criticism came both from the wider movement (especially from the left) and from within the SNP itself. Pro-Brexit SNP MSP Alex Neil was quoted in the Scottish daily *The Herald* on November 8, 2018, as saying that the decision was made by the SNP leadership without any consultation of the party's elected representatives and that there was "a lot of unhappiness" in the SNP over it (*The Herald*, 8 November 2018). Two SNP

MPs, including its longest-serving MP, Pete Wishart, openly opposed this change in strategy and abstained when the option of a confirmatory vote on Brexit was put to the House of Commons in March 2019, even though by doing so, they were breaking the party whip.

From independence supporters, the main reason for opposing a second EU referendum was that this would set a precedent which could be used against the independence camp. As noted by Pete Wishart (2018), "[t]here is now a view amongst the politicians leading the People's Vote campaign that all big constitutional referendums should now have a 'confirmatory' second vote. [...] By enthusiastically buying into this confirmatory vote for an EU referendum, we weaken our hand in resisting Unionist calls for a second vote on a successful indyref." In other words, in the event of a Yes victory in a future Scottish independence referendum, Unionists could legitimately argue that a second referendum was needed to validate the final deal agreed on by the UK and Scottish governments. This, Wishart (2019) pointed out, would "invite the UK to give us the worst possible 'deal'" in order to reverse the result of the first referendum. Many independence supporters have opposed a second EU referendum for those very reasons. Such was, for instance, the case of a pro-independence Eurosceptic group called "Autonomy," which started out as an internal SNP group and is now a cross-party movement. When the SNP started officially backing a second EU referendum, in October 2018, Autonomy issued a statement on its Twitter page in which it "wholeheartedly reject[ed]" this new strategy, because "[s]upport for a People's Vote suggests that any form of independence requires multiple referenda," so that a "People's Vote hands the British State the opportunity to put roadblock after roadblock to impede our ability to become an independent nation."

What alternative strategy did those critics propose? Angus MacNeil (the other SNP MP who abstained in the vote on a confirmatory EU referendum) and others have argued that instead of campaigning for a second EU referendum, the SNP should "get fully behind the campaign to revoke article 50," which would be "in line with how the people of Scotland voted in the EU referendum" without being tactically disadvantageous to the independence camp (Nutt, 2019). However, this proposal was never taken up by the SNP leadership, and the party's European election manifesto of 2019 made it clear that it would only back revoking article 50 "if a no-deal Brexit [was] the only alternative" (SNP, 2019, p. 4).

2.3 The SNP's independence strategy since the EU referendum and its critics in the independence movement

As a result of the SNP leadership's post-referendum decision to concentrate on campaigning against Brexit (or against a hard Brexit), independence was essentially presented as an alternative option should Scotland be forced to leave the European single market. This was made clear when the SNP Conference of October 2016

(the first after the EU referendum) voted a resolution whose final paragraph read: "Conference believes that every avenue must be explored to keep Scotland in the EU. If no viable solution to safeguard our membership as part of the UK exists, Scotland should prepare for a second independence referendum and seek to remain in Europe as an independent country" (SNP, 2016c). In other words, a second independence referendum would only be envisaged in the event that Brexit was imposed on Scotland.

However, the Conference debate over that resolution also made obvious the extent to which the SNP was divided over the strategy of tying a second independence referendum to Brexit. The resolution was voted overwhelmingly, but only after 20 minutes of lively debate in what was described as a "rare public display of internal division" in the party (*The Herald*, 15 October 2016). Demands were made for the resolution to remitted back, both by members who had voted Leave in the EU referendum, and by members worried about giving "Unionists the impression that we'll only ask for independence if Brexit happens" and wishing to stress that "in or out of Europe we need independence" (author's notes, 2016).

Despite internal opposition to this strategy, the SNP leadership continued to use the threat of an independence referendum as a way of putting pressure on the UK government to involve the Scottish government in its EU plans and negotiations. However, by March 2017, Sturgeon "had evidently come to the conclusion that the UK government had no intention of accommodating her stance on Brexit" (Curtice, Perry, Phillips, & Phillips, 2018, p. 199). In spite of initial promises that the devolved administrations would be consulted on Brexit, the Scottish Government had been given no input in the UK negotiating line, and full single market membership for Scotland was not supported by either of the two main British parties. This led Sturgeon to up the ante and on March 31, 2017, she sent the British government an official demand to be given the right to organize a new independence referendum, a demand which had been backed up by a vote in the Scottish Parliament on 28 March. The demand came just 2 days after British Prime Minister Theresa May's letter to European Council President Donald Tusk notifying him of the UK's decision to leave the EU.

Sturgeon (2017) had made it officially known that such a request was forthcoming on 13 March. Since the EU referendum, she had argued, her government had attempted to come to a compromise solution with the UK government, one "that would reconcile the UK-wide vote to leave with the Scottish vote to remain." The UK government having refused all forms of compromise, the Scottish Government had no choice but to explore the alternative path of independence. This would mean the organization of a new independence referendum, the timing of which would be determined by the Brexit process. In Sturgeon's words, it would have to be organized "when the terms of Brexit [were] known, but before it [was] too late to choose our own course," which at the time meant between the autumn of

2018 and the spring of 2019. However, Sturgeon had also stressed that "even at this late stage," she was "not turning [her] back on further discussions should the UK government change its mind and decide it is willing to agree to our compromise proposals" on Brexit.

How did the wider independence movement react to the Scottish Government's official demand for the right to organize a new independence referendum? The Scottish Green Party supported it in the Scottish Parliament, thus allowing the proposal to pass in the absence of a total SNP majority. By contrast, the Scottish Socialist Party described Sturgeon's move as a "huge mistake": what it opposed was not an independence referendum, but rather the fact that the referendum demand had come on the back of Brexit and as an alternative to continued EU or single market membership, which "reduced independence to a Brexit bargaining chip" (Fox, 2017).

Remarkably, just 3 months after requesting the right to a new independence referendum, the Scottish First Minister officially backtracked on this demand (Scottish Parliament, 2017). This turnabout came after UK Prime Minister Theresa May had made it known on television (on March 16, 2017) that her government would not accede to it, arguing that "now [was] not the time" for a second independence referendum. It also came after the snap UK general election organized on 8 June, in which the SNP had had disappointing results. The SNP had come first in Scotland (by far) with 35 seats and 37% of the vote, but this had still meant a loss of 21 seats, which the party had interpreted as punishment for its referendum demand—partly wrongly, as has since been demonstrated (Curtice et al., 2018, pp. 212–216). Thus, on June 27, 2017, Nicola Sturgeon announced in the Scottish Parliament that her government would "not seek to introduce legislation for an independence referendum immediately." This, she claimed, was just to "reassure people" that there would not be an independence referendum in the near future "but only at the end of the [Brexit] process." In the meantime, her government would focus exclusively on its European strategy and "seek to build maximum support around the proposals set out in the paper that we published in December—Scotland's Place in Europe—to keep us in the single market."

The SNP leadership's decision to postpone the holding of an independence referendum, at first planned for late 2018 or early 2019, now put back to an indefinite date, raised a great controversy within the party, so much so that it was at the heart of the SNP deputy leadership contest of spring 2018. Angus Robertson's resignation from his post as "depute leader" in February 2018 led to an internal contest, for which voting took place between 18 May and 8 June of that same year. The campaign largely turned around the issue of the timing of a second independence referendum and revealed the extent of internal disagreement over the leadership's decision to postpone *indyref2*. Out of the three candidates to replace Angus Robertson, two (frontrunner Keith Brown and Julie Hepburn) were close

to the party leadership, while the third (Chris McEleny) made his opposition to the leadership's *indyref* strategy the central plank of his campaign. His argument was that "Scotland cannot afford to wait any longer to see if things can get better" for two major reasons, Brexit and Conservative-led austerity, both of which were presented as a result of the democratic deficit Scotland suffered from within the UK (*The National*, 12 April 2018). His platform as a candidate was therefore that a referendum on Scottish independence "should be held within the next 18 months to protect the freedoms we get from the EU and the status of 200,000 EU nationals that have come to live and work here" (*Holyrood*, 6 June 2018). Although McEleny finished third with 16.2% of the vote, his opposition to the party leadership's position on the timing of a new independence referendum won him the support of many grassroots members and was most certainly the reason behind his rise in popularity: 16.2% might not have been enough to win him the vote, but it was a vast improvement on his results of 2016, when he had first competed for the same position and had only managed to attract 3.4% of the vote.

Those who backed the new SNP leadership line of waiting until the end of the Brexit process to have another independence referendum mainly made the point that "optimum conditions" for a new referendum had not yet been reached, for three main reasons. First, the Brexit vote had not yet led to a significant independence push in Scotland, meaning that if a referendum were organized in the near future, it would possibly be lost; another *indyref* should only be held when victory was guaranteed. Second, there had not been an independence push yet because Brexit had not happened yet. When Scottish people started to feel the economic consequences of Brexit, they would turn to independence. Third, how could an independence case be built before the end of the Brexit process? More clarity was needed on what Scotland's future relation with the EU would be before a definitive case for independence could be made.

Those who opposed the leadership line and pressed for a referendum before May 2021 also defended three main arguments. In addition to the previously mentioned point that "Scotland cannot afford to wait any longer," it was argued that the independence camp had a "mandate" for a referendum, based on the pro-independence majority in the Scottish Parliament, as well as on the fact that the SNP MSPs had won the election on the pledge that the Scottish Parliament should have the right to hold another referendum "if there [was] a significant and material change in the circumstances that [had] prevailed in 2014, such as Scotland being taken out of the EU against our will." This mandate, however, only lasted until the following Scottish Parliament election, after which the independence camp might lose its majority. The Scottish Government therefore had a duty to hold a referendum before May 2021 (when the next election will be held). Second, in answer to the "optimum conditions" argument, it was pointed out that victory in a second referendum could never be guaranteed—"[i]f we wait for certainty, we wait forever",

in the words of one prominent SNP blogger (Kelly, 2018)—and that in any case, optimum conditions would not "arise spontaneously" but would be "created by campaigning" (Bell, 2018).

Finally, in December 2019 and in the wake of the UK general election organized to try and end the Brexit stalemate, the Scottish Government once more officially requested the right to organize a new independence referendum. The demand was to be able to organize a referendum in 2020, that is, before the end of the Brexit transition period. Once again, London rejected the demand, on the grounds that "the 2014 Independence Referendum was a 'once in a generation' vote" which the British government was committed to respect (UK Prime Minister, 2020). This verdict had been widely expected, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson having previously warned that he would never agree to a second independence referendum. If the Scottish First Minister had still gone ahead with the demand, it was because one of its main purposes had been to reassure the independence movement that the Scottish government and the SNP leadership were still committed to independence and to a new referendum, despite having backtracked on its first request of 2017, and having prioritized its Brexit campaign over its independence campaign. In other words, the latest *indyref* request was mainly made in an attempt to bridge the divides created in the independence movement by the SNP leadership's major strategic choices since the EU referendum. In any event, in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Scottish Government has announced that it no longer plans on holding a referendum in 2020 (BBC News, March 2020).

3 Conclusion

In electoral terms, Brexit has not been detrimental to the SNP: 100% of Scottish constituencies having voted in the same way, and in the way favored by the SNP, the EU referendum was not an electoral game-changer for the party (contrary to the two main British parties, the Conservatives and Labour). Since 2016, the SNP has remained the dominant party in Scotland, and if polls are to be believed, it will remain so after the next Scottish Parliament election of 2021. The EU referendum has also worked to the advantage of the SNP in several respects. First, it has given the SNP a legitimate reason to re-open the independence debate very soon after the failed independence referendum of 2014. Second, it has both reinforced the main pro-independence argument, namely the idea that Scotland within the UK suffers from a democratic deficit to which the only answer is independence, and weakened the main anti-independence argument, namely that independence means uncertainty and that remaining in the UK is the only safe, risk-free option. Third, since the EU referendum, support for independence has become "more strongly linked with a favourable attitude towards the EU" (Curtice et al., 2018, p. 196), which the SNP could interpret as validation of its longstanding "independence in

Europe" policy. Even more importantly, there are signs that Brexit could finally be pushing the level of independence support up to the decisive threshold of 50%.

However, the Brexit referendum vote has also created a context in which independence supporters are turning against each other and disagreeing both over the principle of linking Scottish independence to membership of the EU, and over the timing of a second independence referendum. The decision to tie independence to EU membership was not one that the SNP first made at the time of the 2016 referendum; rather, its origins can be traced back to the 1980s when the SNP adopted its "independence in Europe" policy. However, what was new in the aftermath of the EU referendum was the decision to give priority to the campaign to retain single market membership over the campaign for independence and, most importantly, to make the latter dependent on the former.

This change in strategy has never ceased to be opposed by a significant part of the independence movement, which has tried to promote alternatives ever since. In other words, all the tactical decisions on Europe and on independence made by the SNP since the EU referendum have generated controversy within SNP ranks and in the wider independence movement. Most controversial have been the decision to campaign for a confirmatory EU referendum and the decision to put back a second independence referendum until after the end of the Brexit process.

There has always been disagreement in the independence movement between supporters of EU membership and those nationalists who see it as a surrender of sovereignty (which was mainly why the SNP opposed European membership in the 1970s). However, since the SNP's conversion to independence in Europe in the 1980s, the supporters of EU membership have been much more numerous than the skeptics, so that this divide had remained largely hidden from view and had not been important enough to threaten the internal cohesion of the party. By tying independence so closely to Brexit, the SNP leadership has created multiple new fault lines in the independence movement. As a result of this, the leadership's legitimacy is arguably being more openly challenged by the pro-independence grassroots than ever since the SNP won its first election victories. Thus, although the SNP has not experienced the same level of disunity over Brexit as the Conservative and Labour Parties, the 2016 EU referendum could still have a lasting impact on its internal cohesion and more widely on the internal cohesion of the Scottish independence movement.

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WILDER ALEJANDRO SÁNCHEZ AND LUCIA SCRIPCARI

The Republic of Moldova (RoM) continues its quest to become a developed nation and strengthen its relations on areas like diplomacy, defense, and trade, with the West, namely Europe and the United States. At the same time, Chisinau also has to deal with a separatist region, the so-called Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic (PMR), henceforth Transnistria, on the Eastern side of the Dniester River.

This situation dates back to 1992, when Moldova fought a short-lived war against Transnistrian separatists, whom were backed by Russian military forces. Almost three decades have passed since this conflict, and Transnistria remains a poor and underdeveloped region that is not recognized by any member of the United Nations, including Moscow, as a legitimate and independent state. Nevertheless, Transnistria is geopolitically significant, as it serves as a forward position for Russian military presence and influence in Southeastern Europe; and it is also a constant thorn on Chisinau's side as it tries to improve ties with Western governments and organizations.

Moldova's other domestic woes include parliaments that are unable to form a government, scandals such as the theft of USD 1 billion from Moldovan banks and a constant brain drain of its population. As Chisinau works to improve its internal affairs, the country must also focus on its foreign policy, as it is a player in the 21st century Great Game in Southeastern Europe: it has a pro-Moscow separatist region within its territory, while it borders the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union to the West (via Romania) and Ukraine to the East.

Our goal is to understand Chisinau's strategy toward Transnistria, and whether the two sides of the river will ever be able to reunite. Since the possibility that the country may become a unitary state seems to be out of the question to Transnistrians leaders, other alternatives have been put forward; for example, the Kozak plan proposed an asymmetric federation constituted by Moldova, Transnistria, in addition to the autonomous region of Gagauzia.

Analyses that deal with Moldova usually mention in the first paragraph how the country is small, poor, and unknown to the rest of the world. These statements and characterizations give the reader a negative view of the country. Hence, we will begin this chapter about separatism by describing Moldova in a different way: Moldova is a geographically small, landlocked nation in Southeastern Europe, with an ambitious, multilingual, young population, but bad governance and other prob-

lems, including the legacy of the USSR and the 1992 war, have prevented the country from reaching its full potential. Moreover, the separatist region of Transnistria, which remains severely dependent on Russia, influences Chisinau's domestic and foreign policy. Almost three decades since the 1992 war, can this conflict ever be peacefully solved in a way that can benefit the inhabitants of both sides of the Dniester River?

1 The plan

We will divide this chapter in the following manner: we will commence with a brief discussion about separatism in the 21st century, and we will also enumerate separatist movements in other parts of the globe in order to put this case in the proper global context.

Subsequently, we will commence our focus on Moldova by providing a brief historical review about how the separatist region of Transnistria came to exist. We will discuss Moldova when it was part of the Soviet Union, the reasons for the 1992 war, as well as its aftermath. This section will also mention some initiatives carried out after the war in order to find some kind of solution to the conflict, particularly the 2003 Kozak Memorandum. Similarly, we will mention developments that hampered relations between Chisinau and Tiraspol, like Transnistria's 2006 independence referendum and sanctions imposed in by Ukraine, which "limited the separatist enclave's ability to trade independently of Moldova." (Freedom House, 2007).

The next section will discuss what has happened in Moldova and Transnistria in the past decade. We selected 2009 as the start date for "Recent Developments" as this was the year when the Twitter Revolution occurred, in which Moldovans across the country protested that year's fraudulent parliamentary elections. Moreover, 2009 also marked the creation of the Eastern Partnership, a European Union initiative to foment development and good governance in six non-EU states, which includes the Republic of Moldova.[1] This section will discuss the 2014 theft of USD 1 billion of Moldova's national treasure; changes in the Transnistrian regime; Moldova's attempts to approach Transnistria's rulers, businesses, and general population; and the events that took place in Gagauzia, a small autonomous region in Southern Moldova, in 2014.

Afterward, we will discuss the role of foreign powers and regional geopolitics and how they have influenced Moldova's past, present and will continue to influence its future. We will address the war in Ukraine; Russian diplomatic, trade-related and military activities in Moldova and Transnistria; Chisinau's improving defense ties with the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

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[1]The five other members of the EP are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia and Ukraine.

(NATO); the role of the European Union (EU), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), among other players.

Following this analysis of current events, we will look into the future in the "Where do we go from here? (One Moldova, Two Identities)" section. What will Moldova look like in the next decade? We will discuss Chisinau's current domestic and international goals for the coming years, including greater integration with Europe, a larger participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations, stopping the country's brain drain, attracting investment and increasing trade, and (ideally) improving good governance. The obvious question is whether Chisinau can accomplish these objectives, and how will they impact the ever-present Transnistria question—ideally improvements in Moldova may convince policy-makers, business leaders, and, more importantly, the youth of Transnistria that approaching the other side of the Dniester River will have a positive impact in their lives.

Without a shadow of a doubt, Moldova's future is tightly connected with regional geopolitics and the relations (or tensions) between the United States and several European states versus the Russian Federation. Hence, looking into the future must take this factor into account as well. Finally, we will provide some concluding remarks.

2 A brief discussion of separatism

Throughout the 20th century, there were three waves of decolonization and separatism.[2] The first wave occurred after the First World War, with the end of the Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman, and Russian empires. Decades later, after the end of the Second World War, the second wave occurred; the colonies of various Western European countries gained independence, specifically in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean, and Southeast Asia. The last wave occurred in the 1990s, with the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)—which saw the appearance of 15 nations, including the Russian Federation, the heir of the USSR—and the dissolution of Yugoslavia due to the Balkan Wars.

It is worth noting that new independent states continue to appear in the 21st century, albeit at a slower pace than before, as small regions gain their independence from larger states. The newest independent nation in the world is South Sudan, which broke away from Sudan in 2011, preceded by East Timor, which gained its independence from Indonesia in 2002. Moreover, the 2008 Russo-Georgian War ended in Georgia's separatist regions, South Ossetia and Abkhazia, declaring their

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[2]Much has been written about this topic, most famously by Samuel Huntington's *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, and Francis Fukuyama's *The End Of History And The Last Man*. See also Sun-Ki Chai's "Nationalism and Separatism" in *Nations and Nationalism*, Volume 4 (1989-Present).

independence—at the time of this writing, only five nations have recognized the independence of these two regions.[3]

There have been also plenty of other instances in which violent or non-violent attempts at independence were unsuccessful. Two examples are Scotland's 2017 referendum to separate from the United Kingdom and the violent Civil War in Sri Lanka (1983–2009) in which the separatist movement known as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam attempted to gain independence from Colombo.

When we narrow down our discussion geographically closer to Moldova, we find other separatist regions, such as Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh), which is contested between Armenia and Azerbaijan; the aforementioned South Ossetia and Abkhazia; and Ukraine's Luhansk People's Republic and Donetsk People's Republic, a result of the 2014 war. To summarize, the process of separatism has not ended, as new countries continue to emerge across the globe (although how many of them are recognized by the international community varies).

2.1 How to define the origins of Transnistria?

There is a wealth of academic literature that discusses why separatist movements occur, their *raisons d'être*, as well as their aspirations. For example, Ryabinin explains that "there are several opinions as for the basic reasons that cause separatism—economical misbalance, cultural contradictions or different political preferences. It is necessary to emphasize that there is not just one reason of separatism movement." (Ryabinin, 2017, p. 7). He also argues that "younger the country is the more active the separatism movements could be," an idea that can certainly apply to Moldova, which faced Transnistrian separatism, essentially parallel to it becoming an independent nation, when it separated from the USSR (Ryabinin, 2017, p. 7).

However, this is one way to look at the situation. After all, we can view Igor Smirnov (the leader of the separatist movement and "president" of Transnistria from 1991 to 2011) and his supporters as embarking on some type of quest to protect Transnistrian identity from being lost due to measures taken by Chisinau (or Bucharest). On the other hand, we can also define Smirnov as an individual who simply capitalized on the country's ethnic tensions and the chaos at the time of the USSR's dissolution, in order for him to gain power and influence. In other words, while academic literature that discusses separatism correctly focuses on issues that may push individuals forward to take arms or protest in order to become independent from the main state, there have always been, and will always be, individuals who will attempt to personally profit from these situations.

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[3]The Russian Federation, the Republic of Nicaragua, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the Republic of Nauru and the Syrian Arab Republic. Damascus recognized the two regions in 2018. "A May 2018 article published by TASS, a Russian news agency, also mentions that Tuvalu and Vanuatu recognized the independence of the two regions in 2011, but these declarations were subsequently withdrawn." (Sanchez, 2019). See also TASS, 2019a.

Hence, we must stress that the roots, current status, and future of the Moldova-Transnistria conflict do not solely revolve around the fears of a group of individuals about the future of their national identities. We must also take into consideration that there were individuals that may have wanted this conflict due to their own personal greed for wealth and power, and there may also be entities (e.g., the Russian government) that want the two sides of the Dniester River to remain divided for the very same reasons.

3 Historical review: How did we get here?

A proper discussion of Moldova's history would require a hefty volume as we would need to discuss the Principality of Moldavia, how the territory switched hands between the Ottoman and Russian Empires, and its eventual unification with Romania. Hence, we will commence our brief historical summarize when the territory was under Soviet control.

In 1917, as the Bolshevik revolution gained pace, the Moldovan Democratic Republic was created within the new Russian Republic, and one year later, the region known as Bessarabia came under Romanian jurisdiction, although the Soviet government did not recognize this, and called the area the Bessarabian Soviet Socialist Republic. Years later, in 1924, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin established the Moldovan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (MASSR), within the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic—it is worth noting that Transnistria was part of this entity. During the Second World War, and as a result of the secret Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, Moscow gained (or regained, if we go back further in history) control of Bessarabia, dividing Romania once again. "Stalin merged Bessarabia and the MASSR into the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic (MSSR), on August 2, 1940, which became the fifteenth republic within the USSR." (Borgen, 2006, p. 8).

Life for Moldova as part of the USSR was not easy. It is well known that tens of thousands of Moldovan families were deported by Stalin to Siberia and Kazakhstan to be "politically re-educated." According to estimates, "over 100,000 people were sent to labor camps in the Soviet Union from Bessarabia—today's Moldova—in three waves, in June 1941, July 1949 and April 1951." (Necsutu, 2018). Meanwhile, the MSSR territory underwent a modernization process, as major factories were constructed. Unfortunately (or fortunately, depending on which side you support), these industries are located in modern-day Transnistria.

As the Soviet Union began to disintegrate in the late 1980s, the MSSR pushed for greater autonomy (*Case of Ilascu and Others*, 2004, p. 9),[4] and in the summer of

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[4]In August and September 1989 the Moldavian Supreme Soviet enacted two laws introducing the Latin alphabet for written Romanian (Moldavian) and making that language the country's first official language, in place of Russian.

1990, the MSSR declared sovereignty, changing its status within the USSR (Borgen, 2006, p. 9).

Such decisions were not well received by the Russian-speaking inhabitants of the MSSR: enter Igor Smirnov, a manager at Elektromash in Tiraspol. He created the Union of Workers Collectives (OSTK), who wanted to secede from the MSSR. Their main concern, which will be a recurring argument in this essay, was that Moldova wanted to not only leave the USSR but also join Romania—which at the time was undergoing its own share of internal uproar, which resulted in the execution of Nicolae Ceausescu on December 25, 1989.

As Kosienkowski and Schreiber explain, Moldova's minorities "recall the period of national rebirth of Moldovans and Moldova's *Romanianization* (with the possibility of the reunion of Moldova and Romania) at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s, which contributed to ethnic conflict in Gagauzia and Transnistria." (Kosienkowski & Schreiber, 2014, p. 9). Developments that supported these concerns included making Moldovan (Romanian) the country's official language, while "on 27 April 1990 the Supreme Soviet adopted a new tricolor flag (red, yellow and blue) with the Moldavian heraldic device and a national anthem which, at that time, was the same as Romania." (*Case of Ilascu and Others*, p. 9). Thus, the importance of the idea that Moldova could somehow rejoin Romania cannot be overstated, as this continues to be one of Tiraspol's go-to arguments today.

On September 2, 1990, "Transnistria declared its separation from Moldova and its existence as a republic within the USSR," which still had a year of existence left (Borgen, 2006, p. 15). The declaration prompted violence between local security forces and the separatists, particularly in Dubosari. The country changed its name from Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic to Republic of Moldova on May 23, 1991, and declared its independence on August 27, 1991. Unsurprisingly, Igor Smirnov was not pleased with these developments and pushed for the creation of a Transnistrian Moldovan Republic (TMR) on the eastern side of the river. He was "elected" president on December 1, 1991, when the breakaway region held elections.

War erupted in early 1992, as Smirnov attempted to gain control of Transnistria by employing Transnistrian militia units, Cossacks, and other paid-volunteers, while the Russian Federation (no longer the USSR) supported the cause via the 14th Army, which had relocated to Transnistria from its USSR-era headquarters in Chisinau.[5] The Transnistrian separatists also benefited from access to Russian military's weapons depots, although Moscow contests this argument.[6] Moscow

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[5]For more accounts of the lead-up to the violence see: *Case of Ilascu and Others*, 2004, p. 10.

[6]In 1991–92, during clashes with the Moldovan security forces, a number of military units of the USSR, and later of the Russian Federation, went over with their ammunition to the side of the Transnistrian separatists, and numerous items of the 14th Army's military equipment fell into separatist hands. See: *Case of Ilascu and Others*, 2004, p. 13.

similarly denies that troops belonging to the 14th Army fought on the side of the separatists.[7]

The resulting short-lived war ended on July 21, 1992, when a cease fire was signed between Chisinau and Moscow (not the separatist leadership in Transnistria). Among its stipulations, the agreement stated that Russian troops would be deployed as peacekeepers: five Russian battalions, three Moldovan battalions, and two Transnistrian battalions under the orders of a joint military command structure which was itself subordinate to a Joint Control Commission composed of representatives of Moldova, the Russian Federation, and Transnistria, with its headquarters in Tighina (Bender) (*Case of Ilascu and Others*, 2004, p. 21). The 14th Army (not to be confused with the Russian peacekeepers) partially withdrew. Around a thousand individuals lost their lives and some 130,000 were internally displaced or emigrated.

There would be attempts at mediation for the next 17 years. For example, the 1999 summit of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, held in Istanbul, concluded with a plan for Russian troops to withdraw from the country by 2002; but two decades later, Russian troops,[8] now known as the Operational Group (the new name for the 14th Army), continue to be stationed in Transnistria. Other proposals to find a solution are 2002's Kiev Document, which proposed a federal state, and 2003's Kozak Memorandum (*Russian Draft Memorandum on the Basic Principles of the State Structure of a United State in Moldova*).

There were also provocative actions carried out by Transnistria to remind Moldova, and the international community, about its objectives. Specifically, the separatist region carried out a number of referenda and other declarations to stress that it ultimately sought independence. In Transnistria's 2006 referendum, some 98% of voters were in favor of independence and potentially become part of the Russian Federation. While the referendum is not recognized by the international community at large, this was a strategic move by Tiraspol to demonstrate the world that Transnistrians did not want to rejoin Moldova.

4 Moldova: Recent developments

We have picked the year 2009 to begin this section and to mark the "modern" history of Moldova because of two major events that took place that year: the Twitter Revolution and the Eastern Partnership. Let us summarize both briefly:

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[7]The Russian Government went on to say that the Russian Federation had remained neutral in the conflict. In particular, it had not supported the combatants in any way, whether militarily or financially. See: *Case of Ilascu and Others*, 2004, p. 16.

[8]It is worth noting that the Istanbul commitments were made under the umbrella of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. Russia withdrew from this treaty in 2007, and Russian Foreign Affairs Minister Sergey Lavrov has stated that since Moscow is no longer a part of this treaty, the pledges made under its banner are not applicable anymore.

- *The Twitter Revolution*: A series of protests rocked Moldova on April 6, 2009, due to parliamentary elections. The Communist Party (PCRM) emerged as the winner but there were widespread accusations of fraud, which resulted in protests in Chisinau, Balti, and other major cities. Governmental institutions like the parliament were attacked by protesters, and the 1991 declaration of independence was burnt. The protesters utilized Twitter to organize themselves, and hence, the uprising became known as the Twitter Revolution. Snap elections were called for July in order to appease protesters—while the Communist Party once again won the elections, they did not obtain a majority of votes, and the other parties formed a coalition to push them out of power.

- *The Eastern Partnership*: This initiative was established in 2009 to improve relations between the members of the European Union (EU) and six post-Soviet states,[9] as part of the EU's European Neighborhood Policy. Chisinau's decision to join this bloc is a major development as it shifted Moldova's foreign policy toward the West and away from Russia's influence. The Partnership aims to include improving infrastructure, improve trade, support the youth of these six nations, and help small and medium enterprises, among other objectives. Moldova took its relations with the EU one step further via the EU-Moldova Association Agreement (AA), signed in June 2014 and entered into force in 2016—Moldova now enjoys a free trade agreement (called the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, DCFTA) and visa-free travel with the EU (Congressional Research Service, 2019). According to the EU, Brussels is now Moldova's "first trading partner and biggest investor" and "in 2018, [the EU] accounted for 70% of exports and 56% of its total trade." (European Union External Action, 2019).

There have been other significant developments, both positive and negative, over the past decade. Unfortunately, Moldova's development has been affected by bad governance. Five years after the Twitter Revolution, another major scandal took place which demonstrates that the landlocked country has a long way to go still in terms of improving its political system and government: in 2014 (ironically, the same year the AA was signed), USD 1 billion dollars disappeared from three Moldovan banks: Banca de Economii, Unibank, and Banca Sociala. The money, which amounted to around 12% of the country's GDP, was transferred to shell companies in Hong Kong and other tax havens. Former Prime Minister Vladimir Filat received a prison sentence of 9 years for his involvement in this theft, while other prominent individuals like the oligarch Vladimir Plahotniuc, and the businessman and politician Ilan Shor have also been implicated.

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[9]Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

The country experienced a new round of major protests in 2015, which were an amalgamation of different groups and demands, such as farmers demanding a VAT increase and access to credit; protests against the banking and financial system; protests against the bank scandal, while also demanding closer ties to the European Union; and even protests that demanded the unification between Moldova and Romania (Demytrie, 2015; Luhn, 2015).

4.1 Moldova's political system

As for Moldovan political objectives, they have been characterized by a split between pro-European and pro-Russian parties. For example, the president at the time of this writing Igor Dodon (2016–present) is a well-known supporter of the Russian Federation and a frequent visitor of Moscow. For example, he met with Russian President Vladimir Putin in May 2019 as part of a summit of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council (President of Russia, 2019). Moldova has an observer status in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), and President Dodon has consistently promoted Moldovan membership to this bloc, while also arguing that Chisinau should scale back from its close ties with the European Union or the NATO.[10] However, as Moldova is a parliamentary democracy, the presidency is largely a ceremonial post.

On the other hand, the parliament is often split between the pro-Europe but corrupt Democratic Party and the pro-Russia Socialist Party. The country held parliamentary elections in February 2019, and a new party, Justice and Dignity, emerged as an influential new alternative—its platform revolves around approaching Brussels and combating corruption.[11]

Between February and June 2019, Moldova experienced a new wave of political instability as it proved to be a challenge to create a new governing coalition—the three options were the Democratic Party, the Socialist Party, and Justice and Dignity, none of which had enough seats in congress to rule. The situation ended in June when Maia Sandu (a former Minister of Education and Member of Parliament) became the new Prime Minister—she hailed from Justice and Dignity, specifically from the Party of Action and Solidarity. As a result of the crisis and loss of power, the Democratic Party announced that it would withdraw from the government, while its leader, the influential Vladimir Plahotniuc, along with other senior party leaders, have reportedly left the country (Necsutu, 2019). The Sandu government was short-lived, as she resigned in November 2019 due to political pressure. The current Prime Minister is Ion Chicu. The country will hold presidential elec-

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[10]The EAEU's members are Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and the Russian Federation. See TASS, 2018.

[11]The party's full name is NOW Platform DA and PAS, popularly known as ACUM. It is actually a bloc between two parties, Party of Action and Solidarity with Dignity and Truth Platform Party. See: Acum Da Pas, 2019.

tions on 1 November 2020, with President Dodon running for re-election while Sandu is also running as a challenger.

We can place these recent developments in our discussion of separatism: Moldovan authorities are attempting to convince Transnistrians that it is in their best interest to approach Moldova, as the growing relations with Europe present the best opportunities for a better life. Unfortunately, political instability in Chisinau blurs this message.

4.2 How is Moldova doing these days?

Throughout the past decade, Moldova has attempted to improve its socio-economic situation, with some successes. The country's GDP is estimated at USD 11.4 billion: Moldova's top exports are electrical machinery, apparel, oil seeds, cereals, and beverages (including wine) (Congressional Research Service, 2019).[12] Since 2010, Moldova's GDP growth has averaged around 4.3% a year; it is forecast to grow between 3.5% and 4% a year in 2019 and 2020 however the country will suffer due to the fallout of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) health pandemic. Moldovan wine continues to be exported abroad in major quantities. Unfortunately, the western bank of the Dniester River is mostly agricultural land, as the country does not possess major industrial infrastructure similar to Transnistria (built during the USSR-era).

As for other ongoing initiatives, in early July 2019, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and then-Prime Minister Sandu signed agreements in order to "increase the contribution to the development assistance agreement with the value of 29 million US dollars." (Livadari, 2019). Moldova has also teamed up with its fellow Eastern Partnership countries to create a joint catalog of investment projects to approach potential investors and partners (Agenda.ge, 2019).

Moreover, in spite of GDP growth and greater exports, Moldova continues to experience a massive brain drain as Moldovans migrate in search of a better life; many Moldovans apply for Romanian citizenship in order to migrate to Europe (Congressional Research Service, 2019).[13] We can expect that Moldova's population, estimated at 3.5 million citizens, will continue to shrink unless there is a drastic increase in good governance, better employment opportunities, and living conditions that convince the country's youth to remain in the country.

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[12]Agriculture, especially fruit and wine, plays an important role in Moldova's economy. The sector, together with agro-processing, makes up approximately one-third of GDP and one-third of the labor force. Moldova also depends on remittances from labor migrants, which have equaled almost 20% of GDP over the past five years.

[13]At least half a million Moldovans are estimated to hold dual citizenship with Romania, an EU member.

4.3 Transnistria today

Media outlets regularly profile Transnistria as a "country that does not exist," and focus on how it maintains USSR-era traditions, monuments, and a pro-Moscow ideology (Jarzabek, 2019). Transnistria is currently ruled by President Vadim Krasnoselky, who was "elected" in 2016—unsurprisingly, the elections have not been recognized by the international community. Curiously, his predecessor, Yevgeny Shevchuk (2011–2016), had his parliamentary immunity lifted so that he could be prosecuted for corruption, smuggling, and abuse of power. He has denied these charges and, ironically, fled across the river in 2017 (Popsoi, 2017).

Apart from the government itself, the other source of power in Transnistria is Sheriff. This entity owns a chain of supermarkets, a TV channel, a publishing house, a spirits factory, gas stations, and even the local football club, FC Sheriff Tiraspol. Due to the financial backing that it receives from Sheriff, the club is the usual champion of Moldova's football league. In recent years, the company stepped away from backing the rulers in Tiraspol, sometimes supporting other political parties. This breakaway in a united front between Tiraspol and Sheriff has resulted in the company losing some of its influence and privileged position.

The unrecognized region continues to earn income from Moldova, as Transnistria sells electricity to the other side of the river (Shagina, 2018). Adventure tourists have started to flock to Transnistria, given its status as the last bastion of the Soviet Union, which has helped local merchants (Lucinda Smith, 2019; see also Line, 2019). On the other hand, the region's economy has been affected by Ukraine, as Kiev and Chisinau has set up new border posts and imposed tighter restrictions in order to crack down on smuggling between Transnistria and Ukraine.

Like the other side of the Dniester River, Transnistria also suffers from a brain drain. Recent census put the region's population at around half a million.[14] Transnistrians can apply for Russian citizenship, and they use this passport, since the Transnistrian "passport" is not recognized internationally, to move abroad.

Since the 2006 referendum, regional leaders occasionally make provocative declarations in favor of independence and/or joining the Russian Federation. Nevertheless, the region remains unrecognized by all Member States of the United Nations, including its main benefactor, Russia; currently, only similar breakaway, pro-Moscow separatist regions recognize Transnistria as an independent state. The region has also sought quasi-international recognition by applying for observer status at the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva, without success.

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[14]While female representation in the Transnistrian government is minimal, Transnistrian women carry out all sorts of jobs (see: Peters, 2019).

4.4 Chisinau-Tiraspol relations

The Moldovan government has attempted to negotiate and improve ties with the other side of the Dniester River. A round of negotiations under the 5+2 format occurred on July 12, 2019, in Bratislava, Slovakia.[15] While there has yet to be a breakthrough in negotiations over Transnistria's status, there are some initiatives aimed at improving ties between Chisinau and Tiraspol. For example:

Since 2016, Chisinau and Tiraspol have reached agreement on a number of disputable matters such as the joint use of border lands and operation of Moldovan schools in Transnistria. Chisinau recognized Transnistrian diplomas. Apart from that, a bridge across the Dniester was opened and the process of legalization of Transnistrian car plates began. However, they are still reluctant to drop criminal prosecution of each other's officials and have problems in the communications area. Apart from that, they are still failing to elaborate a mechanism for guaranteeing implementation of agreements they reach (TASS, 2019b).

Chisinau is also encouraging Transnistrian-based companies to register in Moldova in order to more easily export their products, rather than resorting to smuggling and other third parties—a more challenging activity given Ukraine's decision to crack down on non-Moldovan goods that attempt to enter its territory (Preasca, 2019).

Of course, there are issues that Chisinau will never validate, such as the Transnistrian passport, stamps, or currency, as this would be an acknowledgment of the separatist region's independence. Rather, as representatives from the Moldovan government explained to the authors, the idea is for Chisinau to convince the Transnistrian population and business community that they are better approaching the other side of the River, rather than continuing to turn to Moscow (Off-the-record discussions between the authors and representatives of the Moldovan government, Summer 2019).

4.5 Moldova, centralization, and minorities

As a final point, it is important to bring together what Moldova's current situation and its multi-ethnic population mean for the country. Ryabinin states that "nowadays there are more than 180 states in the world and only at least 20 are ethnically homogeneous. In more than 40% of states, there could be found five or more national minorities." (Ryabinin, 2017). This is certainly the case for Moldova with a current population of 3.5 million citizens, not including its diaspora and Transnistria; the country is fairly heterogeneous as ethnic groups include Moldovans (75%), Russians (7%), Ukranians (7%), Gagauzians (5%), Russian (4%), and Bulgarians (2%), given 2014 estimates (Congressional Research Service, 2019). The country

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[15]Moldova and Transnistria as parties to the conflict; the European Union, the OSCE and Ukraine as mediators; and the Russian Federation and the United States as observers.

also has ethnic Romanians and Gagauz (World Population Review, 2019). The country's official languages are Romanian (79%) and Russian (15%), according to 2014 estimates, while the predominant religion is Orthodox Christianity (92%) (Congressional Research Service, 2019).

It is similarly important to discuss the developments in 2014 in Gagauzia, a region located in southern Moldova and whose inhabitants, which number around 150 and 160 thousand, enjoy a great deal of autonomy; the region's official title is Autonomous Territorial Unit of Găgăuzia (Unitatea Teritorială Autonomă Găgăuzia in Romanian), which highlights its special status in the country. The Gagauz speak a language that is mutually intelligible with standard Turkish and other Balkan Turkish dialects. "In Moldova's highly tense and politicized linguistic atmosphere, the Gagauz use Russian (either as a first or second language), as opposed to Moldovan (Romanian) in communicating with their compatriots. Cultural and soft-power ties with Russia run deep, especially given the high level of penetration by Russian state-media," explains one report (Erdemir & Lechner, 2018).

In February 2014, the Gagauz carried out a referendum in which they voted against closer ties between Chisinau and the European Union (that was the year when the two sides signed the association agreement). According to reports, with a turnout of around 70%, the majority of voters were in favor of closer relations with the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Eurasian Customs Union, and less relations with the EU.[16] Even more "98.9 percent of voters supported Gagauzia's right to declare independence should Moldova lose or surrender its own independence." (RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty, 2014; see also: Haines, 2014).[17] The term "losing or surrendering its own independence" refers to Moldova unifying with Romania. "The authorities in the neighboring, ethnic Bulgarian district of Taraclia supported the referendum results and reminded the central authorities of their 2013 request for autonomy." (Kosienkowski & Schreiber, 2014, p. 6).

As Kosienkowski and Schreiber argue, and as we have seen in the case of Transnistria and Gagauzia:

> not only Russian ethnics but a majority of Moldova's non-titular ethnic groups are largely pro-Russian because of cultural affinity and historical memory. National minorities are nearly synonymous with the Russian-speaking population, because many either do not know the Romanian language (or Moldovan, according to the country's constitution), or simply prefer to use Russian. The majority of them are Slavs. They perceive Russia as a positive international actor, their

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[16]Its members are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

[17]Some speculate another reason the referendum was organized was to improve Găgăuzia's bargaining position in negotiations the Moldovan national government in Chișinău.

defender for centuries, and harbor nostalgia for the Soviet Union. (Kosienkowski & Schreiber, 2014, p. 8).

In other words, domestic politics, scandals, underdevelopment, and bad governance also affect Moldova's various ethnic minorities. Bad governance can encourage smaller groups to demand more control, if the capital is behaving in a way that they perceive as not respectful of their concerns and objectives; for example: "decentralization of decision-making on education, culture and language are also desired by [Moldova's] national minorities." (Kosienkowski & Schreiber, 2014, p. 12).

Transnistria and Gagauzia serve as precedents as to why the Moldovan capital may be concerned about giving greater autonomy to regions; this situation takes an ethnic angle, seeing as how some of the regions, which would like more autonomy or have pro-Russia sentiments, are ethnically composed (Kosienkowski & Schreiber, 2014, p. 11). There is no simple answer to this situation, as power-sharing between the capital and the provinces is a problem that many nations face.

5 Moldova: The role of foreign actors and geopolitical motives

Although Moldova adopted neutrality in its constitution, recent developments show a transition in the foreign policy priorities that reflect a pro-Western vector. As a small state, it is problematic for Moldova to maintain its neutrality. As Moldova cannot defend its territory on its own, the country has to cooperate with great powers. Moldova's cooperation with the EU and NATO not only contributes to the formation of its geopolitical identity but also creates a counterbalance against Russia. While taking advantage of strong cooperation that contributes to its image and reputation as a growing partner and faithful ally, this also forestalls attempts of Russian domination. This balancing strategy not only protects Moldova's security but also helps Moldova achieve its pro-Western partnership objectives.

Article 11 of Moldovan constitution states that Moldova is a neutral state and its neutrality is based on two characteristics: first, that the Republic of Moldova will be neutral in the event of a violent conflict outside of its borders, regardless of the identity of belligerents and where the violence is taking place. Second, the neutrality of Moldova does not allow the presence of foreign military troops on its territory (Moldova's Constitutional Court Judgment no. 14, 2017).

The concept of neutrality was further developed throughout the Cold War and takes several forms. For instance, *ad hoc* neutrality, also called temporary neutrality, happens when states refuse to go to war, as in the cases of Spanish neutrality during the Second World War or Iranian neutrality during the Gulf War of 1990–1991 (Simpson, 2018). The second form of neutrality is *De Jure* neutrality or neutrality by international law, which also has two forms: *de jure* neutrality: "neutralization" when neutrality is imposed by virtue of an international agreement.

Switzerland's permanent neutrality was established via the Treaty of Paris in 1815 and since then the landlocked Central European state has not participated in a foreign war. Additional examples of neutrality are Belgium (1839), Luxembourg (1867), and Laos (1962) (Karsh, 2011, p. 27). Another form of *de jure* neutrality is "permanent" neutrality in which the state has voluntarily become neutral by legislation. Moldova is an example of a state with a policy of permanent neutrality. The third form of neutrality is *de facto* neutrality which is accepted by the international community and not by conventions. Examples are Ireland, Sweden, and Vatican (Simpson, 2018).

Historically, neutrality was often seen as a policy of small states seeking to preserve their sovereignty while avoiding entangling alliances with great powers (Morris & White, 2011, p. 105). Joenniemi has rightly pointed out that neutrality is also associated, both as an institution and as a policy, as a pursuit of clear-cut demarcation of state borders (Joenniemi, 1993). This is the case of Moldova. As small states tend to have few military capabilities, they have to adopt policies and strategies designed to enhance their security as much as possible. Indeed, the key reason why Moldova has adopted the status of neutrality is the separatist region of Transnistria and the presence of Russian military troops on its territory.

Nevertheless, while the main concern when adopting the neutrality status was security, today the security concern is giving way to economic growth, integration, cooperation, and interdependence. One can argue that Moldova is shifting its policy from neutrality to post-neutrality. According to Agius, "the move from neutrality to post-neutrality was not simply a shift in response to external security changes but intricately enmeshed in ideas of self and subjectivity—what sort of subject the state ought to be." (Agius, 2011, p. 371). For Moldova, European integration and cooperation with NATO and international organizations implies a contribution to the formation of its geopolitical identity.

Yet, Moldova's neutrality continues to be debated. For example, on May 2, 2017, the Constitutional Court delivered a judgment on the interpretation of Article 11, ruling that the deployment with Moldovan territory of troops or military bases, run and controlled by foreign states, is unconstitutional and the military occupation of a part of the territory at the moment of declaration of neutrality as well as the lack of international recognition and guaranties of this statute does not affect the constitutional validity regarding the neutrality. Obviously, the request and ruling were aimed at the Russian troops stationed in Transnistria.

Nevertheless, the Court also ruled that the neutral status of Moldova does not exclude cooperation with other military alliances to strengthen the defense capability of the country.

According to the decision, the participation of the Republic of Moldova in collective security systems, such as the United Nations security system, peacekeeping operations, and humanitarian operations, is necessary for the collective sanctions

against other aggressors—this is not in contradiction with the neutrality status. As we will see, this interpretation has allowed for Chisinau to seek ways to increase defense cooperation with the United States and various European states, much to the chagrin of Russia and pro-Moscow policy-makers in Chisinau, such as President Dodon.

This section will discuss the current status of Moldovan foreign policy and the major actors that have a role in the Moldova-Transnistria question.

5.1 The United States

The United States is Moldova's major defense partner, and the Chisinau-North Carolina relationship has become the cornerstone of this evolving partnership as the North Carolina national guard teams up with the Moldovan armed forces under the umbrella of the US National Guard's state partnership program.

Moreover, the United States is Moldova's major supplier of defense technology and for its defense budget. Additionally, the US Navy is reportedly expanding Moldova's military facilities in Bulboaca. The objective is to train Moldovan troops to participate in UN peacekeeping operations in the near future.

The US State Department welcomed the government change in June 2019, which saw the rise of then-Prime Minister Mia Sandu and her ACUM Party to power, and the departure (quite literally, in some cases) of powerful businessman Vladimir Plahotinuc and his Democratic Party. Washington's renewed confidence for political changes takes place in Moldova at the time of this writing including a visit by Undersecretary Hale to Chisinau in June 2019 and the United States Agency for International Development donating an additional USD 29 million to Chisinau, on top of a USD 100 million commitment, to help with judicial reforms and support the country's industries, like its wine sector. On the other hand, Washington was generally silent when Sandu had to resign. As for the upcoming presidential elections in the European country, US ambassador to Moldova Dereck J. Hogan wrote that "Moldova's leaders have an opportunity — and an obligation — to ensure a free and fair electoral process that fully respects the will of the people," in a 16 September press release.

5.2 The North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NATO–Moldova relations commenced in 1992, when Moldova joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council. This forum for dialogue was succeeded in 1997 by the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, which brings together NATO's allies and partner countries within the Euro-Atlantic area. NATO contributes to Moldova's defense reform and modernization efforts through Partnership for Peace's Planning and Review Process (PARP), the Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) Initiative, the Defence Education Enhancement Program (DEEP), the Build-

ing Integrity (BI) program, the Operational Capabilities Concept (OCC), the Partnership Interoperability Initiative, and the Science for Peace and Security (SPS). Moldovan troops also participate in NATO's mission in Kosovo (NATO, 2018).

The most important development in recent years was the opening, in December 2017, of a civilian NATO Liaison Office in Chisinau; its aims are to promote practical cooperation and facilitate support for the country's reforms. This initiative was defined as "a provocation" by President Igor Dodon, although meetings between Moldovan officials and NATO continue to occur with regularity (RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty, 2017). In fact, then-Prime Minister Maia Sandu met with the NATO Secretary General in July 2019, who reiterated that NATO remains committed to supporting the Republic of Moldova, and it encouraged the new government to continue to implement reforms including strengthening the judiciary, fighting corruption, and building more capable armed forces and security institutions.

NATO is not directly involved in the conflict resolution process in the region of Transnistria. However, in the final declaration of NATO's Summit in Brussels, the Allies have called on Russia to withdraw troops stationed in all three Eastern Partnership countries—Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine. The Atlantic Alliance closely follows developments in the region and fully expects Russia to abide by its international obligations, including respecting the territorial integrity of neighboring countries and their right to choose their own security agreements.

5.3 The Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe

On February 4, 1993, an OSCE mission was established in the Republic of Moldova in order to contribute to the political settlement of the conflict as regards the implementation of agreements about a special status for Transnistria, on the withdrawal of foreign troops as well as for assistance in monitoring the implementation of agreements in the event of a political settlement.

The Head of Mission, as the OSCE mediator, utilizes shuttle diplomacy to mediate between Chisinau and Tiraspol. At the time of this writing, this job falls on the shoulders of Dr. Claus Neukirch, from Germany (OSCE, n.d.).

Since its arrival, the OSCE has proposed several ideas and initiatives to attempt to find a solution for this dispute. For example, in July 2002, the OSCE proposed a plan based on federalism, a "representation at the center, and equality between the parts that would compose the federation." (Tomiuc, 2002). It was argued that this plan could not be implemented because "it contained a condition that allowed Russia to maintain a tacit influence in Republic of Moldova." (Statie, 2013, p. 21). Ironically, even the Transnistrian civil society, like Moldovan Helsinki Committee for human rights, an NGO in Tiraspol criticized it (Ostaf, 2002).

Nowadays, the OSCE Chairmanship's main strategy to address this conflict is the 5+2 format, which promotes interaction, monitors achievements, and establishes new objectives and timelines to advance the settlement process (under the umbrella

of the Berlin, Vienna, and Rome protocols). The 5+2's members are, naturally, Moldova and Transnistria as the Sides; the mediators are the OSCE Mission to Moldova, the Russian Federation, and Ukraine; while the European Union and the United States serve as observers. Since the December 2016 OSCE Ministerial Statement, the negotiations process at all levels has functioned on the basis of an output-based approach (OSCE, 2019a).

Chisinau and Tiraspol have signed agreements on social, economic, and administrative areas on six out of the eight priority issues included in the so-called Berlin-plus package. The two sides have successfully agreed on five of the signed agreements on social, economic, and administrative areas, including on apostilization of educational documents issued in Transnistria, the functioning of the Latin-script schools, the use of farmlands in Dubasari district, the opening of the Gura Bicu-lui—Bychok bridge and on the mechanism for the participation of vehicles from Transnistria in international road traffic (OSCE, 2019b).

In 2018, the OSCE Mission to Moldova facilitated over 60 meetings of 11 expert working groups and two working sub-groups. Yet, the top priority of the mission is to achieve a political settlement for a special status for Transnistria within Moldova in the framework of the 5+2 talks.

5.4 Ukraine is cooperating with Moldova

Ukraine respects Moldova's territorial integrity and supports Chisinau's attempts to regain control of the Moldova–Ukraine border, given that Transnistria is on the eastern side of the Dniester River (Zoria, 2017). Smuggling has been a constant headache for Kiev, and hence, it comes as no surprise that Kiev and Chisinau have established new border posts and imposed more restrictions in order to combat smuggling between Transnistria and Ukraine.

Ukraine's interest in helping Moldova control its border is not a new development. For example, in May 2003, the two governments introduced new customs rules, including for Transnistrian goods export operators. According to the Joint Declaration of March 3, 2006, all exports from Moldova to or via Ukraine, including those via the Transnistrian segment of the border, need to have proper Moldovan documentation (Chiveri, 2016).

These initiatives had an important consequence: Transnistrian enterprises started registering with the State Registration Chamber of the Republic of Moldova and also received certificates of origin in Chisinau's Chamber of Commerce and Industry. In other words, Transnistrian-made products are exported abroad under the "Made in Moldova" brand. More recently, in 2017, Moldova and Ukraine made another step to facilitate the movement of goods, vehicles, and passengers by opening the first joint checkpoint at the Transnistrian section of their border, Kuchurgan–Pervomaisk. More recently, in 2017 Moldova and Ukraine opened the first joint checkpoint at the Transnistrian section of their border, Kuchur-

gan–Pervomaisk, in order to facilitate the movement of goods, vehicles, and passengers on the "one stop–one window" principle, including customs clearance of exported and imported goods in Transnistria, among them excised commodities (Interfax-Ukraine, 2017a).

Moreover, Ukraine's Special Representative for Transnistrian Settlement Viktor Kryzhanivsky has stated that Kiev is ready to provide its territory for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Transnistria (Unian Information Agency, 2018). Without a doubt, this is a consequence of Russia's actions in Ukraine since 2014.

The conflict between Russia and Ukraine intensified the split of the Moldovan population into pro-Ukrainian/Western and pro-Russian. While the Moldovan government continued its pro-Western stance, Russian speaking national minorities showed a strong support toward Moscow given the intensification of Russian propaganda. As the conflict in the Ukraine is also linked to geopolitical choice between East and West, it has raised tensions and affected the Moldovan discourse about European integration (Kosienkowski & Schreiber, 2014).

The war in Ukraine had an impact over the Transnistrian region as well. Case in point, when Crimea was annexed by the Russian Federation in 2014, Transnistrian leaders requested that Moscow annex their region too. Interestingly, Moscow declined this request; this is a fact worth remembering since, as previously mentioned, Moscow has recognized the separatist regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, which Russia helped during the 2008 war against Georgia, but not Transnistria, which Russia similarly supported during the 1992 conflict (Demytrie, 2015).

Similarly, while Transnistria, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia have recognized each other as independent states, there have so far been no statements or comments from Tiraspol regarding the recognition of the Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic.

5.5 Russia, and Moldova and Transnistria

The presence of Russian military troops in the territories of Moldova, Ukraine, and Georgia prevent these countries from maintaining their territorial integrity, and pursuing an independent foreign policy, free from outside pressures—these states, particularly Moldova, aim to approach the West via EU integration (although full membership is a distant dream nowadays).

Maintaining a military presence in Eastern Europe provides Russia with the ability to rapidly deploy forces against NATO and other hostile actors, should tensions between Moscow and Washington (along with its allies) continue to deteriorate. It has been well-established that countries like Moldova and Ukraine serve two purposes: a buffer zone and an area of Russian influence (its "near abroad") (Dascalu, 2019).

When it comes to Moldova, Russian foreign policy is focused more on Moldova rather than Transnistria per se. Moreover, Moscow's policy has been rather reac-

tive as a response to developments beyond its control. For instance, once Moldova signed the AA and the DCFTA, in 2013 Russia re-introduced import bans on Moldovan wine in an effort to make the Moldovans sign up to its own Eurasian integration project, the Eurasian Economic Union (Rogstad, 2016). Nevertheless, the Association Agreement was ratified despite Russia's retaliatory measures. These actions demonstrate Russia's limited power and ability to enforce its objectives.

Apart from moving forward with the trade agreement with the European Union, Moldova has challenged Moscow's influence in other ways. In May 2017, five diplomats of the Russian embassy to Moldova responsible for espionage were declared persona non grata and expelled from the country (The Moscow Times, 2017). Russia has also retaliated by expelling five Moldovan employees from the Moldovan embassy to Russia (Interfax-Ukraine, 2017b). After the tit-for-tat expulsions, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin, who is Russia's special representative to Transnistria, was also declared persona non grata after making defamatory remarks about a Moldovan governmental delegation in an interview with a Russian television channel (Reuters, 2017). More deterioration of the relations happened a year later, after Chisinau expelled three Russian diplomats, "in solidarity with the UK" after a former Russian spy and his daughter were poisoned (Reuters, 2018).

Without a doubt, Russia has been successful in sustaining the frozen conflict in Transnistria since 1992. After all, Moldova's armed forces cannot conceivably defeat Russian troops (be them peacekeepers or the operational group of Russian troops) in addition to Transnistrian forces in traditional combat. However, the fact that Moscow has not recognized or annexed Transnistria, especially after the wars in Georgia and Ukraine, is quite curious and suggests that it prefers to maintain the status quo, as an independent Transnistria would demand additional costs for the economic and military development of the region that Moscow is not ready to pay.

Maintaining the Russian military troops in Transnistria is an instrument to influence the internal and external policies of Moldova (Dascalu, 2019). The frozen conflict constitutes the main impediment of Moldovan integration into EU—a parallel can be made to the division of Cyprus, which hindered its development for decades. Hence, Moldova is often called a hostage of the Russian foreign policy (Orenstein & Mizsei, 2014).

It is worth noting that Russia is not blind to the situation inside Transnistria, namely that the region has long been regarded as a heaven of corruption and organized crime, which affects Moldova through connections with crime groups and corrupt bureaucrats. Case in point, the Russian Investigation Committee opened a criminal case in 2011 against Oleg Brizitsky, deputy chairman of the Transnistrian Republican Bank, Oleg Smirnov, and other officials suspected of theft by way of large-scale embezzlement committed by a group of people by collusion of about 160 million troubles disbursed by the Russian government in humanitarian aid to

Transnistria to support pensioners and agriculture were stolen (TASS, 2011). These precedents reflect not only Russia's limited power on the region and inability to influence the Transnistrian policy-makers but also an unspoken Russian acknowledgment that Transnistria is no utopia.

With that said, in spite of these tensions, Moldova and Russia continue to maintain strong cultural ties, as many Moldovans migrate to Russia for work, and many Moldovans speak Russian.

5.6 The role of the EU

The European Union and its individual members have increased their influence in Moldova, particularly through the joint projects and trade initiatives (European Union External Action, 2019).

The Association Agreement signed between the EU and Moldova includes Chapter V that states that the AA will apply "to the territory of the Republic of Moldova" but adds a specific paragraph on the territorial application in relation to those areas "over which the Government does not exercise effective control." (Govaere & Garben, 2019). According to this article, the application of the AA or the DCFTA in these areas will only commence once Moldova ensures the full implementation and enforcement of this Agreement on its entire territory. Clearly, Moldova could not ensure the enforcement of the Agreement in the breakaway region and Tiraspol considered making a separate agreement with the EU, independently of Chisinau, but this plan failed following the rejection of Brussels and Chisinau (Gumene, 2019).

As a result, and also under the pressure of the businesses in the region in 2015, the Transnistrian government reached an agreement with the European Commission about keeping the regime of autonomous trade preferences for the regional trade until January 1, 2018 (Devyatkov, 2017). Thus, Transnistria obtained the right to export to EU without being included in the Association Agreement.

Until 2016, Transnistria used to benefit from an asymmetric commercial regime with the EU, meaning that it imposed taxes on imports, while the exports to EU were freed from taxes. Nevertheless, the government has to do a policy realignment and adopt a special Regulation stating that import duties are not charged for products, in case the EU countries are countries of origin. Moreover, the import duties were eliminated for all industrial goods (electrical equipment, metal products, furniture, cosmetic products, jewelry, etc.). However, high tariffs are yet imposed on imports of textile products, footwear, and cement (Gumene, 2019).

On the other hand, the European investors also take advantage of the deal. For example, an Italian businessman is an investor who established an agricultural company with 120 employees in Dubasari (Transnistria), given the region's fertile soil, favorable climate, and undeveloped market. The company exports 80% of sun-

flower, barley, wheat, flax, and corn crops to EU members Italy, Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria (Eurasianet, 2016).

Transnistria-based companies that want to export to the EU face certain requirements that serve Chisinau's interests, namely they must be registered in the Moldovan capital and allow Moldovan customs officials to review their wares.

In contrast to other countries confronting the separatist regions, Moldova shows tolerance toward foreign investments in its own breakaway regions. Russia-backed Abkhazia and South Ossetia do not welcome much Georgia's deal with the EU. At the same time, Azerbaijan bans any travel to (much less investment in) Nagorno-Karabakh that does not occur with Baku's permission. In addition, the Moldovan Chamber of Commerce helps promote Transnistrian companies in the EU and provide them with international grants and training (European Youth Portal, 2019).

Nevertheless, the EU had a prompt decision to issue sanctions toward the region due to the language policy of the breakaway territory, which used to forbid the use of the Latin alphabet in schools. Following the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights in Catan and Others v. Republic of Moldova and Russia case, in October 2012, that the policy violates the right to education (International Justice Resource Center, 2012), the situation of the Romanian schools in the Transnistrian region did not improve. The local administration continued to apply the administrative and financial pressures on the institutions, such as tax and health inspections, rent increases, the freezing of bank accounts, stoppages in the electricity and gas supply, and the psychological harassment of the teachers and students, such as arrests and customs searches of staff members from the schools when they tried to bring in cash in order to pay wages and the seizure of some of their property (*Iovcev and others v. the Republic of Moldova and Russia*, 2019). In 2019, the European Court of Human Rights held that the measures taken by the authorities were intended to enforce the "Russianization" of the language and culture and obliged the Russian Federation to pay damages as it exercised effective control over the region, in view of its continuing military, economic and political support (ECHR Case Law, 2019).

Nevertheless, the EU had a prompt decision to issue sanctions toward the region due to the language policy of the breakaway territory, which used to forbid the use of the Latin alphabet in schools. The European Court of Human Rights has ruled in several cases, as for example in Catan and Others v. Republic of Moldova and Russia that the policy violates the right to education (International Justice Resource Center, 2012). Thus, in 2003 EU first imposed travel restrictions on 16 members of the Transnistrian leadership and extended them until October 2019. This is in line with the review of European Council Decision 2010/573/CFSP, according to which the member states of the EU shall take necessary measures to prevent the entry into, or transit through, their territories of persons responsible for obstructing the political settlement of the Transnistrian conflict, and campaigns of intimida-

tion and closure schools using the Latin script in the breakaway territory (Eldarov, 2018).

We can summarize the EU's policy toward Moldova and Transnistria as mixed but focused on helping Moldova maintain its territorial integrity. Whether it is via the European Partnership or the AA, Brussels has generally maintained a positive attitude toward Chisinau.

6 The complexity that is Moldova

6.1 Moldova's constructivist foreign policy

Understanding Moldova's foreign policy is not an easy task. The country is divided into pro-Western and pro-Russian camps. Failing to build close economic relations with Russia, the country turned to West and sought to construct a better perception about itself, as it wanted to be perceived as a reliable partner.

On the one hand, given Moldovan active role in the cooperation with the military alliances, its contribution in international peacekeeping operation, and adherence to supranational organizations such as the EU, one can say that neutrality has become less relevant. Likewise, in the context of Moldova's broader European and international cooperation, the discourses of Moldovan state officials about strengthening and improving the partnerships show distancing and disassociation with neutrality because it no longer reflects Moldovan priority.

By bringing the example of Finland whose Former President Martti Ahtisaari has argued that *joining NATO would resolve the ongoing question of Finnish geopolitical identity*, Agius correctly pointed out that "debates about NATO membership are not simply about security; they form an essential strand in the discourse about European integration and identity and have implications for what sort of identity is pursued." (Agius, 2011, p. 383).

As for Moldova, its foreign policy vectors toward stronger cooperation with NATO, and the EU aims at constructing and reaffirming its geopolitical identity.

However, it is also true that Moldovan foreign policy has been shaped by the Transnistrian conflict, and in this regard, Moldova has been heavily relying on the neutrality status, thus demanding the removal of Russian troops from its territory as a possible solution to the conflict.

Ironically, neutrality is shaped in different circumstances, depending which side is speaking. For example, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that Moscow supports Transnistria' reunification with Moldova "in the framework of Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity, with a guaranteed special status for Transnistria." (Socor, 2011). Yet, Russia demands strict observance of Moldova's neutrality as one of the preconditions to conflict-resolution. Moldova's neutrality shall, according to Russia, extend not only as staying out of NATO but also as equidistance between the European Union and Russia (Socor, 2011). While accen-

tuating the need to preserve neutrality, it deems the presence of Russian military troops on the territory of Moldova compatible, despite the Constitutional Court decision recognizing the presence of troops unconstitutional.

6.2 Complicated internal politics

In 2019, the coalition between the Russia-backed Socialists and the pro-EU ACUM bloc collapsed after only five months. A vote of co-confidence passed by Moldovan parliament, forcing Prime Minister Maia Sandu and her government to resign. The cause of the tensions was due to the parties' disagreement over the pre-selection process for the next Prosecutor General. Now Maia Sandu is the biggest challenger to President Dodon in the upcoming November 2020 presidential elections.

Analysts and observers have cautioned about the potential for fraud in the upcoming elections. Unfortunately, this is likely to occur given Moldova's history of fraudulent elections as recent as the 2019 elections when Transnistrians were brought across the river to vote in the local elections.

Even more, President Dodon is quite unpopular these days because of his government's inability to control the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in an exponential increase in the number of cases. In the first week of September 2020 Moldova registered over 600 coronavirus infections daily for three days in a row. One of the highest numbers of deaths per day was reported on October 8, when 18 people died in a single day due to coronavirus. At the time of this writing Moldova has registered 62,618 confirmed coronavirus cases and 1,478 deaths. As a consequence of the pandemic, the country's economy is likely to stagnate – this is problematic as Moldova's economy is in bad shape for years, despite assistance from the European Union.

Overall, despite being backed by the Kremlin, Dodon's presidency has failed to bring reforms and jumpstart the country's economy. For instance, Dodon has been unable to convince the Russian government to lift the economic embargo it imposed on Moldova back in 2013; Moldova's major trade partner continues to be the EU, much to Dodon's anger as he is known for his pro-Moscow policies.

Moldova's November 2020 elections, like previous elections, will be nasty and confusing. There will likely be a second round, between Dodon and Sandu, which will cause alliances between political parties, pledges for favors, and opportunities for electoral fraud (particularly regarding the vote of the Moldovan diaspora).

7 Discussion: Where do we go from here? (One Moldova, Two Identities)

In solving the separatist issue, two priorities should be taken into account. First, deciding on the political status given to Transnistria. Second, the removal of Russian troops from the Moldovan territory.

While the issue of Transnistrian status is slowly but practically being solved via so-called shuttle diplomacy where the head of the OSCE mission is playing the role of the mediator, which helps Moldova and Transnistria negotiate various important matters, the same cannot be said about the removal of Russian troops, a constant demand by Moldovan authorities. The situation becomes more complex when we take into account Moldova's pro-Russian president who criticized the UN General Assembly resolution, which calls for withdrawing Russian troops from the territory of Moldova, as an anti-Russian *démarche* of the Moldovan government. While 64 states supported the document, against were 14, and 83 countries abstained (General Assembly of the United Nations, 2018). It is interesting that when there were international instruments at hand, this initiative, that could have possibly solved a key issue that affects Moldovan territorial integrity, was not backed by the Moldovan president himself.

After the resolution was voted, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs also condemned the adoption of the document relying on the Moldovan president's statements. "It is noteworthy that the leadership of the Republic of Moldova is itself divided in its attitude towards this resolution, as follows from the Special Statement of the President of Moldova of June 19, 2018," Moscow stated (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 2018).

It is of no surprise that Russia's contributions to the polarization of Moldovan society between East–West and its endorsement of a pro-Russian leader paved the way to similar statements and created a blockade in adopting a common strategy of Moldovan government.

It is true that no previous Moldovan government has consented the presence of Russian military troops on its territory, but the lack of consent is not enough to solve the issue. It is also true that Moldova had previously a pro-Russian president, the head of Communist Party Vladimir Voronin, who did not request the removal of troops in order not to upset Moscow. Now Moldova has to deal with another president who is touting a pro-Russian agenda. Even an optimist will not hope that while pro-Russian leaders are in power the situation will change.

In other words, the Transnistrian conflict is not solely a conflict between Tiraspol and Chisinau but also between Chisinau and Moscow.

Russia seems to support the "reunification" of Transnistria with Moldova, but solely under Moscow's own terms and conditions. For instance, in August 2019, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov stated that:

> Russia has not recognized the PMR, it is a participant in the process aimed at settling this conflict on the basis of proper principles. The number-one principle is the following: a special status for PMR, agreed with Tiraspol as component part of the Republic of Moldova, with understanding that Moldova will preserve its sovereignty, that is will never be absorbed by anyone as a state and with understanding that it

will remain neutral, that is will never join any military-political blocs (InfoTag, 2019).

Russia's official position is that the only solution is the creation of a federation uniting the two entities (Moldova and Transnistria), possibly with a third component—Gagauzia.

It is evident that Russia's policy of "divide and rule" has not changed, and controlling Transnistria is an instrument to keep Moldova's internal and external policy under Russian control, as federalization would offer Transnistria, as a federal unit, veto power over all Moldovan foreign policy initiatives. As Nantoi correctly pointed out, "through the Transnistrian region, Moscow wants to have control over the entire Republic of Moldova." (24 Ore, 2019).

Ironically, while stressing neutrality, Russia itself seems to limit the foreign policy objectives of Moldova. Hence, as a short-term objective, it seeks to maintain the status quo, and the long-term objective is to shape the settlement of the dispute according to its interests, that is, the federalization of the country, so that it can maintain its influence.

Having already been rejected 16 years ago, it is not a surprise that Chisinau rejected the Kazak Memorandum this time as well. Thus, Russia's plan seems unattainable given the current government's pro-Western vector. It seems that Russia will continue freezing the conflict at least until 2024 when President Putin's mandate expires. As long as this dilemma exists, Moldova will be unable to realize one of its biggest foreign policy goals: EU membership.

8 Concluding thoughts

We decided to title this chapter "Is the term 'frozen conflict' still applicable?" because we wanted to understand whether the past decade has brought about any developments that demonstrate that the Moldova-Transnistria problem has changed in a way that signifies that this term is no longer applicable.

At the time of this writing, some Transnistrian companies have registered in Moldova in order to export their products, thanks to a stronger control on the Moldova–Ukrainian border to prevent Transnistrian goods from being exported. Moreover, Chisinau and Tiraspol continue to meet under the 5+2 format, but there is little reason to believe that this conflict can be resolved in the coming years as long as (A) Transnistria continue their demand for independence and (B) Russian troops (be them the so-called peacekeepers or regular troops) remain in the separatist region.

Despite the events of 2019 (the rise and fall of Prime Minister Sandu), we can predict that, for the foreseeable future, Moldova will maintain a simultaneous and nebulous pro-West and pro-Russia foreign policy and will aim to integrate itself more with the European Union (and possibly with NATO), although membership

to both entities is still too distant to realistically consider. At the same time, several Moldovan policymakers will continue to seek close ties with the Russian government.

Foreign policy objectives aside, the future of Moldova and the willingness of Transnistrians (not just the separatist authorities) to find some kind of solution, will also be influenced on Moldova's development in the coming years. After all, Brussels would like to see some kind of solution to the Moldova-Transnistria problem, namely some type of re-integration, before it allows the country as a whole to further integrate with the EU. On the other hand, Chisinau argues that integration with the EU right now, will serve as a powerful incentive for Transnistria to approach Chisinau and agree to some kind of solution. This is a "what comes first?" type of problem between "integration" and "re-integration" among Brussels, Chisinau, and Tiraspol. Without a doubt, the road from Chisinau to Brussels passes through Tiraspol.

In the introduction of this chapter, we explained that we did not want to solely focus on Moldova's problems, which are well known: (bad governance, corruption, under-development, and a constant brain drain). The 2009 Twitter Revolution and the events of June 2019 which brought the short-lived government of Maia Sandu demonstrate that Moldovan citizens want to see their nation develop, and for this an efficient government is necessary. Hopefully the next November 2020 presidential elections will bring about much-needed change to the country's political system and overall government. Hopefully, the events of June 2019 mark a new positive start for the country, although the same was said after the 2009 Twitter Revolution.

We conclude by saying that while the Moldova-Transnistria conflict may no longer be frozen, it is not thawing yet. It is something in the middle. Like all things in Moldovan, whether domestic or foreign policy-related, it is complicated.

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The end of the Cold War opened a Pandora's box of regionalism and separatism across Europe, and today they once again pose a significant threat to the territorial and political integrity of the traditional nation-states. Yet, the existence of various subnational groups is inevitable in democratic states. The scope of separatism and regionalism in Europe is quite wide. It includes de facto states, such as Kosovo, Transnistria, and North Cyprus; strong separatist movements aimed at achieving independence, like Catalonia, Basque Country, Scotland, Flanders, and Faroe Islands; strong movements aimed at achieving a more regional autonomy, for example, Lombardy and Veneto; and weaker regional movements, which could potentially escalate in the future, such as Transylvania in Romania or Vojvodina in Serbia.

This edited volume tackles all the above-mentioned regional moments and even includes Greenland as a bonus. It brings together seventeen prominent scholars from a wide range of European and North American academic institutions who compiled ten chapters to shed light on the revival of regionalism and separatism via a thorough evaluation and analysis of some of the most important current separatist and regionalist/autonomist movements across modern Europe.