

**« Y a-t-il des Catalans en France pour pouvoir y espérer  
l'avènement d'un cinéma catalan ? » :  
Introducing “La France catalane”**

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This is a very long introduction, and so it is worth setting out, right off the top, what its goals are. I am seeking not only to introduce the essays that make up this special section of *Dalhousie French Studies* (although I will have something to say about each one of them as we move forward), but also to introduce, for a more or less general audience (probably academic, just as probably not specialist in Catalan Studies), the broad contours of the discourse around Catalan culture and language in France. I'll cover a lot of ground here: some of it political (including some discussion of creative tensions between federalism and republicanism), some of it quasi-activist (I will try to introduce the thought of key advocates like Robert Lafont or Llorenç Planes, as well as key institutions such as Terra Nostra or the Universitat Catalana d'Estiu), some of it light-sociolinguistic (where I'll briefly discuss work published by the Institut d'Estudis Catalans, the truly indispensable institution of the Catalan language as a whole, as well as the really pioneering work on this topic, James Hawkey's recently-published book *Language Attitudes and Minority Rights: The Case of Catalan in France*). What I want to do overall is provide some sense of the big questions that someone coming to the place of Catalan in France must grapple with, and try to explain what those do and don't have to do with larger state formations (like Catalonia, or France). My discussions of all of this are motivated by one central argument, which is that Catalan culture and language in France is more closely compatible with a sense of political belonging to France than many might at first assume. That's why this section is devoted to “La France catalane,” a term that I made up and which a lot of people who I like and respect and agree on almost everything with have given me no small amount of (basically good-natured) hassle about. I'll justify that term in a more detailed way below, but for now, I'll just repeat that central argument by way of defending this term that I made up, and make the following polemical statement: “La France catalane is still *France*.”

The title of this introduction derives from an essay on “La Catalogne” in a special issue of the French film journal *CinémAction* devoted to “Cinéma des régions.” It was published in 1980, and also had sections on Brittany, Occitania, Flanders, Alsace, Corsica, and Le Dauphiné. Like “La Flandre,” “La Catalogne” crosses over into another nation-state. That is to say, the term “La Catalogne” includes both parts of southern France and also the Principality of Catalonia. When most speakers say “Catalonia” that is usually what they are talking about: the devolved region that, for the time being as in the 1980s, is part of the Kingdom of Spain. Their endonym in Catalan is “El Principat de Catalunya,” and it is today officially known as “La comunitat autònoma de Catalunya,” one of 19 autonomous communities of Spain (two of which are the cities of Melilla and Ceuta). From here on out I will refer to it as “the Principat.” Moreover, the Principat had, as of 1980 when the issue was published, a small but nevertheless emergent national cinema of its own. Francoism was over, the Catalan culture that the fascist state had banished from the public sphere was in revival mode, and filmmakers such as Pere Portabella and Ventura Pons were starting to sketch out what a distinctly Catalan cinema, one separate from Spanish cinema, might look like (and in much the same way that Quebec filmmakers such as Pierre Perrault and Denys Arcand had done vis-à-vis Canadian cinema in the 1960s and 70s). Marcel Oms' piece on “La Catalogne,” though, is ostensibly supposed to be about *France*: about the parts of France that are, in some way, Catalan. He opens by imagining someone asking just that

question, “Y a-t-il des Catalans en France pour pouvoir y espérer l’avènement d’un cinéma catalan ? ” (218). It’s a reasonable question, given the smallness of the territory we’re talking about here. *La Catalogne française* is generally accepted to be made up of 5 regions: Cerdanya, Capcir, Conflent, Vallespir, and Rosselló (that’s from Joan Becat’s map, published by Terra Nostra and reprinted many times, including in Alà Baylac-Ferrer’s *Le Catalan en Catalogne nord*, 75). That is to say, it is more or less coterminous with the boundaries of the French *département* of Pyrénées-Orientales (although as one reviewer of this essay pointed out, the one place where that’s not the case is in the historically Occitan-speaking region of Fenolledès, which is part of Pyrénées-Orientales). All in all, the territory is about 4100 square kilometres in total. It’s all relative, of course, given that the neighbouring micro-state of Andorra, the only country in the world whose official language is Catalan, is about a tenth that size. What makes this Catalan part of France different has more to do with the assertion that Oms makes just a few sentences later, which is that “il est impossible de se définir Catalan en France sans se poser le problème de la relation aux Catalans en Espagne” (218).

On the surface, this might seem to be an example of what Llorenç Planes called, in his 2011 book *Per comprendre Catalunya Nord*, “El jacobinisme barceloní” (97). What he was invoking there was the tendency to insist that all of Catalan identity is basically the same and thus flows through the metropolitan capital (via Barcelona), just as French identity has since the revolution (via Paris). Planes goes on to write:

La diferència entre els jacobins parisencs i els jacobins barcelonins és que els uns consideren que aquí és França, i només França, si els altres que aquí és Catalunya, i només Catalunya. Però tenen en comú de considerar que tenen el dret de fer aquí el que fan a altres llocs, prescindint de la població que hi viu tot l’any, negant l’especificat de Catalunya Nord, específicat que ens ho donat, ho vulguin o no, la nostra història particular. (97)<sup>1</sup>

That kind of oppressive centralisation, of course, is the very thing that *catalanistes* in France are resisting so forcefully, so the accusation of Jacobinism is meant to sting. Oms’ article, written for a Paris-based publication, spends some time talking about some television initiatives and some collectives such as “le Groupe ‘Trabucem’ dont les membres ont déjà, à titre individuel, réalisé plusieurs films en super-8” (219), but gives almost as much space to the cinema of the Principality of Catalonia. That is, by and large, to the cinema of Barcelona.

The catch, of course, is that Marcel Oms was Perpignan born-and-bred, someone known to people writing about Catalan cinema but during his lifetime (he died in 1993) better known as a mainstay of France’s cinémathèque scene and a regular contributor to magazines such as *Positif* and *Cahiers de la cinémathèque*. He actually opens the article by saying that he would only ask that question “si je n’étais Catalan moi-même – et assez profondément enraciné dans la culture catalane autant qu’engagé depuis longtemps dans les luttes pour la récupération de l’identité” (218). Pere Verdaguer’s 1974 book *Defensa del Rosselló català* recalls how he did presentations of new films from Barcelona as part of the first Universitat Catalana d’Estiu in Prades, as well as at the gatherings sponsored by the Grup Rossellones d’Estudis Catalans that were the summer university’s predecessor (more on both below). He was doing that not as some insensitive interloper from the bustling south, up here in the provinces to show them how it’s done, but as a Catalan who was also a French citizen. Indeed, Verdaguer recalls that “Per a Marcel Oms, que assistia

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<sup>1</sup> “The difference between Parisian Jacobins and Barcelonan Jacobins is that one assumes that this is France, and no more than France, and the other assumes that this is Catalonia, and no more than Catalonia. Because they both believe that they have the right to do here the same things that they do in other places and to disregard the people who live there year-round, negating the specificity of Catalunya Nord, specifically that which gives us, whether we want it or not, our particular history.”

al col·loqui, els rossellonesos som irremediament francesos” (67).<sup>2</sup> Note that Verdager says “som... francesos,” using the first-person plural form of the verb for “to be”: *les roussillonnais sommes irrémédiablement français*. And that line about “El jacobinisme barceloní”? As I said, that’s from Planes’ 2011 book *Per comprendre Catalunya Nord*. But Planes is better known for his 1974 booklet *El petit llibre de Catalunya-Nord*, which begins with the formulation: “Així són la gent de la frontera: iguals com a homes [*sic*], diferents com a ciutadans, de la mateixa llengua, de la mateixa nació però de distints estats” (1).<sup>3</sup>

What I am trying to point out here is the degree to which the discourse around what I’m calling *La France catalane* (a term I will justify in more explicit terms in just a few paragraphs) does not, by and large, shake out along the lines of a typical nationalist, or a typical regionalist movement. On the one hand, this *is* a regionalist movement; its genesis is in the debates around regionalism that were current in France in the 1960s, and I’ll discuss in particular the importance of Robert Lafont. But it also shares with many European nationalist movements a strong connection with a neighbouring state (states in this case: Andorra and the Principat). Most European movements that feature this kind of proximity to another state populated by co-nationals tend to be defined by a desire for integration of that national territory, at least hypothetically or symbolically. A key difference in the case of the Catalans of France is that there is no sustained desire to “rejoin” the south in a formal way, no history of agitating for such a political outcome even among the most ardent *catalanistes* on either side of the border. Indeed, not even the Basque situation, so similar in many ways since it is also a border region between France and Spain, provides a good analogy. We do not find, in any part of *La France catalane*, a sustained history of calls for a “Catalan homeland,” the likes of which have driven Basque nationalism since at least the end of the Franco period.

Having said that, some *catalaniste* radicals, especially in the 1970s, were quite interested in innovative federalist proposals. Federalism is a crucial part of Catalan-language political thought going back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century; the leading Catalan political philosopher of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Antoni Roviri i Virgili (who I discuss more below), was basically a scholar of federalism. It is often remarked that Spain is a federation in all but name (Luis Moreno’s 2001 book is the standard treatment of this subject), and many “soft separatists” in the Principat make a point of saying that their demands would likely be satisfied by a federal reform of Spain. Nicholas Berjoan has recalled how the group *Esquerra catalana dels treballadors* (Catalan Workers’ Left) were advocating for the following outcome: “La Catalogne française autonome conclura un contrat d’association avec la France avant d’intégrer une « federació supra estatal des països catalans » [a suprastate federation of the Catalan countries] sous régime socialiste” (270). These kinds of multi-level federal arrangements are common in Catalanist discourse in no small part because of the complexity of *Els Països Catalans*, the Catalan countries. That is to say: the Principat, *La France catalane*, Andorra, Valencia, Franja de Ponent (the Catalan-speaking part of the autonomous community of Aragon), the Balearic Islands, and the city of L’Alguer on the island of Sardinia (its Italian name is Alghero). Geographically that’s a pretty diverse roll-call: regions large and small, devolved and non-devolved; a city; a fully independent if very small country (the microstate of Andorra).

What we also see in *La France catalane* overall is a movement that aims at a kind of Taylorian “recognition.” I am referring to Taylor’s celebrated 1992 essay “The Politics of Recognition” (reprinted in the book *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, edited by Amy Gutmann), wherein he writes that “not only contemporary feminism but also race relations and discussions of multiculturalism are undergirded by the

2 “For Marcel Oms, who participated in the conferences, we folks from Roussillon were unmistakably French.”

3 “These are the people of the border: equal as men [*sic*], different as citizens, with the same language, part of the same nation, but from different states.”

premise that the withholding of recognition can be a form of oppression” (36). In a recent article strongly influenced by his work with Gérard Bouchard, Taylor has contrasted a Quebec-style interculturalism with his earlier formulations for multiculturalism, concluding that “Some of the reasons that make interculturalism right for Quebec apply also to some European countries” (422). I’m not sure that France is one of those, and the Catalan desire for a classically Taylorian recognition shows us why. The contemporary French state is famously inhospitable to officially-recognised difference because it can seem to violate the spirit of “égalité” inasmuch as the state must treat different groups differently not equally, “liberté” inasmuch as nobody should be presumed by the state to be Catalan by an accident of birth but should instead avail of fundamental rights around the freedom to choose any or no community, and “fraternité” inasmuch as the state should not do anything to compromise the ties that bind *all* citizens of France together by officially recognising secondary identities which could dilute the strength of that connection. Elsewhere Taylor has written that “the very definition of a republican regime as classically understood requires an ontology different from atomism.... It requires that we probe the relations of identity and community, and distinguish the different possibilities, in particular the possible place of we-identities as against merely convergent I-identities, and the consequent role of common as against convergent goods” (*Philosophical Arguments*, 192). Note Taylor’s use of the plural there: *we-identities*. The broad tendency of the French state to claim “French” as the only legitimate “we-identity” and all other such identities as mere atomisation is what makes me to want to deploy a term like “republican fundamentalism” when discussing the Jacobin tendencies of the French state. This is ultimately quite different from what Taylor sees as “the very definition of a republican regime as classically understood.” Taylor’s former student Richard Kearney, writing about republicanism in a specifically Irish context, has elaborated this classical heritage in a way that is especially useful for our purpose here. He writes that “there is, I believe, a great need for a novel appreciation of the *universalist* dimension of republicanism, as we move towards greater integration with the common house of Europe and the wider world. And there is a corresponding need for a re-appreciation of its *localist* dimension, if we are even to realise the possibilities of a participatory democracy which the project of a decentralised Europe of the regions<sup>4</sup> will, if achieved, open up” (37).

At this point readers will notice that I have been deploying the made-up term “La France catalane,” instead of using terms such as Roussillon (which speaking strictly geographically is only one of six relevant regions), “Catalunya Nord” or “Catalunya del Nord,” which, as we will see, come with arguments of their own. “La France catalane” is a kind of inverted form of Pere Verdaguer’s 1969 book *Catalunya Francesa*, one that emphasises that we are talking here about *France*. Alà Baylac Ferrer gave me a lot of good-natured ribbing about this term when I participated in his seminars at the 2017 Universitat Catalana d’Estiu, now held annually in the (Catalan!) French village of Prades. As you will see he takes this up in a more formal way in his contribution to this special section. I take the point that Catalans in France often don’t have a lot of warm feelings for or allegiance to the French state, for the centralising-Jacobinist tendencies I have just discussed. But my task with this special section is precisely to rethink *France*, and to draw attention to the way that French belonging, very much including republicanism, is also being re-thought by those who have struggled for the recognition of those citizens who also identify as Catalan. The considerations there, at the theoretical as well as the practical level, are more

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4 This term emerged during the Jacques Delors era of European unification (that is to say, during the period when he was president of the European Commission, 1985–95) and is often ascribed to him. John Loughlin’s 1996 article is an overview of the term’s place in Delors-era Euro-federalisation initiatives. John Hume, former leader of Northern Ireland’s Social Democratic and Labour Party and Nobel Laureate in 1998 for his work on the Northern Ireland peace process, theorised this term more elaborately in a 1988 essay of that title.

different for those Catalans who live in the Principat than is widely acknowledged, in either French- or Catalan-language discourse.<sup>5</sup>

What I think we can see in *La France catalane* is a striving for a distinctly Taylorian kind of republicanism. *Catalanistes* in France demand the recognition of a “we identity” which can sit alongside the other “we identity” of French belonging but is in no way exclusive to it, and thus has at the forefront elements that are universalist inasmuch as they recognise the plurality of identity itself. This is the kind of universalism enunciated by Robert Lafont in his 1976 book *Autonomie : de la région à l'autogestion*, wherein he writes of “le seuil culturel que l'autonomisme vise : celui de l'universalisme enraciné, capable de relayer l'universalisme abstrait dont les impérialismes concrets se sont depuis le XIXe siècle si bien arrangés” (188). But it is also localist inasmuch as it calls for a recognition of the reality that the Catalan language and culture have existed in this part of the Hexagon for a very long time, despite the best efforts of parties on both sides of the Treaty of the Pyrenees which, in 1659, more or less created the border between French and Spanish Catalonia that we have today.

This special section of *Dalhousie French Studies*, then, seeks to change the meaning of the adjective in the journal's title. “French” is usually taken to refer to a language, and thus inclusive of writing in French that we find in Quebec, North Africa, the Indian Ocean region, etc. That is of course a gesture of inclusion that speaks to the longstanding idealism about universalist possibilities of the French language as a *langue d'élection*. Here, though, I mean for “French” to refer to a nation state: to France. I consider that as a parallel gesture of inclusion. Whereas the usual way with “French Studies” is to define “French” by way of saying “it's not a just nation-state; it's a language! A language can include many different countries!”, I am in effect saying “it's not just a language; it's a nation-state! A nation-state can include many different languages!”

There are three elements of the *problématique* here that are worth explaining in more detail for those coming to this region for the first time. Most imperative for the purposes of an introductory section like this one is to examine the foundational writing, the works and contexts that gave the modern movement its broad contours. On that front the book-length *essais* of Llorenç Planes' and Pere Verdager are key. Their experience would be quite different from the important but distinct sensibility that flows from the significant presence that Catalans from the Principat have had in *La France catalane*, especially in the period that directly preceded and followed the Spanish Civil War. The “Complot de Prats de Mollo” of 1926 was shades of things to come, but the great exiled philologist Pompeu Fabra is the figure that looms the largest, and for reasons that are different in *La France catalane* than in the Principat. The danger that lies in the difference between these two experiences is the emergence of a kind of “two solitudes” in *La France catalane*, one emanating from the Principat and based in language and the other more “autochtone” and based in a kind of cultural identity with an ambiguous relationship with ethnicity. There is a real danger that this later formulation could evolve into the sort of narrow and exclusionary definition of “Catalan” that only feeds the republican-Jacobinist critiques of the movement. The degree to which these conceptions – one centred in *La France catalane* itself, and another coming to the north from a decidedly southern perspective — can be reconciled is very much an open question. That matter is at the heart of a 2017 book by the journalist Aleix Renyé, *Catalunya Nord: La llesqueta del septentrió* (North Catalonia: The Slice of the Hexagon), which wrestles with some of the same problems as that earlier

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5 This is a very old term for what is now the devolved region of Catalonia, part of the Kingdom of Spain; it derives from the region's status under the Crown of Aragon. It is nevertheless very common to come across it in Catalan-language discussions, especially in newspaper reporting. The poet Joan Fuster has written a very lyrical text called “*Qüestió de noms*” that addresses the trickiness of giving names to each of the “Catalan Countries,” and it can be found at <http://webs.racocatala.cat/cat1714/d/fuster1.pdf> or at [goo.gl/G6D8MT](http://goo.gl/G6D8MT).

generation embodied by Planes and Verdaguer, but which has also made genuine advances on those issues.

What I am perhaps sidestepping, although really just leaving to the more seasoned scholars who contribute proper research articles to this section, is the matter of more recent scholarship. For anyone beginning work on this topic of the contemporary life of Catalan in France, the logical starting place is Júlia Turinyá's short 2011 book *Les organitzacions de reivindicació catalana a Catalunya Nord, 1960–1981*, which divides the post-1960 period into three main stages, the third ending in 1981 and defined by what she calls “La institucionalització.” The Institut d’Estudis Catalans continues to publish linguistic work on the variants of Catalan spoken in France and makes a serious effort to include *La France catalane* in its discussions of the language generally. The 2016 book *El català al nord de Catalunya a principi del segle XXI*, by Joan Peytaví Deixona, is a serious work of dialectology that both offers a history of the language in France and also a description of its major phonetic, morphological and syntactic elements. Another such example is Miquel Àngel Pradilla's 2015 book *La catalanofonia: Una comunitat del segle XXI a la recerca de la normalitat lingüística*. Catalan in France has a fairly minor place in the considerations there, although Pradilla is refreshingly blunt as to why, writing that “El cas de la Catalunya del Nord és probablement el més escandalós, ja que l’estat francès s’ha negat tossudament a reconèixer oficialment la diversitat lingüística, fins al punt de no voler ratificar la Carta Europea de les Llengües Regionals o Minoritàries (CELRM)” (43).<sup>6</sup> New scholarly work on the Catalan presence in France nevertheless has a very well-established scholarly home in the hexagon at the Université de Perpignan's *Institut Franco-Català Transfronterer / Institut Franco-Catalan Transfrontalier*, which is located at the university's Casa dels Països Catalans. Important linguistic research is done there, as well as more broadly sociological studies, many of which intersect in interesting ways with some of the work we are doing with this section. One recent example is Alà Baylac-Ferrer's *Le Catalan en Catalogne nord et dans les Pays Catalans*, which appeared in 2016 and offered a very useful broad-strokes survey of the current cultural and linguistic situation for a French readership; it was published by the *Institut Franco-Catalan Transfrontalier* and the university's press.

Of special note that front is a recent book by Rachid Id Yassine, *Musulman et Catalan, une identité incertaine ?*, which places less emphasis on the Catalan language than the contributors to this section (myself included) are inclined to do but which also engages the matter of Catalan identity in a way that strongly recalls Taylorian principles of multiculturalism. He identifies the fundamental tension at work when he writes that “Ce problème de la langue est d’ailleurs récurrent et montre bien que l’identité catalane, si elle est d’abord une identité territoriale, est également affectée d’une dimension de la langue” (33). But despite this territorial rather than ethnic emphasis, something key to interculturalist pluralism, Id Yassine also points to the limits of this model. He concludes by saying that “il n’en demeure pas moins que les musulmans de Catalogne française ne semblent pas préoccupés par l’identité catalane. Leur intégration dans la société civile locale se réalise essentiellement à partir du répertoire français voire européen” (109). In terms of interculturalism overall this is something of a success story: Id Yassine causally points to Muslim immigrants looking towards an eventual integration into French and European society. But this also makes plain the degree to which the specific situation of the Catalan society based in France is short-changed by such a model. The absence of full recognition on the part of the state of *La France catalane* as a rights-bearing cultural collectivity, which is the basis for most forms of multiculturalism, is not going to make a

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6 “The case of Catalonia North is probably the most scandalous, in that the French state has stubbornly refused to officially recognise its linguistic diversity, to the point of not wanting to ratify the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (CELRM).”

very attractive candidate for integration into *la culture catalane française*. That is the way that minority cultures stagnate into an ethnic *folklorisme*, supposedly detached from the modern world of immigration and integration. This is not the case in the Catalan culture of the Principat, where vigorous intercultural principles are important parts of the discourse around the contemporary Catalan identity (which had already been transformed by the widespread integration into Catalan society of the “internal migrants” from places like Andalucía in the 1960s and 70s). What I hope to show in what follows, though, is that centralising the language is in fact the way forward for Catalan identity in France, and that tendency is, so to speak, in the bones of the movement. Moreover, the history of that kind of linguistically-centred conception of identity is in fact what makes the *catalaniste* movement in France, in the words of Id Yassine, “essentiellement à partir du répertoire français voire européen.”

### Planes and Verdaguer

There is a long, rich history of historical work on “Els Països Catalans” that goes back centuries, but the modern movement is basically born in the 1970s. The key event was the defeat of Charles de Gaulle’s April 1969 referendum on constitutional reform. In addition to senate reform, this would have greatly expanded the constitutional recognition and powers of France’s regions (which are constituted as groups of departments), and would have also put in place a complex system wherein the deputies for each region would be both elected and appointed. The defeat of the referendum sent shock waves through the French political establishment and de Gaulle, having staked his presidency on a win, resigned within hours of the final results being known. But this also seems to have focussed the attention of French regionalists. This is how Lafont put it, again in 1976’s *Autonomie : de la région à l’autogestion*: “La France que le referendum de 1969 avait réveillée vaguement « régionaliste », se défie de plus en plus ouvertement de la tradition centralisatrice soutenue par des pouvoirs successifs, et penche au moins pour son assouplissement” (11). Two such people woken up by the experience were Llorenç Planes and Pere Verdaguer.

Planes was an agronomist by profession, although he was the editor of *La Falç*, a *catalaniste* magazine that he helped found in 1970. It was Edicions “La Falç” that published, in 1974, his booklet *El petit llibre de Catalunya-Nord: Lluita per un “Rosselló” Català*, and this remains the sort of go-to option for readers looking to understand the roots of the modern movement. This is due in part to its wrestling with, for lack of a better name for it, “the French question,” as well as for his perspectives on the way that the Catalan language was evolving, sometimes in ways parallel to the situation in the Principat, sometimes in very different ways.

In terms of language activism, *El petit llibre de Catalunya-Nord* is important for a number of reasons. Planes was very blunt about the degree to which the experience of Catalan speakers in France was defined by diglossia rather than real bilingualism, and the degree to which that was a problem. He wrote in *El petit llibre* that “El bilingüisme és una situació estable, la diglòssia és una fase de reemplaçament d’una llengua per una altre. Per això l’objectiu lingüístic d’una revolució a Catalunya Nord ha d’esser transformar la situació de diglòssia en bilingüisme” (47).<sup>7</sup> In writing along these lines he seems influenced by Francesc Vallverdú’s small but seminal book *Dues llengües, dues funcions?*, published in 1970 by Barcelona’s Edicions 62. That is an examination of the dual role that Spanish and Catalan play in Catalonia, both private-sphere languages in some ways and both public-sphere languages in others, and it makes the case that this linguistic complexity goes

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7 “Bilingualism is a stable situation, whereas diglossia is a phase where one language is replaced by another. Thus, the linguistic objective of a linguistic revolution in Catalunya Nord must be to try to transform the diglossic situation into bilingualism.”

back centuries. That book was (and remains) important because it gives a sense of the degree to which many in Catalonia have defined the reality, even in 1970, that “són bilingües —sovint d’un *bilingüisme funcional*, és a dir, no diglòssic— la majoria de barcelonins, si bé les situacions ‘pures’ (amb fàcil alternança d’una llengua a l’altra) no son tan abundants se sol suposar: ho prova, entre d’altres indicis, la practica força estesa de conversar un catalanòfon i un castellanòfon, almenys en contactes ocasionals, cadascuns en la llengua pròpia” (24).<sup>8</sup> That does seem to be the situation that Planes aspires to for the Catalan language in France, although he is not romantic about the degree to which the Principat should be serving as some kind of ideal towards which everyone else should strive. Anticipating his “jacobinisme barceloní” argument of 2012, he pointed out in *El petit llibre* that the written Catalan developed by Pompeu Fabra and maintained by the Institut d’Estudis Catalans was more or less based on the Barcelona variant, and that “Es necessari utilitzar”; it’s necessary to use that one. But he went on to say that “No caldria creure per això que la gent de Barcelona parla més bé aquest català que els altres catalans; no és gens cert. Al contrari, sovint certs castellanismes i incorreccions fan que el català parlat per ells no sigui millor que el d’altres comarques” (49).<sup>9</sup> This is an oft-observed problem with the Catalan spoken and codified in Barcelona. Indeed, at the 2017 Universitat Catalana d’Estiu, there was a session featuring two members of the Institut d’Estudis Catalans (Joandomènec Ros and Jordi Mir) who were subject to some very fierce polemics during the question period about the increasing amount of “castellanismes” that are creeping into the Institut’s dictionary. I’ll discuss below how that problem ended up being resolved by someone from another country. Suffice it to say for now that Planes’ sense of the language is a complex one, taking into account the sociolinguistic reality that (even in Franco’s Spain) Catalan is more intact in the Principat and the Catalan speakers of France should engage actively with this reality, while at the same time recognising that this is not the *same* situation, that they are not all one big “we” that have a *de facto* allegiance to everything that happens in Barcelona.

Possibly the most influential aspect of *El petit llibre*’s arguments about language had to do with the simple name of the region we are talking about in this special section. August Bover Font’s contribution is a survey of Catalan-language literature in France, and when he contacted me about contributing he was keen to emphasise that the correct usage for the region we are talking about is Catalunya *del Nord*, not Catalunya Nord. This has been duly decreed by the Institut d’Estudis Catalans’ Oficina d’Onomàstica, and the Institut itself uses that formulation without fail. As a rule, I follow the Institut’s directives, and my respect for the work they do is borne out here, I hope, by the degree to which I do not generally use the term “Catalunya Nord” except when quoting others. But I’m reluctant to make extensive use on my own of the term “Catalunya del Nord,” simply because that has not been universally accepted north of the border, as I think anyone who has had any amount of experience up there would have to admit. The origin of the term “Catalunya Nord,” at least in print, is Planes’ 1974 *Petit llibre*, whose first section after the introduction is titled “un problema de nom.” He pours over some of the many possibilities, including one that it is very common to hear, “Roussillon” or “Rosselló.” But Planes identifies this as problematic, given that “El Rosselló històricament havia estat un comtat, un dels més importants d’aqueixes terres, però el comtat del Rosselló mai no va englobar la totalitat

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8 “...the majority of Barcelonans are bilingual — this is often a functional bilingualism, that is to say, not a diglossic one — even if ‘pure’ situations (with an easy switching from one language to another) aren’t as abundant as you might think; the proof of this, among other indications, is found in the very widespread practice that when a Catalan-speaker and a Spanish-speaker talk to each other, at least in casual contacts, they each speak in their own language.”

9 “It does not follow from this that people from Barcelona speak this form of Catalan better than other Catalans; this is by no means clear. On the contrary, oftentimes certain *castellanismes* (borrowings from Spanish) and errors that appear in their speech means that the Catalan they speak is no better than that of other countries.”

d'aquest país" (3); I take "aquest país" to mean the Catalan parts of France. What he finally settles on by way of a name is "Catalunya Nord," and this is his logic:

Ens adherirem, doncs, a una altra expressió ja bastant divulgada i parlarem de Catalunya Nord i de Catalunya Sud. Això vol dir Catalunya al Nord de la frontera franco-espanyola i Catalunya al Sud d'aqueixa frontera. Nord i Sud prenen el sentit qui tenen en unes expressions com Vietnam Nord i Sud, Corea Nord i Sud o Euskadi Nord i Sud. (4–5)<sup>10</sup>

On the surface that logic behind the "Catalunya Nord" usage is consistent, but it does run into problems with the usage codified by the Institut d'Estudis Catalans. The official statement of the IEC on the matter is:

a denominació lingüísticament correcta d'aquest territori en català és precisament la Catalunya del Nord (similar a *Amèrica del Nord* i *Corea del Nord*, per exemple), que és la que ja apareix en les principals obres de referència en català, i no la *Catalunya Nord*, que encara s'empra en algun mitjà de comunicació.... es tracta gramaticalment d'un sintagma format per dos substantius, units necessàriament per la preposició.<sup>11</sup>

Their document *SF-03: Noms i gentilicis dels països del món*, approved by the Institut's Secció filològica in 2010, is equally consistent on the matter and utterly opposed to this usage, proscribing the usage, for instance, of "Corea del Nord" for North Korea (8). Their comprehensive place-name document, 2007's *Nomenclàtor toponímic de la Catalunya del Nord*, uses the formulation "Catalunya del Nord" throughout, admitting "Catalunya Nord" only when citing the titles of books and articles.

But as the IEC's official statement explaining the grammar suggests, the shorter usage persists. The two most recent surveys of the culture, both indispensable as introductions, are Planes' 2011 book *Per comprendre Catalunya Nord* and Alà Baylac-Ferrer's *Catalunya Nord: Societat i identitat*. Those seminars of Baylac-Ferrer's that I took part in at the 2017 Universitat Catalana d'Estiu were in a series titled "Ensenyament i identitat a Catalunya Nord." Baylac-Ferrer also transfers this formulation into French; his aforementioned survey of the situation of Catalan in France is, after all, titled *Le Catalan en Catalogne nord et dans les Pays Catalans*. As you will see in his article that follows in this section, he uses that formulation "Catalogne nord" habitually, acknowledging that IEC has mandated "Catalunya del Nord" as the correct formulation but stating in his article that "Catalogne nord est aujourd'hui largement connu par l'ensemble des habitants et utilisé de manière ordinaire par des personnes et institutions qui ne peuvent pas être soupçonnées de militantisme catalan : géographes, élus, administrations. La forme Catalunya del Nord / Catalogne du Nord, variante apparue à posteriori et définie comme seule forme correcte par l'Institut d'Estudis Catalans ne modifie pas le sens de l'appellation Catalogne Nord."

Although I see the point that Baylac-Ferrer is making and am basically sympathetic to it, this is not really an argument into which I wish to enter. I avoid arguments about whether to end sentences with a preposition for the same reason: I'm happy enough to defer

10 "Roussillon historically was a county, one of the most important of these lands, because the county of Roussillon never made up the entirety of this country [le Pays Catalan].... We are thus attached to another expression, one that already clearly in circulation: Catalunya Nord and Catalunya Sud. This means the Catalonia that is to the north of the French-Spanish border and the Catalonia that is to the south of that border. North and south thus take on the meaning that they have in expression North and South Vietnam, North and South Korea, or North and South Euzkadi."

11 "...in Catalan the linguistically correct name of this territory is, precisely, *Catalunya del Nord* (similar to *Amèrica del Nord* and *Corea del Nord*), which is the one that appears in the Catalan language's principle reference works, not *Catalunya Nord*, which is still used in some means of communication... grammatically speaking, it is a syntactic element [un sintagma] formed by two nouns, thus necessarily linked by a preposition." The statement can be seen here: <http://www.iec.cat/butlleti/114/noticies.htm> or [goo.gl/uCmgmL](http://goo.gl/uCmgmL).

to the authorities on such matters, but it seems pointless to deny when such pronouncements, for whatever reason, don't feel quite right. Aleix Renyé quotes Llorenç Planes as saying that “Catalunya Nord és una designació al límit de l'incorrecte per descriure una realitat políticament incorrecta” (63),<sup>12</sup> and that seems just right to my outsider's eyes. I thus find that *La France catalane* sidesteps this likely intractable philological problem and moves us into the territory of a different (and just as intractable!) problem about French and Catalan identity being combinable.

Further to that problem, another important aspect of *catalaniste* ideology of the 1970s, clearly reflected in the arguments of *El petit llibre de Catalunya-Nord* and following from what I have just explained about the book's take on language, was the degree to which it was radical without being separatist (at least in the way that the term is generally understood in English). It's not simply that French and Catalan identity could indeed be cheerfully combined as my use of *La France catalane* might suggest, but we don't see a straightforward rejection of the former in favour of the latter either. In terms of other European movements, the clearest analogy is with the Jura separatism of Switzerland, to which Planes and *La Falç* is roughly contemporary (and which, for some reason, does not come up much *chez Lafont*). The Jura separatists never sought to separate from Switzerland; the goal was to separate the Francophone-majority areas from the canton of Berne and form their own, Francophone canton. This was often framed in the context of living up to Swiss ideals, rather than defying or rebelling against them; a true commitment to federalism, that most sacred element of Swiss politics, demanded that the people of the Swiss Jura be properly seated at the table of the Confederation. Indeed, in some of the more politicised writing about Jura, the Catalans of France come up explicitly, as in J.-C. Rennwald's 1984 book *La question jurassienne*, which has a chapter titled “Peuples français, peuples de France.” This understanding of separatism was definitely part of the discourse of 1970s *France catalane*. Berjoan cites an “NDLR” to an article on Catalan separatism in the magazine *Terres Catalanes* from 1971 that stated “no volem ésser ni Espanyols ni Francesos” [we don't want to be French or Spanish] but also specified that “La nostra concepció del separatisme difereix un xic. Nosaltres no som, podriem dir reunionistes, primer dins de la nostra ètnia i, segonament (...) entrant de ple, en els temps actuals, que és el de la federació i de la cooperació, europea primer, mundial després.” (286).<sup>13</sup> What we have here, of course, are strong echoes both of the “Jurassian” non-separatist separatism that I am describing but also a tendency to gravitate towards federalism, something that is not as well-known a part of the Catalan political tradition as of the Swiss, but which is, as I discussed above, natural given how politically and geographically diverse a formation as Els Països Catalans is, a consciousness that is much more pronounced in *La France catalane* than it is in the Principat (the bigger siblings seldom pay the kind of attention to the smaller ones that they should).

Something quite similar can be seen in terms of the way that Planes framed the matter of belonging in *El petit llibre de Catalunya-Nord*. Distinguishing between Catalan belonging north and south of the border, he wrote:

Els Catalans del nord que sempre s'han considerat catalans també es qualificat de francesos: “Sí sóc català, mes també francès!” Es una resposta molt freqüent. Els catalans del Sud, al contrari, sovint diuen simplement que són catalans. Pot

12 “Catalunya Nord is a designation right at the border of the incorrect, which describes a reality that is politically incorrect.” On this matter I highly recommend Renyé's essay “Desgavell toponímic,” which is part of his 2017 collection *Catalunya Nord: La llesqueta del septentrí*, which I discuss below. He is even-handed and sardonic at the same time, and (as I also discuss below) able to explain the linguistic and cultural tensions at work here with a clarity that sometimes evades the scholars at the IEC.

13 “Our conception of separatism differs a bit. We folks here are, you could say, reunionists, firstly in terms of our ethnicity and secondly (...) in the present day bring us right towards federation and cooperation, first off European, and after that global.” The ellipses are Berjoan's, and he also translates this passage into French.

semblar que hi hagi aquí dues acrituds contradictòries i que els del Sud siguin nacionalistes catalans i els del Nord ben francesos. No es tan evident com ho sembla, car, dient els del Nord que són francesos i els del Sud que són catalans, per a tots és una manera de dir que no són espanyols. (23)<sup>14</sup>

It is tempting here to quote the joke in John Sayles' film *Lone Star* about how touching it is to see one prejudice overcome by an older, more deeply engrained prejudice. But something else is at work here. Planes is trying to identify a certain kind of national belonging that is solid enough to create a sense of unity across a national border – between Spain and France, in this case —but also flexible enough to take different forms in both places. That form in France is one defined by accommodation and plurality. James Hawkey sees the situation in more or less these terms, although his overall analysis of that situation is more sharply critical of the French state than I am inclined to be. One question posed by his extensive linguistic fieldwork (conducted in 2015 and 16) was whether “a high solidarity rating for Catalan precludes a high solidarity rating for French” (92). The answer, in short, was no: “as Catalan solidarity score increases, so does French solidarity score” (92). He goes on to say that “Given the strength of centralist French language ideologies, it is hardly surprising that French should be seen as the language of status by all. But the fact that it is also arguably the language of solidarity for all (even for self-declared Catalan speakers) is greatly interesting, and speaks to the power of the existing ideological hegemony... which reinforces the primacy of French on all fronts, not just those associated with status” (93). I'm not so sure that this is *prime facie* evidence of hegemony, a sort of “false consciousness,” republican-style. I am more inclined to see this as a result of a (French) republican ideology that does indeed privilege unity and solidarity, but one that has been filtered through (Països-Catalans-led) conceptualisations of federalism, which would seem to be especially relevant in an era when France is now an unquestionably central, if not *the* central member of the history's most ambitious experiments in federalism, the European Union. I do not wish to downplay the very real hostilities towards cultural difference or diversity that the French state has long cultivated in (and often imposed on) its citizenry. But as trends in immigration make it clearer and clearer that France is faced with a crisis of integration, the public scepticism of that sort of quasi-fundamentalist approach to integration (*intégrisme d'intégration*, if you will) has been on the rise. This dualistic vision of French-Catalan identity can certainly be seen in terms of this kind of re-think, a re-think whose heritage in 1970s debates about regionalism (led by Lafont but including many others indeed) has never been more ripe for rediscovery by those wishing to save French republicanism from itself.

One can, in short, be both French and Catalan in a way that is impossible to imagine down south. As Planes jokingly mentions in passing, this ability to be *both* French and Catalan is due in no small part to the fact that the identity-claim of “Spanish” is popularly understood as antagonistic to the one of “Catalan” in a way that “French” isn't. That's partially a product of demographics; *La France catalane* is about .5% of the total population of France, whereas the Principat is about 16% of the population of Spain. Catalan simply isn't central to the nation-state-wide discourse in France in the same way it is in Spain; it hasn't occupied enough bandwidth to really generate many wide-spread stereotypes or negative feelings on either side. Furthermore, although I see the Spanish state's repression in Catalonia in the wake of the October 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 referendum as nothing

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14 “The northern Catalans that have always considered themselves Catalans are also described as French: ‘Yes I'm Catalan, but French too!’ This is a very common response. The southern Catalans, on the other hand, often simply say that they are Catalans. This can seem like they have two contradictory attitudes and that the folks from the south are Catalan nationalists while the northerners are well and truly French. This is not as evident as it may seem, because the northerners saying they're French and the southerners saying they're Catalans is for both of them just a way of saying that they're not Spanish.”

short of shocking and truly the beginning of a new epoch in Western European politics, I do believe that Catalan identity can survive on its own in Spain in a way that is unimaginable for a minority that is half of one percent of the overall population of France. It's also important to recognise that Planes was writing during the Franco period, which was a very dark time indeed for Catalan nationalism. As I will discuss shortly, it was far more likely that Catalans from the south would come to the north seeking sanctuary than it would be for French Catalans to somehow identify with a political entity based in the Spanish Kingdom. The year *El petit llibre* was published, the Catalan language would be facing gradually fewer threats as restrictions around censorship had been relaxing since at least the 1960s; Franco would be dead the next year. But 1974 was still very far indeed from the present-day reality of a devolved government, Catalan-medium schooling, etc. That sense of a Principat that was ostensibly more culturally intact but in fact far more politically unstable and dangerous for *catalanistes* would have had a major effect on the thinking of that first generation of French *militants* awoken by the failure of the 1969 referendum.

That is as true, if not more so, of the other key figure of this generation of intellectuals, Pere Verdaguer. He was born in Banyoles, south of the French border, in 1929, but when he was 10 his family came to France fleeing the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War. Verdaguer built a wide and diverse literary career as a critic, an editor, a poet, and a science-fiction writer. When he died in February 2017 the IEC staged a commemorative research seminar, and the programme for that day identified 63 books that he had authored over the course of his life. His early works *Catalunya francesa* (1969) and *El Rosselló avui* (1969) are historical surveys of *La France catalane* and as such are excellent introductions, but they don't have the kind of polemical bite that *El petit llibre de Catalunya-Nord* does. But the same year that little book appeared Verdaguer published *Defensa del Rosselló català*, which combined these two impulses — the historical and the polemical — very effectively. One way he does this is by offering detailed histories of key institutions.

His second chapter is devoted entirely to the El Grup Rossellonès d'Estudis Catalans (GREC) and the third is devoted entirely to the emergence of the Universitat Catalana d'Estiu (UCE), which as I mention above is held every year in Prades (known in Catalan as Prada), a French village about 30 minutes outside of Perpignan, and which emerged in 1968 out of the colloquia staged by GREC in the late 1950s and 60s. These are key institutions for several reasons. One is that GREC was not only heavily invested in the *catalaniste* discourse of the period, but was also very much a proto-regionalist organisation that sought out connections with its sister struggles across *France*. Moreover, it did so in a way that made its connections to the fundamental principles of French republicanism clear. Verdaguer recalls that the roots of the movement “va venir del Mouvement Laïque des Cultures Régionales, el qual, recentment creat, havia organitzat del 26 al 31 de desembre de 1959 un seminari a París. Jordi Pere Cerdà (Antoni Cayrol) hi havia estat invitat. *L'Indépendant* va publicar integralment el comunicat final. Cerdà, per la seva banda, en un article a *Transmontane*, revelava el dinamisme dels bretons, dels occitans i dels bascos i denunciava la passivitat rossellonesa” (55).<sup>15</sup> The Principat, by this telling, was something of an afterthought; there was an unmissable French specificity to this emergence, one whose first steps are in the name of *laïcité* and which move through the main minority language groups of the Hexagon. What we see here is very close to the way that Paul Willemen described the wave of Black British cinema of the 1980s (Isaac Julien, John

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15 “...came from the Mouvement Laïque des Cultures Régionales, which having been recently created, organised a seminar in Paris between 26 and 31 December. Jordi Pere Cerdà (known by the pen name Antoni Cayrol) was invited. *L'Indépendant* published the closing address in full. For his part Cerdà, in an article in *Transmontane*, brought out the dynamism of the Bretons, the Occitans, and the Basques by way of denouncing the passivity of the *roussillonaises*.”

Akomfrah, etc.): “Compared to U.S. black films, black British films are strikingly British, yet in no way can they be construed as nationalistic. They are part of a British specificity, but not part of a British nationalism...” (209). Compared with the limited *catalanista* discourse of the mid-to-late Franco period Principat, GREC is strikingly French, yet in no way can be constructed as nationalistic; it is rather part of a French *specificity*.

Something parallel although somewhat different can be seen in the way that he presents the history of the Universitat Catalana d’Estiu. Today that event is dominated by the presence of Catalan speakers from south of the border, and debates about the politics of the Principat are front and centre. Historically it is known as a place that emerged during a Francoist period where the Institut d’Estudis Catalans was tolerated (although by no means given any government support or invested with any public authority over anything) but most other manifestations of *catalanisme* would bring suspicion and sometimes unwelcome attention from the police. It was a place to discuss and debate Catalan culture that had a still-guarded frontier between the participants and a fascist state. But Verdaguer places its intellectual heritage elsewhere: not in a Principat looking for a northern shelter but rather in Els Països Catalans. Reconciling the diversity of the Catalan countries with the experience specific to the village of Prades where the event was unspooling was, in Verdaguer’s telling, a key concern. He writes that “La UCE, fins aleshores, havia estat un lloc d’encontre, un punt de contacte entre els Països Catalans, un lloc privilegiat en particular per a la coneixença del cas rossellonès per part dels mateixos rossellonesos i encara més per part dels altres catalans” (133).<sup>16</sup> That image of “els altres catalans” is important; Catalan-ness can still be a repository of otherness. To return to the formulation Planes offered in *El petit llibre*, they may be part of the same nation, but they are also from distinct states. That kind of difference does mean something, and UCE offered a chance to engage with it head-on. But we are also seeing in Verdaguer’s telling of UCE’s history an anticipation of the degree to which Robert Lafont’s regionalist polemics was unmistakably French: in its search for a truly republican spirit.<sup>17</sup> Verdaguer sees in Prades, and its engagement with the whole of Els Països Catalans, that which Lafont longed for in that 1976 book *Autonomie : de la région à l’autogestion* which I quoted above: “le seuil culturel que l’autonomisme vise : celui de l’universalisme enraciné.”

### Fabra and Macià

This is all quite different from the experience of *La France catalane* that is likely to be more familiar to a readership in Catalan Studies generally: the experience of France as a *terre d’exil*. As fascist forces were triumphing in the beginning of 1939, massive numbers of Republicans and their sympathisers fled north to France as refugees. This included most of the devolved Catalan government, led by Lluís Companys, who struggled to set up a Catalan government-in-exile before being arrested by Vichy France’s police in 1940, deported to Spain, and executed. The great Catalan political theorist Antoni Rovira i Virgili served as president of that government-in-exile from 1940 until his death, in Perpignan, in 1949. That exiled government had various installations in Paris, Mexico City and Geneva, but it always had a strong presence in Perpignan as well, that is to say, in *La France*

16 “Until then the UCE had been a meeting place and point of contact between the Catalan Countries, a particularly privileged site for the case of the *roussillonaises* becoming better known by those same people from Roussillon and even more so by other Catalans.”

17 I think this is especially true of some of the books that Lafont published before the referendum, works that are in some ways harsher about the way that France treated its “regions,” connecting that more explicitly to colonialism, but also proceeding from unspoken assumptions about the dialectic between localism and universalism that, as I argue above, Richard Kearney sees as crucial to the tradition of classical republicanism. In Lafont’s case that’s especially true of 1967’s *La révolution régionaliste* and 1971’s *Décoloniser en France: les régions face à l’Europe*.

*catalane*. But the civil-war exile who is most closely associated with *La France catalane* itself wasn't really a politician at all, but rather a linguist. That is Pompeu Fabra.

Although he was trained as an engineer, Fabra spent the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century writing books that would begin the process of modernising and regularising the Catalan language. While there may have been a substantial literary tradition in Catalan, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century spelling and grammar remained variable and to a certain extent dialect-dependent. The formation of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans in 1907 was partially meant to stabilise this situation, and Fabra, who had already published several treatises on Catalan grammar (including 1904's *Tractat de ortografia catalana*) was a founding member of its philological section. The mass of his contributions to the Catalan language are too wide and diverse to detail here, but two contributions do stand out. One is *El català literari*, published in 1932 and serving a dual function as a history of written Catalan and a proscriptive text that became a condensed go-to for those who wanted to finally settle down into a stable written standard. The other is far more sprawling, and that is his dictionary. Editions of Fabra's *Diccionari Ortogràfic* began to appear in 1917 and came out in fairly regular intervals until his exile. His more comprehensive *Diccionari general de la llengua catalana* first came out in 1932, and an updated version was published posthumously in 1954. That dictionary became the foundation on which the IEC's Catalan dictionary was built.

Earlier I mentioned how at the 2017 Universitat Catalana d'Estiu, a panel that featured two members of the IEC was subject to some pretty severe grilling during the question period over the "castellanismes" that had crept into the dictionary over the years. To a certain extent this was defused by an incredibly moving intervention from the third panellist, Ramon Gual. He made a plea for a master dictionary that would be a genuine standard; have a Valencian dictionary, an Andorran dictionary, no problem, but supporting such efforts is not the same thing as being the guardian of a master dictionary of the Catalan language. And that dictionary, he said, should bear the name of Fabra, who should become as synonymous with the totality of the Catalan language as the name of Larousse has for the French language. He was holding back tears as he said this.

This attests to the quasi-sacred place that Fabra has in the *imaginaire catalan français*. Every UCE features a pilgrimage to Fabra's grave in Prades; he moved there after a bit of time in Paris and Montpellier, and died there in 1948. Gual is the head of Terra Nostra, which is both the name of a now-defunct journal and a small publishing company, based in Prades and devoted to Catalunya Nord. Here I use the term fearlessly, given the way that the company has deployed it so vigorously since 1965. Their topo map of Catalunya Nord continues to sell quite well, and their back-list of book-length publications is very large indeed. The journal that bore that name began to appear in 1965, and published many important special issues, including #33, which appeared in 1979: "Pompeu Fabra a Prada." Their last issue appeared in 2001, a special issue called "Bibliografia de Catalunya Nord (1502-1999)." They are, in some ways, the guardian of the spirit of Pompeu Fabra, but of Pompeu Fabra *in exile*. That is to say, they continue the belief in a pan-Catalan identity that has a strong base in the Principat (Gual is the son of Civil-War-era refugees; he came to France at the age of four, in 1940) but which reaches out across Els Països Catalans, and does so almost exclusively via the language, specifically via a faith that the language is an object that is at least potentially stabilizable and thus learnable by and teachable to all comers. Hawkey makes the point that Fabra's approach to standardisation flows from these kinds of assumptions without being overly centralising, writing that "even though proposed language planning initiatives may follow normative (Fabrian) Central Catalan more closely than Rossellonese, this is a norm in which care was taken to minimise diatopic differences. As such, the pragmatic choice of adopting normative, supralocal (Central) Catalan in initiatives to protect Catalan in Northern Catalonia constitute a 'middle ground'" (201).

Gual's sense that a dictionary that includes Valencian terms is a different project from a master dictionary of the Catalan language can also be read as an insistence that the language is not an infinitely diverse set of variations, and thus sprawling and unmanageable and basically about personal identity. That kind of unmanageable sprawl may seem an exciting product of our brave new globalised world from the vantage point of cosmopolitan Barcelona, where Catalan exists in a relatively secure state alongside many other languages (Castilian, Arabic, English, etc.). But that kind of vertiginous diversity is necessarily going to feel very different in a place like Prades, where outside of the private, Catalan-medium school system Bressola, basically everything is in French, and the top priority for *catalanistes* is simply getting people to some reasonable level of fluency and maintaining some base-line of publishing in the language itself (Joan Francesc Lino's 2007 book *La realitat d'un somni* is a history of the Bressola system). If I argued earlier that both Llorenç Planes and Pere Verdaguer embodied a distinctly French sensibility because of their embodiment of the plurality of the republican tradition, I think we can see a similar sense in this Pradian memory of Pompeu Fabra. In the Principat, his legacy certainly derives from his linguistic contributions, but he is also widely remembered as a great patriot of the state from which he was forced to flee, someone who expressed his loyalty to the Generalitat de Catalunya through the language. Joan Martí i Castell's short book *Pompeu Fabra i l'Institut d'Estudis Catalans* speaks of his belief in "la importància de l'acceptació d'una sola norma," the importance of accepting only one norm, but also his sense that Fabra believed in this "Fins a tal punt era indiscutible per a ell que llengua i nació estaven destinades a seguir la mateixa sort" (12–13).<sup>18</sup> That would be a pretty hard case to make north of the France-Spain border, where it is obvious to all that the Catalans who live in France are not going to have the same fate as the members of that same nation who live in a different state. Quasi-ethnic concepts of "nation" are supposed to be anathema to republican regimes (that is the essence of "égalité," invocations of "un sang impur" in national anthems notwithstanding), and this is part of the reason that the language takes on a quasi-religious function in places such as France. It's literally the only thing holding the nation together in a post-revolutionary regime, given the absence of the cultural or quasi-ethnic belongings that do have a history of coexisting under kingdoms: in the *Royaume de France* that the revolution was supposed to banish to the dustbin of history, in the United Kingdom, or in the Kingdom of Spain. Unlike their opposite numbers in Scotland, separatists in the Principat are adamant that an independent Catalan state would be a republic, and the intensity of that republican feeling can certainly be traced to a post-Franco desire to redefine Catalan identity in civic rather than ethnic terms, one where a willingness to use the language, an always-learnable language, plays a crucial role. That republican sense of belonging can be seen in protean form in the way that Pompeu Fabra's memory has lived on in Prades.

The other comparable "southern" memory that plays a role in defining *La France catalane* is the aborted rebellion launched from the town of Prats de Mollo in 1926. This was during the dictatorship of Miguel Primo de Rivera, and was planned by Francesc Macià and his followers. Macià was a Lt.-Colonel in the Spanish army who resigned after being outraged at the treatment of *catalanistes* in Barcelona (the shutting down of the humour magazine *Cu-Cut* in 1905 was a flashpoint). He formed the party Estat Català, a forerunner of the Esquerra Republicana, today a kind of establishment-left party in the Catalan political separatist spectrum. With just under 100 followers, Macià planned to invade the northernmost part of Spanish Catalonia from a base in the French border town of Prats de Mollo. The plot was discovered by the French police and shut down. Macià was arrested

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18 "To such an extent that it would be indisputable for him that the language and the nation were destined to follow the same fate."

with 86 of his followers, which included a number of Italians.<sup>19</sup> They were put on trial on charges of mischief and possessing explosives; the eventual verdict was deportation all around, although they were allowed to choose the border they would be escorted to. In shades of things to come in November 2017, they all chose Belgium, and most worked their way back to Spain eventually. Macià entered electoral politics after the fall of the dictatorship. When Esquerra Republicana won the municipal election in Barcelona under his leadership he declared a short-lived Catalan republic, eventually accepting a kind of “home rule” agreement that kept that Catalan republic within the larger Spanish Republic but re-established the Generalitat as a devolved parliament. Some form of that arrangement lasted more or less until the end of the Civil War (with an interruption between 1934–1936, when a right-wing Spanish republican government imprisoned Macià’s successor, Companys).

Readers may be wondering at this point what any of this has to do with *La France catalane* itself. Contemporary Prats de Mollo is a tiny village but a *very* vibrant home of catalanist sentiment, where Catalan imagery and commemoration seem to be everywhere and it is far easier to obtain services in Catalan than in any part of *La France catalane* I have visited (very much including Prades and perhaps even including Perpignan). Nevertheless, it is tempting to flippantly reply that the answer to my readers’ question, in marked contrast to my telling of the story of Fabra in Prades, is something like “nearly nothing.” That is not to say that the story of Prats de Mollo was unknown in France. 1927 saw the publication, in Paris, of the book *La Catalogne Rebelle*, which told the story of Macià’s invasion plot, as well as giving the broad strokes of the Catalan national movement, including reprinting statements from “Le gouvernement provisoire de la Catalogne.” But apart from a statistical breakdown at the beginning of the book that gives the population of “Catalogne française” at about 206,000, there is basically no mention of the presence of Catalan culture in France itself. The book has a chapter called “La Conjuración des Catalans en France,” but they don’t mean people born in Perpignan or Prades, they mean exiles from the south, largely in Paris. France is just a well-located launch-pad for Catalan radicals, not the repository of a Catalan culture of her own. Catalans are just another European minority group that found support there, especially in Paris. Indeed, *La Catalogne Rebelle* is closest of all to a book like *L’Internationale socialiste et la Géorgie*, which was published from Paris in 1921 in order to draw attention to the fate of the social-democratic Georgian government that had been exiled in Paris following the Bolshevik invasion of 1921 (which ended the short-lived independent Democratic Republic of Georgia of 1918–21). A casual reader of both books would likely understand these as more or less the same political phenomena: foreign radicals taking haven in cosmopolitan France, which is to say mostly Paris and environs. They are, of course, radically different phenomena; it’s not as if France and Georgia were divided by a centuries-old imperial treaty that left some parts of the population on the wrong side of the border. Of course, that *is* the legacy of 1659’s Treaty of the Pyrenees, and the failure to acknowledge that does seem strange given that this is a movement seeking to resolve their own historical grievances that go back just as far. This, more than anything we see anywhere else in 20<sup>th</sup> century *catalanisme*, is an example of Planes’ sense of “El jacobinisme barceloní,” quite literally speaking. That is to say, the moment of Prats de Mollo is defined by a radical spirit, but its all-consuming revolutionary spirit leaves its partisans blind to anything that is not unambiguously part of the vision that they have for

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19 *La Catalogne Rebelle*, which I discuss shortly, states that they “enrôla une soixantaine d’Italiens, hommes braves, idéalistes, tous animés d’une générosité vraiment touchante. Ces hommes, qui se chargeraient du maniement des mitrailleuses et des explosifs, auraient encadré aussi les jeunes Catalans néophytes dans l’art de la guerre” (33).

a transformed state. And how *La France catalane* would connect to a possible independent Catalan republic is deeply ambiguous.

### A slice of *catalanité*

The best treatment of that ambiguity that I know of is the recent book by journalist Aleix Renyé, *Catalunya Nord: La llesqueta del septentrió*; Baylac-Ferrer's article in this section mentions it briefly, and I think it is worth paying close attention to. Renyé is a journalist, resident since the 1980s in Perpignan, but originally from Lleida, in the Principat. He's made his career writing for Catalan-language publications south of the border, and also by working for Ràdio Arrels, France's Catalan-language broadcaster (founded in 1981) whose motto is, to return to the place-name controversy I discussed above, "La veu de Catalunya Nord."<sup>20</sup> His book is a collection of more or less journalistic pieces published over the years, and throughout these pieces it becomes clear that he wants to be an advocate for this local situation at the same time that he recognises the serious problems that remain there, problems that would be visible to a *català del sud* in a way the might not be to a *roussillonais*.

Although a passion for his adopted *pays catalan* runs throughout the book, this is most visible in an essay called "El Manifest Revulsista Nord-Català." This essay reprints the titular 1998 manifesto that Renyé co-signed with Pascale Comelade and Joan-Lluís Lluís in full, in addition to offering some before and after sorts of reflections. I might suggest that the title is something like "The Revulsive North Catalan Manifesto," but it's not easy to translate. The word "revulsista" is not in the Institut d'Estudis Catalans' dictionary, and if you Google it most of what comes up is related to that very document. The IEC dictionary offers the following definition for the root-word "revulsiu -iva": "Circumstància, esdeveniment, que, tot i causar sofriment o molèsties, és positiu perquè produeix una reacció favorable."<sup>21</sup> That second clause there is really important; the situation that the signatories to this manifesto are describing here for sure is causing suffering and trouble, but their response is in fine activist fashion meant to produce something favourable. A lot of that has to do with defending *La France catalane* from the two states who, through a varying combination of indifference and arrogance undermine the full emergence of the *pays* that Renyé unfailingly calls Catalunya Nord. The first relevant state is, of course, France, and as Renyé does throughout *La llesqueta del septentrió* the manifesto indicts France for its centralising tendencies, even though these lupine imperialists often dress in the sheep's clothing of regionalism. The manifesto denounces "l'entitat cripto-regionalista anomenada Languedoc-Roussillon," going on to say that "Aquesta *région* no és més que l'estadi últim del sempitern imperialisme cultural jacobí, a través dels seus organismes més polítics (Direction Régionale des Affaires Culturelles, ARAM, Maison du Livre et des Écrivains, etc., lloadors d'un tradicionalisme en via de putrefacció malgrat la seva pseudo-modernitat d'inspiració parisenca)" (152).<sup>22</sup> The language here is uncommonly fierce but the argument is fairly well-known among the militants of the *catalaniste* movement in France: the support from the Jacobin state only serves to shore up a harmlessly Parisian sense of other cultures that always ends up being, to use the pejorative French sense of the

20 As James Hawkey points out, "The Arrels voluntary association was established in 1981 and continues to ensure a high degree of visibility for Catalan language issues in the region. *Arrels* has established two entirely Catalan-medium primary schools in Perpignan, which since 1995 have been integrated into the public school system" (25), which is in contrast to the private Bressola system, which does not follow France's state curriculum. The review *Terra Nostra* published a special issue in 1991 (#71) on Arrels, titled "Arrels: una escola, una ràdio."

21 "Circumstance or event which, in that it causes suffering or discomfort, is put forward in order to produce a favourable reaction."

22 "...the crypto-regionalist entity called Languedoc-Roussillon.... This region is no more than the final state of that hexagonal, Jacobinist cultural imperialism, which works through its most political organisms (Direction Régionale des Affaires Culturelles, ARAM, Maison du Livre et des Écrivains, etc., all locations of a rotting traditionalism, despite their Parisian-inspired pseudo-modernity)"

term, *folklorique*. Regionalism, at least as it is defined by official France, is clearly not going to save what Renyé and his comrades in arms value in Catalunya Nord.

But the manifesto also indicts the citizens of the Principat for their complete ignorance of the culture of their northern siblings. They write that “Sem conscients, és clar, de la implantació cada dia més gran, al nostre país, de comportaments ultra-francòfils i de l’arrelament de les mentalitats nacional-integristes franceses. També constatem l’abandó progressiu de la percepció de la nostra catalanitat, com també la ignorància quasi completa dels catalans autònoms del Sud envers nostre (l’exemple anecdòtic en seria l’èxit de la Maison du Languedoc-Roussillon a Barcelona, un insult per als nord-catalans)” (154).<sup>23</sup> Now here’s when it gets *really* interesting. First of all, note the use of “Sem conscients,” which is the Roussillon variant of what would be in standard Catalan “som conscients.” That sets the tone for the formulation a few clauses down, where they decry the implantation that is going on “al nostre país.” They are of course referring there *to France*, which certainly is their country, and not at all to the state south of the border. Their aspiration here is clearly not for some kind of *Risorgimento à la catalane*; what they long for instead is a recognition of “la nostra catalanitat” which isn’t necessarily linked to a state. Indeed, they’re pretty irritated with many of the residents of that southern state, who as they recall flocked *en masse* to a restaurant named for the location of that *catalanitat*, la Maison du Languedoc-Roussillon, located in Barcelona’s trendy Eixample neighbourhood, and which prided itself on its classic French cuisine. Same nation, different state; that’s the classic condition of the relationship between *La France catalane* and the Principat. Planes’ *Petit llibre* was explicit about that, invoking, as I recalled above, the reality of “diferents com a ciutadans, de la mateixa llengua, de la mateixa nació però de distints estats.” Part of the importance of the manifesto, and of *La llesqueta del septentrí* overall, is the degree to which it places equal weight on “mateixa” and “distints.”

What I think that is moving us close to, really, is a concept of French identity, and Catalan identity as well, that embodies what Charles Taylor has, in his 1993 book *Reconciling the Solitudes: Essays on Canadian Federalism and Nationalism*, called “deep diversity.” Writing in the wake of Meech Lake and just before the 1995 referendum on Quebec sovereignty, he argues that “to build a country for everyone, Canada would have to allow for second-level or ‘deep’ diversity, in which a plurality of ways of belonging would also be acknowledged and accepted” (183). Taylor invokes the differing experiences of Ukrainian-Canadians, Québécois and Dené as indicative of the complexity that we’re talking about here; different groups are going to seek different kinds of belonging. That is the reality that the Catalan experience presents to France, something that seems fairly clear from the outside: a Catalan, a descendant of *pieds noirs* and a recent immigrant from Senegal are all going to have different ways of belonging to France, and I think that the decades have shown the folly of denying this in the name of an overly-zealous view of republican neutrality. What bears emphasising, though, is the degree to which this Taylorian recognition of “deep diversity” is an imperative for a renewal of *Catalan* identity as well. Residents of Barcelona, Andorra la Vella, Perpignan and L’Alguer are going to have ways of being Catalan that are no less different than their Muslim co-citizens whose situation has been theorised by Id Yassine, or their friends the Ukrainian/Québécois/Dené across the Atlantic, or their fellow residents of the hexagon the Catalan/Pied-noir/Senegalese. This is an important part of Miriam Almarcha-París’ contribution to this section, which explains in great detail the tensions between *catalanité*, *andorranité* and

23 “We’re conscious, clearly, of the implantation in our country, more and more as each day goes by, of ultra-Francophile behaviours, as well as of the degree to which national-integrationist mentalities are taking root. We are also aware of the degree to which the perception of our *catalanité* is being progressively abandoned, as well as of the nearly total ignorance on the part of the autonomous Catalans of the south of ourselves (the anecdotal example of which would be the success of the Maison du Languedoc-Roussillon in Barcelona, an insult to the North-Catalans).”

what we Canadians instinctively, but probably erroneously in this specific context, call *nordicité*.

But Renyé is also critical of the way that elements of the *catalaniste* discourse in France has evolved, and he is most explicit about this in his essay on USAP, the celebrated French rugby team that has become as important for the north-Catalan identity as FC Barça has become to their opposite numbers in the south. It is definitely “*més que un club*.” But for Renyé this speaks to a worrying tendency to divorce the identity from the language, and indeed to marginalise the language. In quite a delicious bit of code-switching, he writes:

Per a les forces vives polítiques, mediàtiques i rugbístiques *payscatalanistes* de la Catalunya Nord (perdó, IEC!) parlar català en públic, *més enllà dels estadis esportius o una cargola entre amic*, és cosa *de vieux militants catalanistes ringards et aigris...* o de “catalans espagnols” que, ja sap, pobrets, no saben francès.... La normalitat “catalane” en el “Pays Catalan” és “être fier d’être catalan.” És així, en francès, i punt. (122)<sup>24</sup>

Catalan identity in the absence of the Catalan language is clearly something that bothers Renyé a lot, not simply because such an absence often leads the to a national identity defined instead by ethnicity (and thus anathema to classical republicanism), but because it winds up being actually *hostile* towards the language itself. In this way Renyé opposes the position staked out in Quebec by the writer (and publisher) Antonio D’Alfonso. Writing in English in an essay called “Unmeltable Ethnicities,”<sup>25</sup> D’Alfonso argued that “Language is but one of the many parameters that individualizes a culture. It does not contain all of a culture. In fact, if anything language has a strong tendency to constrain, confine, cloister and definitively manacle culture so as to render it a stereotype of itself, a fossil, a figment in the minds of corrupt politicians” (151). This is part of his larger “defence of ethnicity,” which he sees as necessary in the context of both Canadian and Quebec cultural nationalism, movements that he argues are defined by a tendency to homogenise all manner of difference in a manner that is closer to the “melting pot” model either group will admit. In the same collection we find a long interview with D’Alfonso called “In Defence of Ethnicity,” where he says, more polemically, that “The only person to have imposed language on culture was Benito Mussolini. It is no surprise, therefore, to find that in Italy to combine language and culture immediately conjured up the image of fascism. And this is still apparent today. I am sure this is why in Italy the language debate is very different in spirit to the kind of debate that one encounters in Quebec” (204).

That spirit that he refers to has to do with the modernisation of identity, that is to say the transformation of Canadiens-français into Québécois which will be so well-known to readers of *Dalhousie French Studies*. He is not entirely comfortable with that transformation, though. In that “Defence of Ethnicity” interview, he notes that “there exists no major link... between the Quebecois and the Fransaskois. Intolerance keeps them divided” even though “we are dealing with one people – this is horrifying!” (206). He finds there an echo of the way that Italians in Italy think of “Italics” such as himself (that’s the term he coins to describe all Italian people, including the diaspora), as having no legitimate claim to an Italian identity (of whatever description), often because of their lack of

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24 “For the lively political, media and rugbyish *payscatalanistic* forces of Catalunya Nord (suck it, IEC!), speaking Catalan in public, apart from at the sports stadium or chowing down on some escargot with friends, is something *de vieux militants catalanistes ringards et aigris ...* or for ‘Spanish Catalans,’ who, *les pauvres*, don’t know any French... The ‘Catalan’ normality in the ‘Pays Catalan’ is “être fier d’être catalan.” And doing that in French, period.”

25 This was originally written in English, and so I have opted to rely on the version found in D’Alfonso’s 1995 collection *In Italics*. This has also been published as *En italiques: réflexions sur l’ethnicité* (Interligne, 2005). D’Alfonso writes in English, French and Italian.

proficiency in standard Italian. He sees this as horrifying, for similar “we are one people” sorts of reasons. Renyé is, in essence, coming up the middle of these competing positions. He doesn’t exactly say that Catalans on both sides of the French border are “the same people,” but it is not at all difficult to imagine him summarising the indifference of Catalans in the Principat to those in France by saying something like “this is horrifying!” Where he differs from D’Alfonso irreconcilably is on the matter of language. Renyé is an immigrant from the Principat, and clearly sees his sense of *catalanité* as having little to do with ethnicity as such – even the insurgent, sticking-up-for-difference variety that D’Alfonso defends – but rather a conscious decision to live fully in a culture that is in principle open to all, rather than defined by accidents of birth (of both the “who’s your daddy?” variety and the “where were you born?” variety). That, really, is what makes him very French indeed: that is to say defined by a republican sensibility about both the autonomy of the individual (you are not defined by the facts of your birth) and the importance of *solidarité* (absent such reactionary kinds of connections, language is finally just about the only thing that can provide the social cohesion that is essential for progress).

So finally, we return to the spirit of Pompeu Fabra, the Fabra of Prades, the republican Fabra. He knew that it was the language itself that connected the *Pays Catalans* in their totality. Once that language is marginalised in favour of something so much more easily consumable (such as, say, mass-marketed sporting events), Renyé experiences the reality that that it becomes all too easy to tar the whole movement with the brush of being *dépassé* and somehow foreign, not connected to France at all. It may seem somewhat paradoxical that it is a language other than French that brings the movement back to ideals of French republicanism, the legacy that Fabra’s exile began, and that Planes and Vergdager continued, and which Renyé has brought into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It may seem to an outside observer that these defenders of “Rosselló català,” to invoke that 1974 book of Vergdager’s, are engaging in some basically irrelevant garden-cultivation, retreating from the struggles of a globalising world to narcissistically focus on a few minor differences in French or Catalan life, depending on which state you’re looking at the experience from. But that experience of adopting a nationality that exists not just across a border but across *Els Països*, which includes devolved regions, a microstate, an island group, a definitely non-devolved region, and a city, is one that should be seen as proto-globalist, and moreover an embodiment of a globalisation that is both outward looking and protective of local distinctiveness. What we are talking about with that kind of proto-globalism is, really, Richard Kearney’s hope that republicanism could be understood anew in both its universalist and localist dimensions. I hope that underscores the degree to which the political heritage and ideals specific to France have a special role in this debate about the meaning and the future of *Els Països Catalans*.

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