Amic o enemic? Immigration and the Catalan struggle for independence

Ethnopolitics

Amic o enemic? Immigration and the Catalan Struggle for Independence

--Manuscript Draft--

Full Title:	Amic o enemic? Immigration and the Catalan Struggle for Independence
Manuscript Number:	RENO-2019-0039R2
Article Type:	Freestanding
Keywords:	Catalonia; sub-state nationalism; immigration; threat-benefit model
Abstract:	Immigration has extended to regions with sub-state nationalist movements, such as Scotland, Friesland, the Basque Country and, as is the focus of this research, Catalonia. In a context of political upheaval in the region, this article aims to examine the impact of the successive waves of immigration to Catalonia on the modern independence movement. The respective status of the immigrant population in Catalonia is a major issue about which there is a divergence of opinion. This study approaches attitudes toward immigrants through the threat-benefit framework, which perceives immigrants as both threatening and beneficial for the receiving society. The data, gathered from six focus groups and ten narrative interviews, reveal a complexity of attitudes on the impact of immigration on the secessionist movement. Two themes emerge in the informants' discussion: 'Immigration: Rising Benefit' and '(New) Immigration: (New) Challenge'. The comments of the respondents indicate that, against the backdrop of the independence process in the territory, there exists a range of views on the impact of the various waves of migration to Catalonia. This study suggests that a fuller understanding of the situation in the territory may be facilitated by qualitative approaches.
Order of Authors:	Steven Byrne
Response to Reviewers:	Hello, Please find attached the final copy. Thank you, Steven Byrne

Amic o enemic? Immigration and the Catalan Struggle for Independence

Word Count: 9,756

Abstract

Immigration has extended to regions with sub-state nationalist movements, such as Scotland, Friesland, the Basque Country and, as is the focus of this research, Catalonia. In a context of political upheaval in the region, this article aims to examine the impact of the successive waves of immigration to Catalonia on the modern independence movement. The respective status of the immigrant population in Catalonia is a major issue about which there is a divergence of opinion. This study approaches attitudes toward immigrants through the threat-benefit framework, which perceives immigrants as both threatening and beneficial for the receiving society. The data, gathered from six focus groups and ten narrative interviews, reveal a complexity of attitudes on the impact of immigration on the secessionist movement. Two themes emerge in the informants' discussion: 'Immigration: Rising Benefit' and '(New) Immigration: (New) Challenge'. The comments of the respondents indicate that, against the backdrop of the independence process in the territory, there exists a range of views on the impact of the various waves of migration to Catalonia. This study suggests that a fuller understanding of the situation in the territory may be facilitated by qualitative approaches.

Keywords: Catalonia; sub-state nationalism; immigration; threat-benefit framework

Introduction

Immigration has become a vital topic of research as scholars strive to unravel the complex issue of why immigration goes more smoothly for some groups than for others (López-Rodríguez, Navas, Cuadrado, Coutant, & Worchel, 2014). Consequently, immigration and immigrant integration has become one of the most pressing policy concerns of the 21st century. Contemporary democratic states in the West, such as Spain, Canada, Italy and Belgium are becoming increasingly diverse as a result of immigration and issues related to the integration and management of this diversity are the objects of robust political and social debate (Barker, 2015). In addition, a heightened sensitivity to immigration is frequently associated with this rapid increase in diversity. This has not gone unnoticed in scholarly work and a number of explanations have been systematised in recent reviews of the literature (Escandell & Ceobanu, 2010; Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014).

Immigration and the diversity that it brings is not only a challenge to the traditional model of the nation-state but it is also an issue for communities and groups which see themselves as distinct and self-governing within the larger state (Kymlicka, 2001). Adding to this, associated with the processes of globalisation, there has been a resurgence and intensification of minority nationalist movements seeking more autonomy or independence across Europe in the second half of the 20th century (Lecours, 2012; Williams, 2018). Considering this, growing international migration constitutes a challenge for contemporary democracies, no more so than for minority or sub-state nations; those regions that claim some degree of linguistic, cultural or national recognition or self-determination (Barker, 2015; Adam & Deschouwer, 2016).

These ‘stateless nations’ or ‘neonationalisms’, such as Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland, face a number of significant challenges when interacting with immigration. As Wisthaler

(2016) argues, sub-state nations face the challenge of maintaining and protecting their identity, culture and interests of a non-state nationality. However, they are also confronted with the need to find ways to include the additional diversity that comes with immigration, potentially boosting the territory's demographic weight and enhancing its legitimacy as a liberal democratic actor (Hepburn, 2009; Adam, 2013a). In these societies, it is here where the 'new' diversity arising from immigration meets the 'old' politics of sub-state nationalism (Barker, 2015). Or as Banting and Soroka (2012) argue, it is at this nexus where the multiculturism brought by mass immigration meets the politics of minority nationalism. This article aims to address the call for more research regarding public opinion toward immigration and its impact on sub-state nation's own identity and interests (Jeram, Van Der Zwet, & Wisthaler, 2016).

With the complex relationship existing between sub-state nationalism and migration movements as the backdrop, this article specifically focuses on the case of Catalonia. Whilst there has been a growing body of studies since 2010 exploring sub-state nationalisms and migration (Franco-Guillén, 2016; Adam, 2018), as yet and despite the ongoing socio-political situation in Catalonia, there is a dearth of qualitative scholarly research analysing the Catalan case. Considering this, the current article offers a novel argument about the role of inter-regional group relations and how these relations weigh on the discourses of stateless nations, immigration and successionist movements at a time of political unrest. Catalonia represents an auspicious place for research with the steady rise of independentism in the region combined with the new socio-political, cultural and linguistic issues that have emerged as a consequence of immigration to the autonomous region (Dowling, 2018; Rodríguez-García, Solana-Solana, Ortiz-Guitart, & Freedman, 2018).

The relationship between sub-state nationalism and secessionist movements in the EU are complex and, at times contradictory (Wagner, Marin, & Kroqi, 2019). In addition, recent

research focusing on integration discourse in sub-state nations has demonstrated that most stateless nationalists have not jumped on the anti-multiculturalism bandwagon (Hepburn, 2011; Jeram et al., 2016). From the Catalan perspective, the region has long been constructed as a land of welcome where positive attitudes toward immigration are present (Conversi, 2000). For example, Rodon and Franco-Guillén (2014) found that Catalan identity is related to less negative attitudes toward immigrants. In addition, Wilson-Daily, Kemmelmeier and Prats (2018), found that identifying as Catalan was linked to a greater appreciation of diversity. Furthermore, Wilson-Daily et al. (2018) argue that these views of immigration may be reflective of wider support for the nationalist cause by attempting to include, or at least not reject, immigration and diversity. In addition, scholars have noted that support for the secessionist movement in Catalonia correlates strongly with pro-immigration attitudes, where the right to decide on the region's future is as an inclusive broad-based (transversal) civic rather than ethnic movement (Woolard, 2016; Cetrà, 2019; Pardos-Prado, 2019). However, the current article suggests that while attitudes toward immigration remain largely positive among successionists, making the newer waves of migrants to Catalonia into allies was considered a significant and ongoing challenge for the independence movement in the region.

For my purposes here, there is a need to qualify the term migrant as it is used in this article. I refer to migrants as those who arrived to Catalonia during the three successive waves of inward migration to the territory. The first internal wave arrived between 1901 and 1930 and nearly 1.4 million internal migrants arrived in Catalonia. The second wave arrived between 1951 and 1975 with an estimated 1.7 million migrants arriving into the region from the impoverished agrarian South of Spain (Carbonell, 2019). The third wave began at the turn of the century, with the arrival of newcomers from different parts of the world, such as North and West Africa, Asia and Latin America (see, e.g. Conversi & Jeram, 2017; Rodríguez-García et

al., 2018). As is demonstrated in the following sections, much of the informants' discussion referred to this newer wave of immigration.

This research examines attitudes of members of six pro-independence socio-political organisations toward immigrants and their perceived role in the modern independence movement in Catalonia. Four of the six organisations were civic, namely, Ateneu d'Acció Cultural (ADAC), Assemblea Nacional Catalana (ANC), Ateneu 24 de Juny and Súmate. In addition, two political parties, Candidatura d'Unitat Popular (CUP) and Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC), agreed to contribute to this study. These organisations were the focus of this investigation because, in general, socio-political organisations are more than just vehicles for representing their members' interests. Rather, they often embody an alternative to established society, engaging in political and/or cultural conflict aimed at promoting or opposing social change. In short, socio-political organisations may reflect wider societal views on what a community or society might or should become in the future (Della Porta et al., 2017).

The data collection for this project was conducted at a unique time in the regions history, namely, the months leading up to the Catalan 2017 independence referendum (March-July 2017). The data, as I shall describe, reveals a dynamic relationship between the research participants' views on immigration and how these opinions intersected and interacted with their understanding of the Catalan independence project. The findings suggest that when it comes to the politics of immigration, there was a heterogeneity of positions adopted by the informants regarding different immigrant groups and their role in the regions push for independence. As such, informants in this study implemented different strategies for appraising different groups and that the choice of those strategies was context bound.

The article is structured as follows. The first section provides a brief historical overview of Catalonia as a relevant case for study. The second section discusses the theoretical

framework adopted in the current study. I, then, present the methodology that was employed. Following this, the empirical data is presented and discussed in relation to the literature. The conclusion compares the findings of this research to the relevant work on sub-state nationalisms and immigration (Adam & Deschouwer, 2016). Finally, the paper offers suggestions for future research.

Catalonia, Immigration and Independence

Catalonia emerges as an interesting case for study for several reasons. With a population of 7.5 million, Catalonia makes up a substantial proportion of the Spanish population (16% of 46.6 million) (Tortella, 2017). Located in the Northeast of Spain, Catalonia is one of the most affluent regions in Spain, producing a GDP representing 18-20% of the Spanish total (Gray, 2015). In addition, the territory has its own legislative and executive power over several important competencies including education, language policies, health care, culture and social services (Woolard, 2016; Cetrà, 2019). However, in recent years the regions fiscal woes have become a rallying call for nationalists who blame the Spanish state (Franco-Guillén, 2016). The economic crisis has also heightened social tensions, impelling huge numbers to direct their political sympathies and preferences toward the pro-independence movement (Huszka, 2014).

Traditionally, immigration to Catalonia was made up of people from other regions of Spain. Resulting from this, Catalan society has been profoundly marked by internal migration from other areas of Spain (Dowling, 2018). The majority of this internal immigration arrived from Andalusia and Extremadura and settled in peripheral districts and cities of metropolitan areas such as Barcelona or Tarragona (Zapata-Barrero, 2014; Serrano & Bonillo, 2017). Resulting from this, immigrants have accounted for approximately 40% of Catalonia's total population since the 1960s (Hepburn, 2011). Reflecting this, more than half of the current

population of Catalonia, in the first or second generation, has its roots in different regions of Spain (Carbonell, 2019). Politically there is a general consensus that since the restoration of democracy in Catalonia in the 1970s, the community is open to incorporating immigration into the region (Cetrà, 2019). Given this, it is argued that due to the strength of linguistic identity, Catalonia has largely rejected racist or segregationist approaches with Catalan identity adopting an integrationist approach. In addition, the promotion of the Catalan language and culture has long been conceived as an inclusive factor that could expand the potential boundaries of Catalanness and by extension Catalan nationalism (Conversi, 2000; Climent-Ferrando & Triviño, 2015). As such, traditionally immigrants are not resented as a major threat to national identity. Rather, Catalonia's largely successful history of integrating migrants from other parts of Spain has been constructed as a source to further strengthen separatist claims (Conversi, 2000; Kleiner-Liebau, 2009).

However, Catalonia has seen a rapid increase in international immigration since the turn of the century. This has resulted in a significant diversification of languages, cultures and religions across Catalonia over the past 20 years (Alarcón & Garzón, 2013; Rodríguez-García et al., 2018). For example, migration from Latin America to Spain went from being almost inexistent in the early 1990s to being one of the most significant incoming demographic movements at the beginning of the 2000s (Corona & Kelsall, 2016). In addition to immigration from Latin America, newcomers have also come from different parts of the world, such as North and West Africa, and Asia (see, e.g. Ianos, Huguet, & Lapresta-Rey, 2017). Today approximately 13.6% of the population in Catalonia are of foreign origin (Puigdevall, Walsh, Amorrortu, & Ortega, 2018). These large-scale and intense migratory movements have created increasingly diverse communities at the local level, communities that the independence movement and wider Catalan society has had to interact with (Pujolar, Fernàndez, & Subirana,

2011; Alarcón & Garzón, 2013). These new immigrants encounter far more legal obstacles to settling in the country and have to face additional religious, cultural and linguistic adaptation difficulties (Griera, 2016; Dowling, 2018). Reflecting the importance of these issues, scholars maintain that these newer waves of immigration constitute an important element in the configuration of Catalan contemporaneous society and has important implications for the independence movement in the region (Cuadras-Morató, 2016; Woolard, 2016).

In response to the disproportionate increase in international migration during the first decade of the 21st century, the Catalan government has remodelled some of its integration policies. Current policies focus on pluralism and interculturalism (Franco-Guillén, 2018). Thus, from an intercultural perspective, Catalonia is a particularly interesting region within Spain as it has received large amounts of both domestic and international immigrants (Bayona-Carrasco & Gil-Alonso, 2012). Catalonia has always been a host country where the integration of immigrants has not involved a process of assimilation nor a multicultural approach. Rather, the region has pursued a dynamic intercultural approach where diversity and community identity are recognised but are also accompanied by a strong encouragement to unite and integrate (Touraine, 2000; Carbonell, 2019). Linked to this is the concept of 'intercultural nationalism' in Catalonia, which has seen elites construct regional immigration policies in opposition to those of the central Spanish state. In addition, regionally-based populist constituencies are encouraged to accept cultural and ethnic diversity as a resource (Conversi & Jeram, 2017). This is in comparison to other sub-state nations, for example South Tyrol, which have adopted assimilationist approaches to immigration (Carlà, 2015; Medda-Windischer & Popelier, 2015).

The current political context in Catalonia is another ingredient that must be added to this discussion. In the past, Catalonia traditionally pushed for national recognition and greater

devolution of power in the form of autonomy. From 1979-2006, only between 25% and 30% of Catalans favoured outright independence and most preferred a larger degree of autonomy for the region (Cuadras-Morató & Rodon, 2017). In fact, in 2005, social support for Catalan independence was at its lowest level since the early 1990s (Dowling, 2018). However, in recent years 'Catalanism' (Catalan nationalism) in Catalonia has intensified on an unprecedented scale due to several political, economic, cultural and social factors (Woolard, 2016). The increased tensions between Catalonia and the Spanish state have resulted in a spike in support for an independent Catalonia, going from 17% in 2006 to 45% in 2014 (Boylan, 2015; Liñeira & Cetrà, 2015). At the end of 2018 support in the region for an independent Catalonia was at 38.8% (CEO, 2018). The aforementioned factors culminated in the controversial self-determination referendum that took place on the 1st of October 2017 (Martí, 2013; Carbonell, 2019). As political change is the most significant feature of the social context that enables the creation of new socio-political meanings (Jeram et al., 2016; Woolard, 2016); the changing political context in Catalonia merits an exploration of how immigrants are constructed in modern Catalonia against the backdrop of the independence movement.

A Threat-Benefit Framework

As mentioned in the introduction, when '[…] immigrant multiculturalism meets the politics of minority nationalism' (Banting & Soroka, 2012, p. 158), immigration can potentially be perceived as a threat and/or as a benefit to stateless nations and their interests (Kymlicka, 2001; Hepburn, 2011). Sub-state nations exhibit a variety of approaches to immigration, with some supporting the inclusion of immigrants into the nation-building project, while others have called for assimilation or even the outright exclusion of immigrants from the minority community (Jeram, 2013; Wisthaler, 2016). However, with rare exceptions (see, e.g. Berry & Kalin, 1995; López-Rodríguez et al., 2014), the majority of studies have almost totally

overlooked positive appraisals of immigration. As such, more nuanced, domain-specific examinations of appraisals of the 'other' have seldom been conducted. Considering this, I was interested in the ways in which the informants' views on immigration in Catalonia and the Catalan secessionist movement might be related to the threat-benefit framework (Tartakovsky & Walsh, 2016a, b; 2019).

The central premise of the threat-benefit model is that a local population can construct immigrants as simultaneously threatening and beneficial for the receiving society. While only recently developed, the threat-benefit model has been extensively discussed in relation to the appraisal of different immigrant groups in multiple domains and settings (see, e.g. Tartakovsky & Walsh, 2016a, b; 2019). However, to the best of this authors knowledge, the threat-benefit framework has not been employed in the Catalan context. As such, this conceptualisation is particularly useful in understanding the situation in Catalonia, where the rapid increase in immigration and the upsurge in support for an independent Catalonia in the region is reframing the wider debate.

Under the immigration as a threat view, inward migration is frequently constructed as a threat to historical minorities or sub-state nationalisms. This is because migrants have often shown a tendency to integrate into the dominant culture, which usually offers greater opportunities for economic improvement and social mobility (Kymlicka, 2006; Adam, 2013a). Medda-Windischer (2015) posits that a part of the threat orientation is that the national minority may fear gradually being outnumbered and therefore become powerless in political life. In places like Catalonia, immigration can be constructed as a threat insofar as the arrival of people who lack a historical tie with the land could dilute the identity of the 'nation without a state' and weaken nationalist sentiment (Poggeschi, 2015; Tartakovsky & Walsh, 2016a, b). This particularly applies in the language sphere, where Castilian (Spanish) is normally considered

the first linguistic instrument of integration and mobility (Zapata-Barrero, 2009; Kössler, 2015).

Conversely, immigration can also be constructed as beneficial for sub-state nationalisms, whereby migrants can act as potential allies against the central government (Barker, 2015; Kössler, 2015). As such, scholars note that the arrival of new migrants to a region can be seen as an opportunity (or benefit) to a national emancipation project. For example, Zapata-Barrero (2006) states that it is a question of turning any initial pressure brought by migration into an advantage that contributes to the development of the national project. From this perspective, immigration can be constructed as an important tool for sub-state nationalisms nation-building ambitions. In this respect, migrants can be beneficial to sub-state nations when they serve to increase the population of the regional community and share in the common identity, culture and language of the region (Hepburn, 2011; Walsh, Tartakovsky & Schifter-Weber, 2018).

As stated above, I wanted to explore members of independence organisations attitudes toward immigrants and their role in the independence movement in Catalonia. Given that immigration has raised new challenges for sub-state nations, the study of this dynamic is of significant importance (Kymlicka, 2001; Jeram et al., 2016). Considering this, I was particularly interested in how the immigrant community, both old and new, were perceived within the independence movement in the region. To conclude, through adopting a qualitative approach, I aimed to explore the relationship between the respondents' attitudes toward immigrants and their perceived role in the modern Catalan independence movement.

Methodology

A qualitative approach to data collection was employed in this study. Such methods are typically characterised by the adoption of an explorative approach to inquiry and the collection of rich, descriptive data that portrays complex human experiences (Silverman, 2006; Prasad, 2017). Adding to this, qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive practices that transform the world and 'make it visible', even for issues as complex as intercultural relations (Bukowski & Buetow, 2011; Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The empirical material for this study was generated through employing two qualitative approaches. Focus groups and narrative interviews were used to explore participants' views on the role of immigrants in the modern independence movement in Catalonia. In total, six focus groups and ten narrative interviews provided the data for this research.

To begin with, six focus groups were conducted with members of Catalan independence organisations.[1] Focus groups have been described as a semi-structured interactive group session, designed with the purpose of collecting information on a designated topic (McClafferty, 2004). Focus groups were employed in this study as the group dynamic element of this research instrument encourages participants to freely express their opinions about a subject, to exchange anecdotes and comment on each other's experiences and points of view in an in-depth manner (Kitzinger, 1995). Here the focus groups were useful in gaining knowledge and attitudes that were unlikely to arise through individual interviews (Leavey, Sembhi, & Livingston, 2004). As such, the interaction between focus group participants helps to put individual statements into context, thus providing a means of validation (Razum, Sahin-Hodoglugil, & Polit, 2005). In all the focus groups the researcher acted as the moderator. A passive nondirective approach was adopted during the focus groups. In line with this, a limited

number of questions and probes were used and as the moderator, I kept any interjection to a minimum (Fern, 2001).

Following the focus groups, narrative interviews were conducted with the research respondents.[2] Narrative interviews were chosen for this research because they present a less dominating way of interviewing that facilitates detailed accounts of participants' lives and experiences (Elliot, 2005). In contrast to the focus groups, the in-depth individual interviews allowed access to more personal experiences and emotive issues that may have been too sensitive to explore within a group (Leavey et al., 2004). Methodologically, narrative interviews can also provide insight into complex subjective tensions and frustrations that can be seen to shape attitudes toward other groups (Valentine & Sadgrove, 2014). For this investigation, the narrative interview as described by Riessman (2008) was considered the most appropriate method as it emphasises the importance of the socio-political context and how it can impact upon interviewees during the research process (Squire, 2013).

As previously mentioned, research participants for this investigation were chosen for their involvement in pro-independence socio-political organisations in Catalonia. As such, a purposive sampling strategy was employed as it permitted for me to choose participants with specific characteristics that could act as rich sources of data (Draper & Swift, 2011; Denscombe, 2014). Initially, eight pro-independence socio-political organisations were contacted. However, two groups had to withdraw from the research due to time and logistical constraints.

Potential informants were contacted through emails to independence organisations. Following this initial contact, the focus groups and narrative interviews were conducted over the course of several weeks. Informants for the narrative interviews were self-selected, insofar as they decided whether they wanted to volunteer to contribute to the study. It may, of course,

be the case that there was an element of selection 'bias' for the narrative interviews, in that the recruitment procedures may have attracted the attention of those who felt particularly strongly about the situation in Catalonia.

Discussions were audio-recorded for the purpose of transcription. I transcribed all the recorded material and this process became part of the interpretation and analysis process. All data were imported into NVivo (version 11). Following other recent applications of Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach to thematic analysis (see also Clarke & Braun, 2013) in the context of focus groups and narrative interviews, such as Andreouli and Nicholson (2018) and Patterson, Markey and Somers (2012) respectively, I employed this method to identify the most salient categories in the data. In particular, as already mentioned, I was interested in the ways in which the immigrant population in Catalonia might be constructed as a threat and/or a benefit to the independence movement in the region.

The collected data were treated as a single collection of texts. Clarke & Braun's (2013) six-stage analytical framework to thematic analysis was adhered to. These stages were; familiarisation with the data; generation of initial codes; searching for themes; reviewing themes; defining and naming themes; producing the report. This framework offered a systematic bottom-up approach for coding data in which specific statements were analysed and categorised into themes (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The themes that emerged from this process represented the central phenomena of this study, shaping the overall 'story' of the data. Throughout the data analysis, it became clear that, against the backdrop of the secessionist movement in Catalonia, there was a range of views on the impact of the various waves of migration to the territory. In what follows, I discuss the main results of this study.

Findings and Discussion

The results allowed for a detailed analysis regarding the role of immigrants in the modern independence movement. The recent developments in contemporary Catalonia, comprising of mass-protests and the creation of new socio-political contexts, offered an excellent opportunity to examine the changing role of the immigrant population in the independence movement. In all of the focus groups and narrative interviews, this issue provoked much passionate debate and discussion. However, my findings demonstrate that the research participants were not an entirely homogenous group.

The data revealed a divergent narrative about the different waves of immigrants that have come to Catalonia and their impact on the independence movement. On the one hand, immigration to Catalonia was framed positively for the prospects of an independent Catalonia and wider Catalan society in general. However, on the other hand, the data also suggested that the newer sources of immigration and diversity was framed as a potential challenge to the prospects of independence in the region.

In what follows, I will give examples of some of the opinions of the speakers I interviewed in an effort to provide a picture of the situation. The constructions of the immigrant population in the region and their fluid role in the sovereignty process, are explored under two motifs: 'Immigration: Rising Benefit' and '(New) Immigration: (New) Challenge'. These constructions of the role of migrants in the independence movement are explored below.

Immigration: Rising Benefit

Transnational immigration is a relatively new phenomenon in Spain. It was not until the early 1990s that external immigrants began arriving to Catalonia from North Africa, Asia and Latin-America (Conversi & Jeram, 2017). It is within this context that many of the informants

stressed the importance of recognising the changing constitution of modern Catalonia. In this sense, there was a clear realisation and acknowledgement of the changes immigration had brought to the social, cultural and political fabric of Catalonia and by extension the Catalan independence movement (Woolard, 2016; Aramburu, 2018). For example, as one informant mentioned:[3]

> What we have to consider is the make-up of modern Catalan society, where it is now but even more importantly where it might be in five or ten years. How will we [supporters of independence] adapt to this? This is what I am worried about. (Narrative Interview, ANC, Nicolau)

Or as another respondent stated:

> If we are really serious about gaining independence for this country, we really need to take all of those who were not born here into account too, because without them, I doubt that we can ever be independent. (Focus Group, Ateneu 24 de Juny, Arnau)

In addition to the comments above, the data also indicated that attitudes toward immigration amongst the informants mirrored the wider discourse in the region, which has historically seen Catalonia constructed as a cosmopolitan, assimilating society or a *terra d'acollida* (land of welcome) or *terra de pas* (a land of passage). Considering this, the informants seemed to align themselves with wider Catalan government policy and political rhetoric which promotes the idea of a collective nation in an attempt to erase linguistic and cultural divisions in the region (Franco-Guillén & Zapata-Barrero, 2014; Woolard, 2016).

When discussing the role and impact immigration has had on the sovereignty movement, informants frequently constructed immigration as a potential benefit, where there was an attempt to involve immigrants closely in subnational belonging and social cohesion (Conversi & Jeram, 2017). In particular, reflecting the reality of Catalonia's long history of

internal migration, 'traditional' migrants were constructed by some informants as advantageous (or beneficial) to the independence project. From this perspective, the informants' attitudes, to some degree, converge with Catalan government policy, political rhetoric or the national ideology (Woolard, 2016). This echoes Aramburu's (2018) argument that in Catalonia there has been 'the unmaking of social boundaries' in the region and a political and institutional push for the accommodation of immigrants into the independence debate. Reflecting the changing composition of the independence project, the respondents below stated the following:

> There are organisations such as *Súmate* that are Spanish speakers but are in favour of independence. Before, this was unthinkable. Catalan nationalism used to be pure, owned by the ones wearing a *barretina* and such.[4] Because of that, a whole demographic that was interested in becoming involved was lost. I read an article that talked about the new Catalans. Before new Catalans were one thing and now it's another [laughs]. Before it was Spanish immigration, and now it relates to immigrants who come from outside Spain. (Narrative Interview, Ateneu 24 de Juny, Pau)

> We are a more inclusive society in terms of immigration. So I think the values that we can see in the studies of political science, say that we are a little bit more progressive than Spain. We need to be this way if we want to secure independence. (Narrative Interview, ERC, Pol)

The above comments reflect the reality that large-scale and intense migratory movements have created an increasingly diverse community at the local level in Catalonia, communities that the independence movement has had to interact with (Alarcón & Garzón, 2013). In addition, Pol's comments mirror the argument that with its long history of immigration, Catalonia is presented

as being a tolerant, heterogeneous society with a distinct identity in contrast to the less tolerant, homogenised Spanish society (Jeram, 2013).

The new social composition of Catalonia has seemingly reframed the public discourse regarding the role of migrants within the independence project. Echoing the argument that immigration potentially boosts a territory's demographic weight and enhances its legitimacy as a liberal democratic actor (Hepburn, 2009; Adam, 2013a), one informant stated the following:

> I think we must have a referendum but we must try and achieve the maximum possible participation rate. The only thing I doubt is if the 'yes' side will win, it depends on the participation rate. This is the key to it all, I believe that those who are new to Catalonia are key here. We have to be aware of this. (Focus Group, ERC, Sergi)

Adding to this conceptualisation of immigrants in Catalonia another respondent stated the following:

> This is a welcoming land because there is a lot of immigration from the Spanish state. Now there's foreign immigration, but until recently there was a lot of immigration from Andalusia and Extremadura because they couldn't create a life there, so they came here to look for jobs, they integrated, etc. But now I feel there's a conspiracy against these people who live here and are Catalan, feel Catalan and fight for Catalonia as much as I do, even though some of them don't speak Catalan. This demographic is really important to our cause. (Narrative Interview, ANC, Alba)

The above excerpts reflect the argument that the independence movements approach has shifted in recent years in an attempt to acknowledge the diversity that is present in the region.

The data revealed that given its history of immigration, support for independence in this investigation was partly based on a non-ascriptive or non-hereditary Catalan identity (Conversi, 2000). Adding to this, the disproportionate increase in international migration during the first decade of the 21st century has necessitated a remodelling of the independence project in the region. In this respect, according to the respondents, the sovereignty process now embodied a type of 'integrative' or 'civic' nationalism (Jeram et al., 2016); where the civic nation is inclusive and anyone can join irrespective of nationality.

The data indicated that the waves of immigration to Catalonia were constructed as a potential benefit for the social cohesion of the region, where immigrants provided the opportunity to strengthen the dominant group's position in the receiving country (Hepburn, 2011; Tartakovsky & Walsh, 2019). From a pragmatic point of view, this is perhaps unsurprising given that stateless nations frequently use their immigration history to, '[…] construct and disseminate a tolerant and inclusive national image, one that aims to foster both indigenous people's and migrants' sense of national belonging' (Rodon & Franco-Guillén, 2014, p. 669). However, as I demonstrate in the following section, views on the role of the immigrant population in Catalonia were by no means uniform.

(New) Immigration: (New) Challenge

The previous section indicated that the Catalan case is illustrative of a broader trend insofar as a nation without a state, Catalonia and the independence project in the region is attempting to construct an inclusive citizenship into their national imaginings. This is in contrast to European states that opt for tougher distinctions between nationals and non-nationals and aggressive programmes of cultural integration (Triadafilopoulos, 2011; Jeram, 2013).

However, my data also revealed a slightly more apprehensive discourse when respondents discussed the newer waves of immigration and the integrative capacity of Catalan culture in an increasingly globalised society. This was evident when informants discussed the arrival of migrants from developing countries in Africa, South America and Asia. As previously mentioned, 13.6% of the residents in the territory are of foreign origin (Puigdevall et al., 2018). Discussing this topic, one informant stated the following:

> The younger generation that has come here, many of them are in school, they are living in urban areas where there is still a strong Spanish sentiment […] they have a Spanish mentality and these neighbourhoods are not interested in the same things that we are [independence]. I think that we forget this sometimes. (Focus Group, Súmate, Biel)

Over the course of history, immigration has been seen as a double-edged sword, an incoming cheap-labour that creates new economic opportunities for the native population but, at the same time, a real threat for cultural, social, national and linguistic identity (Barceló, 2014). It is reasonable to assume that this also applies to the independence movement in Catalonia. Considering this, informants frequently alluded to the potential conundrum that migration poses to sub-state nationalism, where too much internal diversity may undermine the claim to cultural distinctiveness and the nation-building process, a phenomenon that has been labelled the 'legitimation paradox' (Jeram et al., 2016). From this perspective, informants maintained that the multiculturism and multilingualism associated with the latest wave of transnational immigration to Catalonia was an issue that the successionist movement must acknowledge. However, this new source of immigration was considered more of a challenge to the independence process in the territory than an overt threat. The excerpt below provides

an example of how immigration is presenting new challenges to the independence project in Catalonia:

> But especially for the last 40 or 50 years, Catalan nationalism, which finds itself in a completely new situation, is challenged by immigration coming from other areas of the Spanish state and further afield. (Focus Group, CUP, Oriol)

Barker (2015) argues that, when responding to immigration flows and the diversity that this brings with it, sub-state nations are faced with the fundamental challenge of balancing openness and insularity. The respondents in the current study maintained that, to varying degrees, the diversity brought by immigration posed a potential challenge to the existing gains made by the region. Providing further insight into the situation, the informant below stated the following:

> There are many people here who came as children and now feel as much Catalan as any Catalan speaker, even though they speak in Spanish or Catalan despite having Spanish as their mother tongue. They have later joined the independence movement. But we do face new challenges with the new wave of immigrants in recent years. (Narrative Interview, ANC, Flor)

As previously mentioned, migration from Latin America to Spain (and Catalonia) has increased significantly since the early 2000s. Many scholars have suggested that the presence of this newer wave of migration has changed the socio-political landscape in the region (Pujolar, 2010; Rodríguez-García et al., 2018). Considering this, it was unsurprising that informants discussed the impact of the newer wave of immigration to the region, particularly those from South America. For example, the interviewees below stated the following:

> With the South Americans […] their view of life is very different to how we do things here and so their principals and their values are completely different to ours.

> I mean they have come here for a better life, not to help us obtain an independent Catalonia. (Focus Group, Súmate, Bernat)

> The second boom of South-American immigration hasn't helped [the independence movement] much either. (Narrative Interview, ANC, Flor)

Another informant made a similar point more dramatically:

> Look, there are communities here that have no idea of our history, or what is happening right now. There are many people from South America here now. Do they want Catalonia to be independent? I doubt it. For many, Catalonia is Spain, Spain is Catalonia. (Focus Group, ADAC, Sibil·la)

The above excerpts illustrate the uncertainties the respondents had with the newer waves of immigrants to Catalonia, an issue that affects not only the national identity in a region but also the language situation. Barker (2015) points out that the arrival of immigrants who neither speak the language nor learn it can weaken the sub-state nation's goals. From this perspective, the linguistic impact of immigration relates to broader political concerns. If immigrants do not integrate linguistically they may be less likely to participate in the public and political sphere (Gagnon & Iacovino, 2005). Consequently, immigrants may be less likely to support or identify with the goals of the sub-state nation.

The recently arrived Spanish speaking community, those with perhaps no exposure to Catalan-centric cultural frames of reference, were constructed as a significant challenge to the ambitions of the successionist movement in the territory. However, to alleviate this issue, informants stressed the importance of recruiting this section of the population. As such, instead of being viewed as a threat, speakers of Spanish (and other linguistic communities) were now viewed as a resource that could be employed to increase the support base and probability of success for the sovereignty movement. For example, one respondent stated the following:

> There's a whole community of Spanish speakers who are also for Catalan independence […] what we want is to include them, not exclude them, because there're many of them. (Narrative Interview, Ateneu 24 de Juny, Pau)

This theme of inclusion reflects the argument that instead of rejecting immigration as a threat, regions must turn the initial pressure brought by transnational migration into an advantage by integrating immigrants fully into the national project (Zapata-Barrero, 2006; Hepburn, 2011). This process of boundary-blurring within the independence movement may imply a new form of 'ethnic broadening' between 'Catalans' (those who support independence, 'regardless of where they come from or the language they speak') and those who oppose independence for the region (Wimmer, 2008; Aramburu, 2018). This development indicates that the independence project may be opening up to an increasingly heterogeneous Catalan society. This echoes the argument that long-standing nationalist movements are adapting and changing their values toward immigrants to obtain broad support and maintain distinctiveness from the state identity (Jeram 2013). From this perspective, for the informants in this study, the new sources of diversity brought by international migration to Catalonia was perceived as an ongoing challenge rather than a direct threat that the secessionist movement.

Conclusion

This investigation aimed to contribute to the body of research on the nexus between 'nations without states' and immigration. At a time of political unrest in Catalonia, the consequences of immigration for national identity, social cohesion and ethnolinguistic composition can become particularly salient (Barker, 2015). In addition, including newcomers can reduce the cultural homogeneity of the nation, but excluding them could reduce the demographic force of the region and demonstrate an intolerant image to potential sympathisers (Adam, 2013a).

This article investigated how a complex socio-political and sociocultural situation was reflected in what speakers thought about the changing roles of the immigrant population in the Catalan independence movement. This small-scale, qualitative study seems to suggest that the distinction between the more traditional migration from other areas of Spain and transnational migration from across the globe to Catalonia was important for the respondents. Unsurprisingly, none of the respondents who contributed to this study explicitly employed the terms 'threat' or 'benefit' when discussing the situation. However, the qualitative data put forward suggests that the informants in the current study were not an entirely homogenous group.

In the present work, I have revealed how immigrants were constructed in Jeram et al.'s (2016) terminology as 'foes', threating the cultural and linguistic unity that secures self-determination or as 'friends' that, integrate into the group's language and culture. From this perspective, attitudes toward immigration in this study were more closely aligned to Jeram et al.'s (2016) conceptualisation of immigrants as 'friends'. As such, the integration of both national and transnational migrants into Catalan society was seen as a way to further emphasise the territory as a separate cultural and political unit distinct from the larger nation-state of Spain while at the same time adding to the demographic weight of Catalonia as a region (Rodon & Franco-Guillén, 2014; Conversi & Jeram, 2017). These findings seem to echo those of other studies, which have found that a populist anti-immigrant rhetoric is less prominent among those who support secessionism in the region (Pardos-Prado, 2019; Wagner et al., 2019).

However, Vink and Bauböck (2013) maintain that paying equal attention to internal and transnational immigration allows us a greater understanding of contrasting patterns of territorial inclusion. As previously mentioned, large-scale and international migratory movements have created increasingly diverse communities at the local level in Catalonia,

communities that the independence movement and wider Catalan society has had to interact with (Pujolar et al., 2011; Alarcón & Garzón, 2013). Considering this, there was an acknowledgement that the arrival of new minorities in the 21st century and the creation of a new 'superdiverse' Catalonia (Rodríguez-García et al., 2018), posed significant challenges to the independence project in the territory. The data also echoes the argument that different categories of migrants, in this case, internal immigrants and foreign immigrants, tend to be more salient and politicised than another at a given point in time (Barker, 2015; Arrighi, 2019). However, instead of rejecting this new wave of immigration as a threat, informants constructed it as more of a challenge that Catalonia must face, turning any potential pressure into an advantage by integrating immigrants into the regional community (Kössler, 2015).

The construction and reconstruction of sub-state nationalism in a world of globalisation and migration can be a difficult balancing act between maintaining national identity and accepting cultural diversity (Olivieri, 2015). However, the data indicated that immigration was constructed as more beneficial than threatening to the independence process. In line with this, there was an emphasis placed on incorporating immigrants into the independence movement. However, it was perhaps the role of the newer waves of migration from North and West Africa, Asia and particularly Latin America that was of more pressing concern for those who contributed to the current investigation. As such, the respondents were keen to stress the challenges this new diversity posed to the independence project. The data seem to confirm Franco-Guillén's (2015) assertion that attitudes toward migrants in Catalonia and their role in the independence movement may depend on how, and to what degree, they are included and involved in the independence process in the future. Considering this, a further study, with even more forceful data, may help us go deeper into the role of newer migrants and their position in the independence movement in the region.

Notes

1. Thirty-six respondents contributed to the focus groups in total. A single focus group was conducted with each organisation.
2. Ten individuals from the focus groups agreed to be interviewed.
3. Pseudonyms are used throughout, and details have been removed to anonymise informants.
4. A traditional Catalan hat and a symbol of Catalan identity.

Acknowledgements

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

References

Adam, I. (2013a). Immigrant integration policies of the Belgian regions: sub-state nationalism and policy divergence after devolution. *Regional and Federal Studies, 23*(5), 547–569.

Adam, I. (2018). Immigration and sub-state nations. Researching the nexus. In K. Detterbeck & E. Hepburn (Eds.), *Handbook of territorial politics* (pp. 261–278). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Adam, I., & Deschouwer, K. (2016). Nationalist parties and immigration in Flanders: from Volksunie to Spirit and N-VA. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 42*(8), 1290–1303.

Alarcón, A., & Garzón, L. (2013). Children of immigrants and social mobility in officially bilingual societies: the case of Catalonia. *Spanish in Context, 10*(1), 92–113.

Andreouli, E., & Nicholson, C. (2018). Brexit and everyday politics: an analysis of focus-group data on the EU referendum. *Political Psychology, 39*(6), 1323–1338.

Aramburu, M. (2018). The unmaking and remaking of an ethnic boundary. Working-class Castilian speakers in Catalonia and the paradoxes of the independence movement. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. doi: 10.1080/1369183X.2018.1543019.

Arrighi, J. T. (2019). 'The people, year zero': secessionism and citizenship in Scotland and Catalonia. *Ethnopolitics, 18*(3), 278–297.

Banting, K., & Soroka, S. (2012). Minority nationalism and immigrant integration in Canada. *Nations and Nationalism, 18*(1), 156–176.

Barceló, J. (2014). Contextual effects on subjective national identity. *Nations and Nationalism*, *20*(4), 701–720.

Barker, F. (2015). *Nationalism, identity and the governance of diversity: old politics, new arrivals*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bayona-Carrasco, J., & Gil-Alonso, F. (2012). Suburbanisation and international immigration: the case of the Barcelona metropolitan region (1998–2009). *Journal of Economic and Social Geography*, *103*(3), 312–329.

Berry, J., & Kalin, R. (1995). Multicultural and ethnic attitudes in Canada: an overview of the 1991 national survey. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science/Revue canadienne des sciences du comportement*, *27*(3), 301–320.

Boylan, B. (2015). In pursuit of independence: the political economy of Catalonia's secessionist movement. *Nations and Nationalism*, *21*(4), 761–785.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77–101.

Bukowski, K., & Buetow, S. (2011). Making the invisible visible: a photovoice exploration of homeless women's health and lives in central Auckland. *Social Science and Medicine*, *72*(5), 739–746.

Carbonell, J. M. (2019). The two main challenges to Catalan identity. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *63*(7), 789–806.

Carlà, A. (2015). Tensions and challenges between new and old minorities: political party discourses on migration in South Tyrol. In R. Medda-Windischer & A. Carlà (Eds.), *Migration*

and autonomous territories: the case of South Tyrol and Catalonia (pp. 65–99). Leiden: Brill Publishers.

Centre d'Estudis d'Opinió (CEO) (2018). *Baròmetre d'Opinió política* [Dataset]. Retrieved from http://upceo.ceo.gencat.cat/wsceop/6748/Resumen%20en%20Espa%C3%B1ol%20-901.pdf.

Cetrà, D. (2019). *Nationalism, liberalism and language in Catalonia and Flanders*. Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.

Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2013). Teaching thematic analysis: overcoming challenges and developing strategies for effective learning. *The Psychologist*, *26*(2), 120–123.

Climent-Ferrando, V., & Triviño, J. C. (2015). Immigrant associations and political participation: when language matters: the Catalan case. In R. Medda-Windischer & A. Carlà (Eds.), *Migration and autonomous territories: the case of South Tyrol and Catalonia* (pp. 161–183). Leiden: Brill Publishers.

Conversi, D. (2000). *The Basques, the Catalans and Spain: alternative routes to nationalist mobilisation*. London: C. Hurst and Co.

Conversi, D., & Jeram, S. (2017). Despite the crisis: the resilience of intercultural nationalism in Catalonia. *International Migration*, *55*(2), 53–67.

Corona, V., & Kelsall, S. (2016). Latino rap in Barcelona: diaspora, languages and identities. *Linguistics and Education*, *36*(1), 5–15.

Creswell, J., & Creswell, D. (2017). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). London: Sage.

Cuadras-Morató, X. (2016) Catalonia at the crossroads: analysis of the increasing support for secession. In X. Cuadras-Morató (Ed.), *Catalonia: a new independent state in Europe? a debate on secession within the European Union* (pp. 1–19). London: Routledge.

Cuadras-Morató, X., & Rodon, T. (2017). The dog that didn't bark: on the effect of the great recession on the surge of secessionism. *Barcelona GSE Working Paper Series* (No. 968). Retrieved from https://www.barcelonagse.eu/research/working-papers/dog-didnt-bark-effect-great-recession-surge-secessionism.

Della Porta, D., O'Connor, F., Portos-García, M., & Subirats-Ribas, A. (2017). *Social movements and referendums from below: direct democracy in the neoliberal crisis*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Denscombe, M. (2014). *The good research guide: for small-scale social research projects* (5th ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Dowling, A. (2018). *The rise of Catalan independence: Spain's territorial crisis*. Oxford: Routledge.

Draper, A., & Swift, J. (2011). Qualitative research in nutrition and dietetics: data collection issues. *Journal of Human Nutrition and Dietetics*, *24*(1), 3–12.

Elliott, J. (2005). *Using narrative in social research: qualitative and quantitative approaches*. London: Sage.

Escandell, X., & Ceobanu, A. M. (2010). Nationalisms and anti-immigrant sentiment in Spain. *South European Society and Politics*, *15*(2), 157–179.

Fern, E. (2001). *Advanced focus group research*. London: Sage.

Franco-Guillén, N. (2015) Which people? an exploration of the role of immigration in the secessionist process in Catalonia. In K. J. Nagel & S. Rixen (Eds.), *Catalonia in Spain and Europe: is there a way to independence?* (pp. 115–128). Baden-Baden: Nomos.

Franco-Guillén, N. (2016). Selfishness of the affluent? stateless nationalist and regionalist parties and immigration. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *42*(8), 1304–1316.

Franco-Guillén, N. (2018). Intergovernmental relations on immigrant integration in Spain: the case of Catalonia. *Regional and Federal Studies*, *29*(5), 655–674.

Franco-Guillén, N., & R. Zapata-Barrero (2014). Catalunya, terra d'acollida: stateless nationalist party discourses on immigration in Catalonia. In E. Hepburn & R. Zapata-Barrero (Eds.), *The politics of immigration in multi-level states: governance and political parties* (pp. 261–284). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gagnon, A. G., & Iacovino, R. (2005) Interculturalism: expanding the boundaries of citizenship. In R. Máiz, & F. Requejo (Eds.), *Democracy, nationalism and multiculturalism* (pp. 33–50). London: Routledge.

Gray, C. (2015). A fiscal path to sovereignty?: The Basque economic agreement and nationalist politics. In R. Gillespie, & C. Gray (Eds.), *Contesting Spain? the dynamics of nationalist movements in Catalonia and the Basque Country* (pp. 1–21). Oxford: Routledge.

Griera, M. (2016). The governance of religious diversity in stateless nations: the case of Catalonia. *Religion, State & Society, 44*(1), 13–31.

Hainmueller, J., & Hopkins, D. J. (2014). Public attitudes toward immigration. *Annual Review of Political Science, 17*(1), 225–249.

Hepburn, E. (2009). Regionalist party mobilisation on immigration. *West European Politics*, *32*(3), 514–535.

Hepburn, E. (2011). 'Citizens of the region': party conceptions of regional citizenship and immigrant integration. *European Journal of Political Research*, *50*(4), 504–529.

Huszka, B. (2014). Framing national identity in independence campaigns: secessionist rhetoric and ethnic conflict. *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, *20*(2), 153–173.

Ianos, M. A, Huguet, Á., & Lapresta-Rey, C. (2017). Attitudinal patterns of secondary education students in Catalonia. The direct and moderator effects of origin. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *38*(2), 113–129.

Jeram, S. (2013). Immigrants and the Basque nation: diversity as a new marker of identity. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *36*(11), 1770–1788.

Jeram, S., Van Der Zwet, A., & Wisthaler, V. (2016). Friends or foes? Migrants and sub-state nationalists in Europe. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *42*(8), 1229–1241.

Kitzinger, J. (1995). Qualitative research: introducing focus groups. *British Medical Journal*, *3*(11), 299–302.

Kleiner-Liebau, D. (2009). *Migration and the construction of national identity in Spain*. Madrid: Iberoamericana Editorial.

Kössler, K. (2015) Immigration and integration in multilevel systems: a challenge between autonomy and intergovernmental cooperation. In R. Medda-Windischer & A. Carlà (Eds.), *Migration and autonomous territories: the case of South Tyrol and Catalonia* (pp. 27–64). Leiden: Brill Publishers.

Kymlicka, W. (2001). *Politics in the vernacular: nationalism, multiculturalism, and citizenship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kymlicka, W. (2006). Immigration integration and minority nationalism. In M. Keating and J. McGarry (Eds.), *Minority nationalism and the changing international order* (pp. 61–83). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Leavey, G., Sembhi, S., & Livingston, G. (2004). Older Irish migrants living in London: identity, loss and return. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *30*(4), 763–779.

Lecours, A. (2012). Sub-state nationalism in the western world: explaining continued appeal. *Ethnopolitics*, *11*(3), 268–286.

Liñeira, R., & Cetrà, D. (2015). The independence case in comparative perspective. *The Political Quarterly*, *86*(2), 257–264.

López-Rodríguez, L., Navas, M., Cuadrado, I., Coutant, D., & Worchel, S. (2014). The majority's perceptions about adaptation to the host society of different immigrant groups: the distinct role of warmth and threat. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *40*(1), 34–48.

Martí, D. (2013). The 2012 Catalan election: the first step towards independence?. *Regional and Federal Studies*, *23*(4), 507–516.

McClafferty, I. (2004). Focus group interviews as a data collecting strategy. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *48*(2), 187–194.

Medda-Windischer, R. (2015). Migration and old minorities in South Tyrol: beyond a 'nimby' approach?. In R. Medda-Windischer & A. Carlà (Eds.), *Migration and autonomous territories: the case of South Tyrol and Catalonia* (pp. 100–136). Leiden: Brill Publishers.

Medda-Windischer, R., & Carlà, A. (2015). Introduction. In R. Medda-Windischer & A. Carlà (Eds.), *Migration and autonomous territories: the case of South Tyrol and Catalonia* (pp. 1–26). Leiden: Brill Publishers.

Olivieri, V. (2015). Sub-state nationalism in Spain: primers and triggers of identity politics in Catalonia and the Basque Country. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *38*(9), 1610–1626.

Pardos-Prado, S. (2019) *Who supports Catalan independence, and is there a way forward?*. Retrieved from https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2019/12/18/who-supports-catalan-independence-and-is-there-a-way-forward/

Patterson, M. L., Markey, M. A., & Somers, J. M. (2012). Multiple paths to just ends: using narrative interviews and timelines to explore health equity and homelessness. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *11*(2), 132–151.

Poggeschi, G. (2015). Immigration in Catalonia and Spain: the evolution of shared competence. In R. Medda-Windischer & A. Carlà (Eds.), *Migration and autonomous territories: the case of South Tyrol and Catalonia* (pp. 137–160). Leiden: Brill Publishers.

Prasad, P. (2017). *Crafting qualitative research: beyond positivist traditions* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Puigdevall, M., Walsh, J., Amorrortu, E., & Ortega, A. (2018). 'I'll be one of them': linguistic *mudes* and new speakers in three minority language contexts. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *39*(5), 445–457.

Pujolar, J. (2010). Immigration and language education in Catalonia: between national and social agendas. *Linguistics and Education*, *21*(3), 229–243.

Pujolar, J., Fernàndez, J. A., & Subirana, J. (2011). Language, culture and identity in the global age. *Digithum*, May, 79–84.

Razum, O., Sahin-Hodoglugil, N. N., & Polit, K. (2005). Health, wealth or family ties? Why Turkish work migrants return from Germany. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *31*(4), 719–739.

Riessman, C. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. California: Sage.

Rodon, T., & Franco-Guillén, N. (2014). Contact with immigrants in times of crisis: an exploration of the Catalan case. *Ethnicities*, *14*(5), 650–675.

Rodríguez-García, D., Solana-Solana, M., Ortiz-Guitart, A., & Freedman, J. L. (2018). Linguistic cultural capital among descendants of mixed couples in Catalonia, Spain: realities and inequalities. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, *39*(4), 429–450.

Serrano, I., & Bonillo, A. (2017). Boundary shifts and vote alignment in Catalonia. *Ethnicities*, *17*(3), 371–391.

Silverman, D. (2006). *Interpreting qualitative data: methods for analysing talk, text and interaction* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.

Squire, C. (2013). From experience-centred to socioculturally-oriented approaches to narrative. In M. Andrews, C. Squire, & M. Tamboukou (Eds.), *Doing narrative research* (2nd ed.) (pp. 47–71). London: Sage.

Tartakovsky, E., & Walsh, S. D. (2016a). Testing a new theoretical model for attitudes toward immigrants: the case of social workers' attitudes toward asylum seekers in Israel. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *47*(1), 72–96.

Tartakovsky, E., & Walsh, S. D. (2016b). Burnout among social workers working with immigrants from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopia in Israel: testing the connections between personal value preferences, immigrant appraisal and burnout. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *53*(1), 39–53.

Tartakovsky, E., & Walsh, S. D. (2019). Are some immigrants more equal than others? Applying a Threat-Benefit Model to understanding the appraisal of different immigrant groups by the local population. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. doi: 10.1080/1369183X.2019.1565402

Tortella, G. (2017). *Catalonia in Spain: history and myth*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Touraine, A. (2000). *Can we live together? equality and difference*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Triadafilopoulos, T. (2011) Illiberal means to liberal ends? Understanding recent immigrant integration policies in Europe. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *37*(6), 861–880.

Valentine, G., & Sadgrove, J. (2014). Biographical narratives of encounter: the significance of mobility and emplacement in shaping attitudes towards difference. *Urban Studies*, *51*(9), 1979–1994.

Vink, M. P., & Bauböck, R. (2013). Citizenship configurations: analysing the multiple purposes of citizenship regimes in Europe. *Comparative European Politics*, *11*(5), 621–648.

Wagner, A., Marin, J., & Kroqi, D. (2019). The Catalan struggle for independence and the role of the European Union. *Regional Science Policy & Practice*, *11*(5), 787–803.

Walsh, S. D, Tartakovsky, E., & Schifter-Weber, M. (2018). Personal values and immigrant group appraisal as predictors of voluntary contact with immigrants among majority students in Israel. *International Journal of Psychology*, *53*(1), 1–8.

Williams, S. (2018). *Rethinking stateless nations and national identity in Wales and the Basque Country*. Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.

Wilson-Daily, A. E., Kemmelmeier, M., & Prats, J. (2018). Intergroup contact versus conflict in Catalan high schools: a multilevel analysis of adolescent attitudes toward immigration and diversity. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *64*(2018), 12–28.

Wimmer, A. (2008). Elementary strategies of ethnic boundary making. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *31*(6), 1025–1055.

Wisthaler, V. (2016). South Tyrol: the importance of boundaries for immigrant integration. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *42*(8), 1271–1289.

Woolard, K. (2016). *Singular and plural: ideologies of linguistic authority in 21st century Catalonia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Zapata-Barrero, R. (2006). Setting a research agenda on the interaction between cultural demands of immigrants and minority nations. In R. Zapata-Barrero (Ed.), *Immigration and self-government of minority nations* (pp. 13–38). Brussels: Peter Lang Publishing.

Zapata-Barrero, R. (2009). Building a public philosophy of immigration in Catalonia: the terms of debate. In: R. Zapata-Barrero (Ed.), *Immigration and self-government of minority nations* (pp. 125–161). New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

Zapata-Barrero, R. (2014). The limits to shaping diversity as public culture: permanent festivities in Barcelona. *Cities*, *37*(2014), 66–72.

Amic o enemic? Immigration and the Catalan Struggle for Independence

Word Count: 9,756

Author: Steven Byrne

E-mail: steven.byrne@ul.ie

Postal address: School of Modern Languages and Applied Linguistics, University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland.

Telephone: 00353872103237

Abstract

Immigration has extended to regions with sub-state nationalist movements, such as Scotland, Friesland, the Basque Country and, as is the focus of this research, Catalonia. In a context of political upheaval in the region, this article aims to examine the impact of the successive waves of immigration to Catalonia on the modern independence movement. The respective status of the immigrant population in Catalonia is a major issue about which there is a divergence of opinion. This study approaches attitudes toward immigrants through the threat-benefit framework, which perceives immigrants as both threatening and beneficial for the receiving society. The data, gathered from six focus groups and ten narrative interviews, reveal a complexity of attitudes on the impact of immigration on the secessionist movement. Two themes emerge in the informants' discussion: 'Immigration: Rising Benefit' and '(New) Immigration: (New) Challenge'. The comments of the respondents indicate that, against the backdrop of the independence process in the territory, there exists a range of views on the impact of the various waves of migration to Catalonia. This study suggests that a fuller understanding of the situation in the territory may be facilitated by qualitative approaches.

Keywords: Catalonia; sub-state nationalism; immigration; threat-benefit framework

Introduction

Immigration has become a vital topic of research as scholars strive to unravel the complex issue of why immigration goes more smoothly for some groups than for others (López-Rodríguez, Navas, Cuadrado, Coutant, & Worchel, 2014). Consequently, immigration and immigrant integration has become one of the most pressing policy concerns of the 21st century. Contemporary democratic states in the West, such as Spain, Canada, Italy and Belgium are becoming increasingly diverse as a result of immigration and issues related to the integration and management of this diversity are the objects of robust political and social debate (Barker, 2015). In addition, a heightened sensitivity to immigration is frequently associated with this rapid increase in diversity. This has not gone unnoticed in scholarly work and a number of explanations have been systematised in recent reviews of the literature (Escandell & Ceobanu, 2010; Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014).

Immigration and the diversity that it brings is not only a challenge to the traditional model of the nation-state but it is also an issue for communities and groups which see themselves as distinct and self-governing within the larger state (Kymlicka, 2001). Adding to this, associated with the processes of globalisation, there has been a resurgence and intensification of minority nationalist movements seeking more autonomy or independence across Europe in the second half of the 20th century (Lecours, 2012; Williams, 2018). Considering this, growing international migration constitutes a challenge for contemporary democracies, no more so than for minority or sub-state nations; those regions that claim some degree of linguistic, cultural or national recognition or self-determination (Barker, 2015; Adam & Deschouwer, 2016).

These ‘stateless nations’ or ‘neonationalisms’, such as Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland, face a number of significant challenges when interacting with immigration. As Wisthaler

(2016) argues, sub-state nations face the challenge of maintaining and protecting their identity, culture and interests of a non-state nationality. However, they are also confronted with the need to find ways to include the additional diversity that comes with immigration, potentially boosting the territory's demographic weight and enhancing its legitimacy as a liberal democratic actor (Hepburn, 2009; Adam, 2013a). In these societies, it is here where the 'new' diversity arising from immigration meets the 'old' politics of sub-state nationalism (Barker, 2015). Or as Banting and Soroka (2012) argue, it is at this nexus where the multiculturism brought by mass immigration meets the politics of minority nationalism. This article aims to address the call for more research regarding public opinion toward immigration and its impact on sub-state nation's own identity and interests (Jeram, Van Der Zwet, & Wisthaler, 2016).

With the complex relationship existing between sub-state nationalism and migration movements as the backdrop, this article specifically focuses on the case of Catalonia. Whilst there has been a growing body of studies since 2010 exploring sub-state nationalisms and migration (Franco-Guillén, 2016; Adam, 2018), as yet and despite the ongoing socio-political situation in Catalonia, there is a dearth of qualitative scholarly research analysing the Catalan case. Considering this, the current article offers a novel argument about the role of inter-regional group relations and how these relations weigh on the discourses of stateless nations, immigration and successionist movements at a time of political unrest. Catalonia represents an auspicious place for research with the steady rise of independentism in the region combined with the new socio-political, cultural and linguistic issues that have emerged as a consequence of immigration to the autonomous region (Dowling, 2018; Rodríguez-García, Solana-Solana, Ortiz-Guitart, & Freedman, 2018).

The relationship between sub-state nationalism and secessionist movements in the EU are complex and, at times contradictory (Wagner, Marin, & Kroqi, 2019). In addition, recent

research focusing on integration discourse in sub-state nations has demonstrated that most stateless nationalists have not jumped on the anti-multiculturalism bandwagon (Hepburn, 2011; Jeram et al., 2016). From the Catalan perspective, the region has long been constructed as a land of welcome where positive attitudes toward immigration are present (Conversi, 2000). For example, Rodon and Franco-Guillén (2014) found that Catalan identity is related to less negative attitudes toward immigrants. In addition, Wilson-Daily, Kemmelmeier and Prats (2018), found that identifying as Catalan was linked to a greater appreciation of diversity. Furthermore, Wilson-Daily et al. (2018) argue that these views of immigration may be reflective of wider support for the nationalist cause by attempting to include, or at least not reject, immigration and diversity. In addition, scholars have noted that support for the secessionist movement in Catalonia correlates strongly with pro-immigration attitudes, where the right to decide on the region's future is as an inclusive broad-based (transversal) civic rather than ethnic movement (Woolard, 2016; Cetrà, 2019; Pardos-Prado, 2019). However, the current article suggests that while attitudes toward immigration remain largely positive among successionists, making the newer waves of migrants to Catalonia into allies was considered a significant and ongoing challenge for the independence movement in the region.

For my purposes here, there is a need to qualify the term migrant as it is used in this article. I refer to migrants as those who arrived to Catalonia during the three successive waves of inward migration to the territory. The first internal wave arrived between 1901 and 1930 and nearly 1.4 million internal migrants arrived in Catalonia. The second wave arrived between 1951 and 1975 with an estimated 1.7 million migrants arriving into the region from the impoverished agrarian South of Spain (Carbonell, 2019). The third wave began at the turn of the century, with the arrival of newcomers from different parts of the world, such as North and West Africa, Asia and Latin America (see, e.g. Conversi & Jeram, 2017; Rodríguez-García et

al., 2018). As is demonstrated in the following sections, much of the informants' discussion referred to this newer wave of immigration.

This research examines attitudes of members of six pro-independence socio-political organisations toward immigrants and their perceived role in the modern independence movement in Catalonia. Four of the six organisations were civic, namely, Ateneu d'Acció Cultural (ADAC), Assemblea Nacional Catalana (ANC), Ateneu 24 de Juny and Súmate. In addition, two political parties, Candidatura d'Unitat Popular (CUP) and Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC), agreed to contribute to this study. These organisations were the focus of this investigation because, in general, socio-political organisations are more than just vehicles for representing their members' interests. Rather, they often embody an alternative to established society, engaging in political and/or cultural conflict aimed at promoting or opposing social change. In short, socio-political organisations may reflect wider societal views on what a community or society might or should become in the future (Della Porta et al., 2017).

The data collection for this project was conducted at a unique time in the regions history, namely, the months leading up to the Catalan 2017 independence referendum (March-July 2017). The data, as I shall describe, reveals a dynamic relationship between the research participants' views on immigration and how these opinions intersected and interacted with their understanding of the Catalan independence project. The findings suggest that when it comes to the politics of immigration, there was a heterogeneity of positions adopted by the informants regarding different immigrant groups and their role in the regions push for independence. As such, informants in this study implemented different strategies for appraising different groups and that the choice of those strategies was context bound.

The article is structured as follows. The first section provides a brief historical overview of Catalonia as a relevant case for study. The second section discusses the theoretical

framework adopted in the current study. I, then, present the methodology that was employed. Following this, the empirical data is presented and discussed in relation to the literature. The conclusion compares the findings of this research to the relevant work on sub-state nationalisms and immigration (Adam & Deschouwer, 2016). Finally, the paper offers suggestions for future research.

Catalonia, Immigration and Independence

Catalonia emerges as an interesting case for study for several reasons. With a population of 7.5 million, Catalonia makes up a substantial proportion of the Spanish population (16% of 46.6 million) (Tortella, 2017). Located in the Northeast of Spain, Catalonia is one of the most affluent regions in Spain, producing a GDP representing 18-20% of the Spanish total (Gray, 2015). In addition, the territory has its own legislative and executive power over several important competencies including education, language policies, health care, culture and social services (Woolard, 2016; Cetrà, 2019). However, in recent years the regions fiscal woes have become a rallying call for nationalists who blame the Spanish state (Franco-Guillén, 2016). The economic crisis has also heightened social tensions, impelling huge numbers to direct their political sympathies and preferences toward the pro-independence movement (Huszka, 2014).

Traditionally, immigration to Catalonia was made up of people from other regions of Spain. Resulting from this, Catalan society has been profoundly marked by internal migration from other areas of Spain (Dowling, 2018). The majority of this internal immigration arrived from Andalusia and Extremadura and settled in peripheral districts and cities of metropolitan areas such as Barcelona or Tarragona (Zapata-Barrero, 2014; Serrano & Bonillo, 2017). Resulting from this, immigrants have accounted for approximately 40% of Catalonia's total population since the 1960s (Hepburn, 2011). Reflecting this, more than half of the current

population of Catalonia, in the first or second generation, has its roots in different regions of Spain (Carbonell, 2019). Politically there is a general consensus that since the restoration of democracy in Catalonia in the 1970s, the community is open to incorporating immigration into the region (Cetrà, 2019). Given this, it is argued that due to the strength of linguistic identity, Catalonia has largely rejected racist or segregationist approaches with Catalan identity adopting an integrationist approach. In addition, the promotion of the Catalan language and culture has long been conceived as an inclusive factor that could expand the potential boundaries of Catalanness and by extension Catalan nationalism (Conversi, 2000; Climent-Ferrando & Triviño, 2015). As such, traditionally immigrants are not resented as a major threat to national identity. Rather, Catalonia's largely successful history of integrating migrants from other parts of Spain has been constructed as a source to further strengthen separatist claims (Conversi, 2000; Kleiner-Liebau, 2009).

However, Catalonia has seen a rapid increase in international immigration since the turn of the century. This has resulted in a significant diversification of languages, cultures and religions across Catalonia over the past 20 years (Alarcón & Garzón, 2013; Rodríguez-García et al., 2018). For example, migration from Latin America to Spain went from being almost inexistent in the early 1990s to being one of the most significant incoming demographic movements at the beginning of the 2000s (Corona & Kelsall, 2016). In addition to immigration from Latin America, newcomers have also come from different parts of the world, such as North and West Africa, and Asia (see, e.g. Ianos, Huguet, & Lapresta-Rey, 2017). Today approximately 13.6% of the population in Catalonia are of foreign origin (Puigdevall, Walsh, Amorrortu, & Ortega, 2018). These large-scale and intense migratory movements have created increasingly diverse communities at the local level, communities that the independence movement and wider Catalan society has had to interact with (Pujolar, Fernàndez, & Subirana,

2011; Alarcón & Garzón, 2013). These new immigrants encounter far more legal obstacles to settling in the country and have to face additional religious, cultural and linguistic adaptation difficulties (Griera, 2016; Dowling, 2018). Reflecting the importance of these issues, scholars maintain that these newer waves of immigration constitute an important element in the configuration of Catalan contemporaneous society and has important implications for the independence movement in the region (Cuadras-Morató, 2016; Woolard, 2016).

In response to the disproportionate increase in international migration during the first decade of the 21st century, the Catalan government has remodelled some of its integration policies. Current policies focus on pluralism and interculturalism (Franco-Guillén, 2018). Thus, from an intercultural perspective, Catalonia is a particularly interesting region within Spain as it has received large amounts of both domestic and international immigrants (Bayona-Carrasco & Gil-Alonso, 2012). Catalonia has always been a host country where the integration of immigrants has not involved a process of assimilation nor a multicultural approach. Rather, the region has pursued a dynamic intercultural approach where diversity and community identity are recognised but are also accompanied by a strong encouragement to unite and integrate (Touraine, 2000; Carbonell, 2019). Linked to this is the concept of 'intercultural nationalism' in Catalonia, which has seen elites construct regional immigration policies in opposition to those of the central Spanish state. In addition, regionally-based populist constituencies are encouraged to accept cultural and ethnic diversity as a resource (Conversi & Jeram, 2017). This is in comparison to other sub-state nations, for example South Tyrol, which have adopted assimilationist approaches to immigration (Carlà, 2015; Medda-Windischer & Popelier, 2015).

The current political context in Catalonia is another ingredient that must be added to this discussion. In the past, Catalonia traditionally pushed for national recognition and greater

devolution of power in the form of autonomy. From 1979-2006, only between 25% and 30% of Catalans favoured outright independence and most preferred a larger degree of autonomy for the region (Cuadras-Morató & Rodon, 2017). In fact, in 2005, social support for Catalan independence was at its lowest level since the early 1990s (Dowling, 2018). However, in recent years 'Catalanism' (Catalan nationalism) in Catalonia has intensified on an unprecedented scale due to several political, economic, cultural and social factors (Woolard, 2016). The increased tensions between Catalonia and the Spanish state have resulted in a spike in support for an independent Catalonia, going from 17% in 2006 to 45% in 2014 (Boylan, 2015; Liñeira & Cetrà, 2015). At the end of 2018 support in the region for an independent Catalonia was at 38.8% (CEO, 2018). The aforementioned factors culminated in the controversial self-determination referendum that took place on the 1st of October 2017 (Martí, 2013; Carbonell, 2019). As political change is the most significant feature of the social context that enables the creation of new socio-political meanings (Jeram et al., 2016; Woolard, 2016); the changing political context in Catalonia merits an exploration of how immigrants are constructed in modern Catalonia against the backdrop of the independence movement.

A Threat-Benefit Framework

As mentioned in the introduction, when '[…] immigrant multiculturalism meets the politics of minority nationalism' (Banting & Soroka, 2012, p. 158), immigration can potentially be perceived as a threat and/or as a benefit to stateless nations and their interests (Kymlicka, 2001; Hepburn, 2011). Sub-state nations exhibit a variety of approaches to immigration, with some supporting the inclusion of immigrants into the nation-building project, while others have called for assimilation or even the outright exclusion of immigrants from the minority community (Jeram, 2013; Wisthaler, 2016). However, with rare exceptions (see, e.g. Berry & Kalin, 1995; López-Rodríguez et al., 2014), the majority of studies have almost totally

overlooked positive appraisals of immigration. As such, more nuanced, domain-specific examinations of appraisals of the 'other' have seldom been conducted. Considering this, I was interested in the ways in which the informants' views on immigration in Catalonia and the Catalan secessionist movement might be related to the threat-benefit framework (Tartakovsky & Walsh, 2016a, b; 2019).

The central premise of the threat-benefit model is that a local population can construct immigrants as simultaneously threatening and beneficial for the receiving society. While only recently developed, the threat-benefit model has been extensively discussed in relation to the appraisal of different immigrant groups in multiple domains and settings (see, e.g. Tartakovsky & Walsh, 2016a, b; 2019). However, to the best of this authors knowledge, the threat-benefit framework has not been employed in the Catalan context. As such, this conceptualisation is particularly useful in understanding the situation in Catalonia, where the rapid increase in immigration and the upsurge in support for an independent Catalonia in the region is reframing the wider debate.

Under the immigration as a threat view, inward migration is frequently constructed as a threat to historical minorities or sub-state nationalisms. This is because migrants have often shown a tendency to integrate into the dominant culture, which usually offers greater opportunities for economic improvement and social mobility (Kymlicka, 2006; Adam, 2013a). Medda-Windischer (2015) posits that a part of the threat orientation is that the national minority may fear gradually being outnumbered and therefore become powerless in political life. In places like Catalonia, immigration can be constructed as a threat insofar as the arrival of people who lack a historical tie with the land could dilute the identity of the 'nation without a state' and weaken nationalist sentiment (Poggeschi, 2015; Tartakovsky & Walsh, 2016a, b). This particularly applies in the language sphere, where Castilian (Spanish) is normally considered

the first linguistic instrument of integration and mobility (Zapata-Barrero, 2009; Kössler, 2015).

Conversely, immigration can also be constructed as beneficial for sub-state nationalisms, whereby migrants can act as potential allies against the central government (Barker, 2015; Kössler, 2015). As such, scholars note that the arrival of new migrants to a region can be seen as an opportunity (or benefit) to a national emancipation project. For example, Zapata-Barrero (2006) states that it is a question of turning any initial pressure brought by migration into an advantage that contributes to the development of the national project. From this perspective, immigration can be constructed as an important tool for sub-state nationalisms nation-building ambitions. In this respect, migrants can be beneficial to sub-state nations when they serve to increase the population of the regional community and share in the common identity, culture and language of the region (Hepburn, 2011; Walsh, Tartakovsky & Schifter-Weber, 2018).

As stated above, I wanted to explore members of independence organisations attitudes toward immigrants and their role in the independence movement in Catalonia. Given that immigration has raised new challenges for sub-state nations, the study of this dynamic is of significant importance (Kymlicka, 2001; Jeram et al., 2016). Considering this, I was particularly interested in how the immigrant community, both old and new, were perceived within the independence movement in the region. To conclude, through adopting a qualitative approach, I aimed to explore the relationship between the respondents' attitudes toward immigrants and their perceived role in the modern Catalan independence movement.

Methodology

A qualitative approach to data collection was employed in this study. Such methods are typically characterised by the adoption of an explorative approach to inquiry and the collection of rich, descriptive data that portrays complex human experiences (Silverman, 2006; Prasad, 2017). Adding to this, qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive practices that transform the world and 'make it visible', even for issues as complex as intercultural relations (Bukowski & Buetow, 2011; Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The empirical material for this study was generated through employing two qualitative approaches. Focus groups and narrative interviews were used to explore participants' views on the role of immigrants in the modern independence movement in Catalonia. In total, six focus groups and ten narrative interviews provided the data for this research.

To begin with, six focus groups were conducted with members of Catalan independence organisations.[1] Focus groups have been described as a semi-structured interactive group session, designed with the purpose of collecting information on a designated topic (McClafferty, 2004). Focus groups were employed in this study as the group dynamic element of this research instrument encourages participants to freely express their opinions about a subject, to exchange anecdotes and comment on each other's experiences and points of view in an in-depth manner (Kitzinger, 1995). Here the focus groups were useful in gaining knowledge and attitudes that were unlikely to arise through individual interviews (Leavey, Sembhi, & Livingston, 2004). As such, the interaction between focus group participants helps to put individual statements into context, thus providing a means of validation (Razum, Sahin-Hodoglugil, & Polit, 2005). In all the focus groups the researcher acted as the moderator. A passive nondirective approach was adopted during the focus groups. In line with this, a limited

number of questions and probes were used and as the moderator, I kept any interjection to a minimum (Fern, 2001).

Following the focus groups, narrative interviews were conducted with the research respondents.[2] Narrative interviews were chosen for this research because they present a less dominating way of interviewing that facilitates detailed accounts of participants' lives and experiences (Elliot, 2005). In contrast to the focus groups, the in-depth individual interviews allowed access to more personal experiences and emotive issues that may have been too sensitive to explore within a group (Leavey et al., 2004). Methodologically, narrative interviews can also provide insight into complex subjective tensions and frustrations that can be seen to shape attitudes toward other groups (Valentine & Sadgrove, 2014). For this investigation, the narrative interview as described by Riessman (2008) was considered the most appropriate method as it emphasises the importance of the socio-political context and how it can impact upon interviewees during the research process (Squire, 2013).

As previously mentioned, research participants for this investigation were chosen for their involvement in pro-independence socio-political organisations in Catalonia. As such, a purposive sampling strategy was employed as it permitted for me to choose participants with specific characteristics that could act as rich sources of data (Draper & Swift, 2011; Denscombe, 2014). Initially, eight pro-independence socio-political organisations were contacted. However, two groups had to withdraw from the research due to time and logistical constraints.

Potential informants were contacted through emails to independence organisations. Following this initial contact, the focus groups and narrative interviews were conducted over the course of several weeks. Informants for the narrative interviews were self-selected, insofar as they decided whether they wanted to volunteer to contribute to the study. It may, of course,

be the case that there was an element of selection 'bias' for the narrative interviews, in that the recruitment procedures may have attracted the attention of those who felt particularly strongly about the situation in Catalonia.

Discussions were audio-recorded for the purpose of transcription. I transcribed all the recorded material and this process became part of the interpretation and analysis process. All data were imported into NVivo (version 11). Following other recent applications of Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach to thematic analysis (see also Clarke & Braun, 2013) in the context of focus groups and narrative interviews, such as Andreouli and Nicholson (2018) and Patterson, Markey and Somers (2012) respectively, I employed this method to identify the most salient categories in the data. In particular, as already mentioned, I was interested in the ways in which the immigrant population in Catalonia might be constructed as a threat and/or a benefit to the independence movement in the region.

The collected data were treated as a single collection of texts. Clarke & Braun's (2013) six-stage analytical framework to thematic analysis was adhered to. These stages were; familiarisation with the data; generation of initial codes; searching for themes; reviewing themes; defining and naming themes; producing the report. This framework offered a systematic bottom-up approach for coding data in which specific statements were analysed and categorised into themes (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The themes that emerged from this process represented the central phenomena of this study, shaping the overall 'story' of the data. Throughout the data analysis, it became clear that, against the backdrop of the secessionist movement in Catalonia, there was a range of views on the impact of the various waves of migration to the territory. In what follows, I discuss the main results of this study.

Findings and Discussion

The results allowed for a detailed analysis regarding the role of immigrants in the modern independence movement. The recent developments in contemporary Catalonia, comprising of mass-protests and the creation of new socio-political contexts, offered an excellent opportunity to examine the changing role of the immigrant population in the independence movement. In all of the focus groups and narrative interviews, this issue provoked much passionate debate and discussion. However, my findings demonstrate that the research participants were not an entirely homogenous group.

The data revealed a divergent narrative about the different waves of immigrants that have come to Catalonia and their impact on the independence movement. On the one hand, immigration to Catalonia was framed positively for the prospects of an independent Catalonia and wider Catalan society in general. However, on the other hand, the data also suggested that the newer sources of immigration and diversity was framed as a potential challenge to the prospects of independence in the region.

In what follows, I will give examples of some of the opinions of the speakers I interviewed in an effort to provide a picture of the situation. The constructions of the immigrant population in the region and their fluid role in the sovereignty process, are explored under two motifs: 'Immigration: Rising Benefit' and '(New) Immigration: (New) Challenge'. These constructions of the role of migrants in the independence movement are explored below.

Immigration: Rising Benefit

Transnational immigration is a relatively new phenomenon in Spain. It was not until the early 1990s that external immigrants began arriving to Catalonia from North Africa, Asia and Latin-America (Conversi & Jeram, 2017). It is within this context that many of the informants

stressed the importance of recognising the changing constitution of modern Catalonia. In this sense, there was a clear realisation and acknowledgement of the changes immigration had brought to the social, cultural and political fabric of Catalonia and by extension the Catalan independence movement (Woolard, 2016; Aramburu, 2018). For example, as one informant mentioned:[3]

> What we have to consider is the make-up of modern Catalan society, where it is now but even more importantly where it might be in five or ten years. How will we [supporters of independence] adapt to this? This is what I am worried about. (Narrative Interview, ANC, Nicolau)

Or as another respondent stated:

> If we are really serious about gaining independence for this country, we really need to take all of those who were not born here into account too, because without them, I doubt that we can ever be independent. (Focus Group, Ateneu 24 de Juny, Arnau)

In addition to the comments above, the data also indicated that attitudes toward immigration amongst the informants mirrored the wider discourse in the region, which has historically seen Catalonia constructed as a cosmopolitan, assimilating society or a *terra d'acollida* (land of welcome) or *terra de pas* (a land of passage). Considering this, the informants seemed to align themselves with wider Catalan government policy and political rhetoric which promotes the idea of a collective nation in an attempt to erase linguistic and cultural divisions in the region (Franco-Guillén & Zapata-Barrero, 2014; Woolard, 2016).

When discussing the role and impact immigration has had on the sovereignty movement, informants frequently constructed immigration as a potential benefit, where there was an attempt to involve immigrants closely in subnational belonging and social cohesion (Conversi & Jeram, 2017). In particular, reflecting the reality of Catalonia's long history of

internal migration, 'traditional' migrants were constructed by some informants as advantageous (or beneficial) to the independence project. From this perspective, the informants' attitudes, to some degree, converge with Catalan government policy, political rhetoric or the national ideology (Woolard, 2016). This echoes Aramburu's (2018) argument that in Catalonia there has been 'the unmaking of social boundaries' in the region and a political and institutional push for the accommodation of immigrants into the independence debate. Reflecting the changing composition of the independence project, the respondents below stated the following:

> There are organisations such as *Súmate* that are Spanish speakers but are in favour of independence. Before, this was unthinkable. Catalan nationalism used to be pure, owned by the ones wearing a *barretina* and such.[4] Because of that, a whole demographic that was interested in becoming involved was lost. I read an article that talked about the new Catalans. Before new Catalans were one thing and now it's another [laughs]. Before it was Spanish immigration, and now it relates to immigrants who come from outside Spain. (Narrative Interview, Ateneu 24 de Juny, Pau)

> We are a more inclusive society in terms of immigration. So I think the values that we can see in the studies of political science, say that we are a little bit more progressive than Spain. We need to be this way if we want to secure independence. (Narrative Interview, ERC, Pol)

The above comments reflect the reality that large-scale and intense migratory movements have created an increasingly diverse community at the local level in Catalonia, communities that the independence movement has had to interact with (Alarcón & Garzón, 2013). In addition, Pol's comments mirror the argument that with its long history of immigration, Catalonia is presented

as being a tolerant, heterogeneous society with a distinct identity in contrast to the less tolerant, homogenised Spanish society (Jeram, 2013).

The new social composition of Catalonia has seemingly reframed the public discourse regarding the role of migrants within the independence project. Echoing the argument that immigration potentially boosts a territory's demographic weight and enhances its legitimacy as a liberal democratic actor (Hepburn, 2009; Adam, 2013a), one informant stated the following:

> I think we must have a referendum but we must try and achieve the maximum possible participation rate. The only thing I doubt is if the 'yes' side will win, it depends on the participation rate. This is the key to it all, I believe that those who are new to Catalonia are key here. We have to be aware of this. (Focus Group, ERC, Sergi)

Adding to this conceptualisation of immigrants in Catalonia another respondent stated the following:

> This is a welcoming land because there is a lot of immigration from the Spanish state. Now there's foreign immigration, but until recently there was a lot of immigration from Andalusia and Extremadura because they couldn't create a life there, so they came here to look for jobs, they integrated, etc. But now I feel there's a conspiracy against these people who live here and are Catalan, feel Catalan and fight for Catalonia as much as I do, even though some of them don't speak Catalan. This demographic is really important to our cause. (Narrative Interview, ANC, Alba)

The above excerpts reflect the argument that the independence movements approach has shifted in recent years in an attempt to acknowledge the diversity that is present in the region.

The data revealed that given its history of immigration, support for independence in this investigation was partly based on a non-ascriptive or non-hereditary Catalan identity (Conversi, 2000). Adding to this, the disproportionate increase in international migration during the first decade of the 21st century has necessitated a remodelling of the independence project in the region. In this respect, according to the respondents, the sovereignty process now embodied a type of 'integrative' or 'civic' nationalism (Jeram et al., 2016); where the civic nation is inclusive and anyone can join irrespective of nationality.

The data indicated that the waves of immigration to Catalonia were constructed as a potential benefit for the social cohesion of the region, where immigrants provided the opportunity to strengthen the dominant group's position in the receiving country (Hepburn, 2011; Tartakovsky & Walsh, 2019). From a pragmatic point of view, this is perhaps unsurprising given that stateless nations frequently use their immigration history to, '[…] construct and disseminate a tolerant and inclusive national image, one that aims to foster both indigenous people's and migrants' sense of national belonging' (Rodon & Franco-Guillén, 2014, p. 669). However, as I demonstrate in the following section, views on the role of the immigrant population in Catalonia were by no means uniform.

(New) Immigration: (New) Challenge

The previous section indicated that the Catalan case is illustrative of a broader trend insofar as a nation without a state, Catalonia and the independence project in the region is attempting to construct an inclusive citizenship into their national imaginings. This is in contrast to European states that opt for tougher distinctions between nationals and non-nationals and aggressive programmes of cultural integration (Triadafilopoulos, 2011; Jeram, 2013).

However, my data also revealed a slightly more apprehensive discourse when respondents discussed the newer waves of immigration and the integrative capacity of Catalan culture in an increasingly globalised society. This was evident when informants discussed the arrival of migrants from developing countries in Africa, South America and Asia. As previously mentioned, 13.6% of the residents in the territory are of foreign origin (Puigdevall et al., 2018). Discussing this topic, one informant stated the following:

> The younger generation that has come here, many of them are in school, they are living in urban areas where there is still a strong Spanish sentiment […] they have a Spanish mentality and these neighbourhoods are not interested in the same things that we are [independence]. I think that we forget this sometimes. (Focus Group, Súmate, Biel)

Over the course of history, immigration has been seen as a double-edged sword, an incoming cheap-labour that creates new economic opportunities for the native population but, at the same time, a real threat for cultural, social, national and linguistic identity (Barceló, 2014). It is reasonable to assume that this also applies to the independence movement in Catalonia. Considering this, informants frequently alluded to the potential conundrum that migration poses to sub-state nationalism, where too much internal diversity may undermine the claim to cultural distinctiveness and the nation-building process, a phenomenon that has been labelled the 'legitimation paradox' (Jeram et al., 2016). From this perspective, informants maintained that the multiculturism and multilingualism associated with the latest wave of transnational immigration to Catalonia was an issue that the successionist movement must acknowledge. However, this new source of immigration was considered more of a challenge to the independence process in the territory than an overt threat. The excerpt below provides

an example of how immigration is presenting new challenges to the independence project in Catalonia:

> But especially for the last 40 or 50 years, Catalan nationalism, which finds itself in a completely new situation, is challenged by immigration coming from other areas of the Spanish state and further afield. (Focus Group, CUP, Oriol)

Barker (2015) argues that, when responding to immigration flows and the diversity that this brings with it, sub-state nations are faced with the fundamental challenge of balancing openness and insularity. The respondents in the current study maintained that, to varying degrees, the diversity brought by immigration posed a potential challenge to the existing gains made by the region. Providing further insight into the situation, the informant below stated the following:

> There are many people here who came as children and now feel as much Catalan as any Catalan speaker, even though they speak in Spanish or Catalan despite having Spanish as their mother tongue. They have later joined the independence movement. But we do face new challenges with the new wave of immigrants in recent years. (Narrative Interview, ANC, Flor)

As previously mentioned, migration from Latin America to Spain (and Catalonia) has increased significantly since the early 2000s. Many scholars have suggested that the presence of this newer wave of migration has changed the socio-political landscape in the region (Pujolar, 2010; Rodríguez-García et al., 2018). Considering this, it was unsurprising that informants discussed the impact of the newer wave of immigration to the region, particularly those from South America. For example, the interviewees below stated the following:

> With the South Americans […] their view of life is very different to how we do things here and so their principals and their values are completely different to ours.

> I mean they have come here for a better life, not to help us obtain an independent Catalonia. (Focus Group, Súmate, Bernat)

> The second boom of South-American immigration hasn't helped [the independence movement] much either. (Narrative Interview, ANC, Flor)

Another informant made a similar point more dramatically:

> Look, there are communities here that have no idea of our history, or what is happening right now. There are many people from South America here now. Do they want Catalonia to be independent? I doubt it. For many, Catalonia is Spain, Spain is Catalonia. (Focus Group, ADAC, Sibil·la)

The above excerpts illustrate the uncertainties the respondents had with the newer waves of immigrants to Catalonia, an issue that affects not only the national identity in a region but also the language situation. Barker (2015) points out that the arrival of immigrants who neither speak the language nor learn it can weaken the sub-state nation's goals. From this perspective, the linguistic impact of immigration relates to broader political concerns. If immigrants do not integrate linguistically they may be less likely to participate in the public and political sphere (Gagnon & Iacovino, 2005). Consequently, immigrants may be less likely to support or identify with the goals of the sub-state nation.

The recently arrived Spanish speaking community, those with perhaps no exposure to Catalan-centric cultural frames of reference, were constructed as a significant challenge to the ambitions of the successionist movement in the territory. However, to alleviate this issue, informants stressed the importance of recruiting this section of the population. As such, instead of being viewed as a threat, speakers of Spanish (and other linguistic communities) were now viewed as a resource that could be employed to increase the support base and probability of success for the sovereignty movement. For example, one respondent stated the following:

> There's a whole community of Spanish speakers who are also for Catalan independence […] what we want is to include them, not exclude them, because there're many of them. (Narrative Interview, Ateneu 24 de Juny, Pau)

This theme of inclusion reflects the argument that instead of rejecting immigration as a threat, regions must turn the initial pressure brought by transnational migration into an advantage by integrating immigrants fully into the national project (Zapata-Barrero, 2006; Hepburn, 2011). This process of boundary-blurring within the independence movement may imply a new form of 'ethnic broadening' between 'Catalans' (those who support independence, 'regardless of where they come from or the language they speak') and those who oppose independence for the region (Wimmer, 2008; Aramburu, 2018). This development indicates that the independence project may be opening up to an increasingly heterogeneous Catalan society. This echoes the argument that long-standing nationalist movements are adapting and changing their values toward immigrants to obtain broad support and maintain distinctiveness from the state identity (Jeram 2013). From this perspective, for the informants in this study, the new sources of diversity brought by international migration to Catalonia was perceived as an ongoing challenge rather than a direct threat that the secessionist movement.

Conclusion

This investigation aimed to contribute to the body of research on the nexus between 'nations without states' and immigration. At a time of political unrest in Catalonia, the consequences of immigration for national identity, social cohesion and ethnolinguistic composition can become particularly salient (Barker, 2015). In addition, including newcomers can reduce the cultural homogeneity of the nation, but excluding them could reduce the demographic force of the region and demonstrate an intolerant image to potential sympathisers (Adam, 2013a).

This article investigated how a complex socio-political and sociocultural situation was reflected in what speakers thought about the changing roles of the immigrant population in the Catalan independence movement. This small-scale, qualitative study seems to suggest that the distinction between the more traditional migration from other areas of Spain and transnational migration from across the globe to Catalonia was important for the respondents. Unsurprisingly, none of the respondents who contributed to this study explicitly employed the terms 'threat' or 'benefit' when discussing the situation. However, the qualitative data put forward suggests that the informants in the current study were not an entirely homogenous group.

In the present work, I have revealed how immigrants were constructed in Jeram et al.'s (2016) terminology as 'foes', threating the cultural and linguistic unity that secures self-determination or as 'friends' that, integrate into the group's language and culture. From this perspective, attitudes toward immigration in this study were more closely aligned to Jeram et al.'s (2016) conceptualisation of immigrants as 'friends'. As such, the integration of both national and transnational migrants into Catalan society was seen as a way to further emphasise the territory as a separate cultural and political unit distinct from the larger nation-state of Spain while at the same time adding to the demographic weight of Catalonia as a region (Rodon & Franco-Guillén, 2014; Conversi & Jeram, 2017). These findings seem to echo those of other studies, which have found that a populist anti-immigrant rhetoric is less prominent among those who support secessionism in the region (Pardos-Prado, 2019; Wagner et al., 2019).

However, Vink and Bauböck (2013) maintain that paying equal attention to internal and transnational immigration allows us a greater understanding of contrasting patterns of territorial inclusion. As previously mentioned, large-scale and international migratory movements have created increasingly diverse communities at the local level in Catalonia,

communities that the independence movement and wider Catalan society has had to interact with (Pujolar et al., 2011; Alarcón & Garzón, 2013). Considering this, there was an acknowledgement that the arrival of new minorities in the 21st century and the creation of a new 'superdiverse' Catalonia (Rodríguez-García et al., 2018), posed significant challenges to the independence project in the territory. The data also echoes the argument that different categories of migrants, in this case, internal immigrants and foreign immigrants, tend to be more salient and politicised than another at a given point in time (Barker, 2015; Arrighi, 2019). However, instead of rejecting this new wave of immigration as a threat, informants constructed it as more of a challenge that Catalonia must face, turning any potential pressure into an advantage by integrating immigrants into the regional community (Kössler, 2015).

The construction and reconstruction of sub-state nationalism in a world of globalisation and migration can be a difficult balancing act between maintaining national identity and accepting cultural diversity (Olivieri, 2015). However, the data indicated that immigration was constructed as more beneficial than threatening to the independence process. In line with this, there was an emphasis placed on incorporating immigrants into the independence movement. However, it was perhaps the role of the newer waves of migration from North and West Africa, Asia and particularly Latin America that was of more pressing concern for those who contributed to the current investigation. As such, the respondents were keen to stress the challenges this new diversity posed to the independence project. The data seem to confirm Franco-Guillén's (2015) assertion that attitudes toward migrants in Catalonia and their role in the independence movement may depend on how, and to what degree, they are included and involved in the independence process in the future. Considering this, a further study, with even more forceful data, may help us go deeper into the role of newer migrants and their position in the independence movement in the region.

Notes

1. Thirty-six respondents contributed to the focus groups in total. A single focus group was conducted with each organisation.
2. Ten individuals from the focus groups agreed to be interviewed.
3. Pseudonyms are used throughout, and details have been removed to anonymise informants.
4. A traditional Catalan hat and a symbol of Catalan identity.

Acknowledgements

The research for this paper took place in 2017 during my Ph.D. in the School of Modern Languages and Applied Linguistics at the University of Limerick, Ireland. I would like to thank David Atkinson and Máiréad Moriarty for their supervision and invaluable feedback during this research project. In addition, I would like to thank the editor and anonymous reviewers whose comments and critiques strengthened the final version of this article.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

References

Adam, I. (2013a). Immigrant integration policies of the Belgian regions: sub-state nationalism and policy divergence after devolution. *Regional and Federal Studies, 23*(5), 547–569.

Adam, I. (2018). Immigration and sub-state nations. Researching the nexus. In K. Detterbeck & E. Hepburn (Eds.), *Handbook of territorial politics* (pp. 261–278). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Adam, I., & Deschouwer, K. (2016). Nationalist parties and immigration in Flanders: from Volksunie to Spirit and N-VA. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 42*(8), 1290–1303.

Alarcón, A., & Garzón, L. (2013). Children of immigrants and social mobility in officially bilingual societies: the case of Catalonia. *Spanish in Context, 10*(1), 92–113.

Andreouli, E., & Nicholson, C. (2018). Brexit and everyday politics: an analysis of focus-group data on the EU referendum. *Political Psychology, 39*(6), 1323–1338.

Aramburu, M. (2018). The unmaking and remaking of an ethnic boundary. Working-class Castilian speakers in Catalonia and the paradoxes of the independence movement. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. doi: 10.1080/1369183X.2018.1543019.

Arrighi, J. T. (2019). 'The people, year zero': secessionism and citizenship in Scotland and Catalonia. *Ethnopolitics, 18*(3), 278–297.

Banting, K., & Soroka, S. (2012). Minority nationalism and immigrant integration in Canada. *Nations and Nationalism, 18*(1), 156–176.

Barceló, J. (2014). Contextual effects on subjective national identity. *Nations and Nationalism*, *20*(4), 701–720.

Barker, F. (2015). *Nationalism, identity and the governance of diversity: old politics, new arrivals*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bayona-Carrasco, J., & Gil-Alonso, F. (2012). Suburbanisation and international immigration: the case of the Barcelona metropolitan region (1998–2009). *Journal of Economic and Social Geography*, *103*(3), 312–329.

Berry, J., & Kalin, R. (1995). Multicultural and ethnic attitudes in Canada: an overview of the 1991 national survey. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science/Revue canadienne des sciences du comportement*, *27*(3), 301–320.

Boylan, B. (2015). In pursuit of independence: the political economy of Catalonia's secessionist movement. *Nations and Nationalism*, *21*(4), 761–785.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77–101.

Bukowski, K., & Buetow, S. (2011). Making the invisible visible: a photovoice exploration of homeless women's health and lives in central Auckland. *Social Science and Medicine*, *72*(5), 739–746.

Carbonell, J. M. (2019). The two main challenges to Catalan identity. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *63*(7), 789–806.

Carlà, A. (2015). Tensions and challenges between new and old minorities: political party discourses on migration in South Tyrol. In R. Medda-Windischer & A. Carlà (Eds.), *Migration*

and autonomous territories: the case of South Tyrol and Catalonia (pp. 65–99). Leiden: Brill Publishers.

Centre d'Estudis d'Opinió (CEO) (2018). *Baròmetre d'Opinió política* [Dataset]. Retrieved from http://upceo.ceo.gencat.cat/wsceop/6748/Resumen%20en%20Espa%C3%B1ol%20-901.pdf.

Cetrà, D. (2019). *Nationalism, liberalism and language in Catalonia and Flanders*. Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.

Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2013). Teaching thematic analysis: overcoming challenges and developing strategies for effective learning. *The Psychologist*, *26*(2), 120–123.

Climent-Ferrando, V., & Triviño, J. C. (2015). Immigrant associations and political participation: when language matters: the Catalan case. In R. Medda-Windischer & A. Carlà (Eds.), *Migration and autonomous territories: the case of South Tyrol and Catalonia* (pp. 161–183). Leiden: Brill Publishers.

Conversi, D. (2000). *The Basques, the Catalans and Spain: alternative routes to nationalist mobilisation*. London: C. Hurst and Co.

Conversi, D., & Jeram, S. (2017). Despite the crisis: the resilience of intercultural nationalism in Catalonia. *International Migration*, *55*(2), 53–67.

Corona, V., & Kelsall, S. (2016). Latino rap in Barcelona: diaspora, languages and identities. *Linguistics and Education*, *36*(1), 5–15.

Creswell, J., & Creswell, D. (2017). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). London: Sage.

Cuadras-Morató, X. (2016) Catalonia at the crossroads: analysis of the increasing support for secession. In X. Cuadras-Morató (Ed.), *Catalonia: a new independent state in Europe? a debate on secession within the European Union* (pp. 1–19). London: Routledge.

Cuadras-Morató, X., & Rodon, T. (2017). The dog that didn't bark: on the effect of the great recession on the surge of secessionism. *Barcelona GSE Working Paper Series* (No. 968). Retrieved from https://www.barcelonagse.eu/research/working-papers/dog-didnt-bark-effect-great-recession-surge-secessionism.

Della Porta, D., O'Connor, F., Portos-García, M., & Subirats-Ribas, A. (2017). *Social movements and referendums from below: direct democracy in the neoliberal crisis*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Denscombe, M. (2014). *The good research guide: for small-scale social research projects* (5th ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Dowling, A. (2018). *The rise of Catalan independence: Spain's territorial crisis*. Oxford: Routledge.

Draper, A., & Swift, J. (2011). Qualitative research in nutrition and dietetics: data collection issues. *Journal of Human Nutrition and Dietetics*, *24*(1), 3–12.

Elliott, J. (2005). *Using narrative in social research: qualitative and quantitative approaches*. London: Sage.

Escandell, X., & Ceobanu, A. M. (2010). Nationalisms and anti-immigrant sentiment in Spain. *South European Society and Politics*, *15*(2), 157–179.

Fern, E. (2001). *Advanced focus group research*. London: Sage.

Franco-Guillén, N. (2015) Which people? an exploration of the role of immigration in the secessionist process in Catalonia. In K. J. Nagel & S. Rixen (Eds.), *Catalonia in Spain and Europe: is there a way to independence?* (pp. 115–128). Baden-Baden: Nomos.

Franco-Guillén, N. (2016). Selfishness of the affluent? stateless nationalist and regionalist parties and immigration. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *42*(8), 1304–1316.

Franco-Guillén, N. (2018). Intergovernmental relations on immigrant integration in Spain: the case of Catalonia. *Regional and Federal Studies*, *29*(5), 655–674.

Franco-Guillén, N., & R. Zapata-Barrero (2014). Catalunya, terra d'acollida: stateless nationalist party discourses on immigration in Catalonia. In E. Hepburn & R. Zapata-Barrero (Eds.), *The politics of immigration in multi-level states: governance and political parties* (pp. 261–284). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gagnon, A. G., & Iacovino, R. (2005) Interculturalism: expanding the boundaries of citizenship. In R. Máiz, & F. Requejo (Eds.), *Democracy, nationalism and multiculturalism* (pp. 33–50). London: Routledge.

Gray, C. (2015). A fiscal path to sovereignty?: The Basque economic agreement and nationalist politics. In R. Gillespie, & C. Gray (Eds.), *Contesting Spain? the dynamics of nationalist movements in Catalonia and the Basque Country* (pp. 1–21). Oxford: Routledge.

Griera, M. (2016). The governance of religious diversity in stateless nations: the case of Catalonia. *Religion, State & Society*, *44*(1), 13–31.

Hainmueller, J., & Hopkins, D. J. (2014). Public attitudes toward immigration. *Annual Review of Political Science, 17*(1), 225–249.

Hepburn, E. (2009). Regionalist party mobilisation on immigration. *West European Politics*, *32*(3), 514–535.

Hepburn, E. (2011). 'Citizens of the region': party conceptions of regional citizenship and immigrant integration. *European Journal of Political Research*, *50*(4), 504–529.

Huszka, B. (2014). Framing national identity in independence campaigns: secessionist rhetoric and ethnic conflict. *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, *20*(2), 153–173.

Ianos, M. A, Huguet, Á., & Lapresta-Rey, C. (2017). Attitudinal patterns of secondary education students in Catalonia. The direct and moderator effects of origin. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *38*(2), 113–129.

Jeram, S. (2013). Immigrants and the Basque nation: diversity as a new marker of identity. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *36*(11), 1770–1788.

Jeram, S., Van Der Zwet, A., & Wisthaler, V. (2016). Friends or foes? Migrants and sub-state nationalists in Europe. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *42*(8), 1229–1241.

Kitzinger, J. (1995). Qualitative research: introducing focus groups. *British Medical Journal*, *3*(11), 299–302.

Kleiner-Liebau, D. (2009). *Migration and the construction of national identity in Spain*. Madrid: Iberoamericana Editorial.

Kössler, K. (2015) Immigration and integration in multilevel systems: a challenge between autonomy and intergovernmental cooperation. In R. Medda-Windischer & A. Carlà (Eds.), *Migration and autonomous territories: the case of South Tyrol and Catalonia* (pp. 27–64). Leiden: Brill Publishers.

Kymlicka, W. (2001). *Politics in the vernacular: nationalism, multiculturalism, and citizenship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kymlicka, W. (2006). Immigration integration and minority nationalism. In M. Keating and J. McGarry (Eds.), *Minority nationalism and the changing international order* (pp. 61–83). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Leavey, G., Sembhi, S., & Livingston, G. (2004). Older Irish migrants living in London: identity, loss and return. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *30*(4), 763–779.

Lecours, A. (2012). Sub-state nationalism in the western world: explaining continued appeal. *Ethnopolitics*, *11*(3), 268–286.

Liñeira, R., & Cetrà, D. (2015). The independence case in comparative perspective. *The Political Quarterly*, *86*(2), 257–264.

López-Rodríguez, L., Navas, M., Cuadrado, I., Coutant, D., & Worchel, S. (2014). The majority's perceptions about adaptation to the host society of different immigrant groups: the distinct role of warmth and threat. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *40*(1), 34–48.

Martí, D. (2013). The 2012 Catalan election: the first step towards independence?. *Regional and Federal Studies*, *23*(4), 507–516.

McClafferty, I. (2004). Focus group interviews as a data collecting strategy. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *48*(2), 187–194.

Medda-Windischer, R. (2015). Migration and old minorities in South Tyrol: beyond a 'nimby' approach?. In R. Medda-Windischer & A. Carlà (Eds.), *Migration and autonomous territories: the case of South Tyrol and Catalonia* (pp. 100–136). Leiden: Brill Publishers.

Medda-Windischer, R., & Carlà, A. (2015). Introduction. In R. Medda-Windischer & A. Carlà (Eds.), *Migration and autonomous territories: the case of South Tyrol and Catalonia* (pp. 1–26). Leiden: Brill Publishers.

Olivieri, V. (2015). Sub-state nationalism in Spain: primers and triggers of identity politics in Catalonia and the Basque Country. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *38*(9), 1610–1626.

Pardos-Prado, S. (2019) *Who supports Catalan independence, and is there a way forward?*. Retrieved from https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2019/12/18/who-supports-catalan-independence-and-is-there-a-way-forward/

Patterson, M. L., Markey, M. A., & Somers, J. M. (2012). Multiple paths to just ends: using narrative interviews and timelines to explore health equity and homelessness. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *11*(2), 132–151.

Poggeschi, G. (2015). Immigration in Catalonia and Spain: the evolution of shared competence. In R. Medda-Windischer & A. Carlà (Eds.), *Migration and autonomous territories: the case of South Tyrol and Catalonia* (pp. 137–160). Leiden: Brill Publishers.

Prasad, P. (2017). *Crafting qualitative research: beyond positivist traditions* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Puigdevall, M., Walsh, J., Amorrortu, E., & Ortega, A. (2018). 'I'll be one of them': linguistic *mudes* and new speakers in three minority language contexts. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *39*(5), 445–457.

Pujolar, J. (2010). Immigration and language education in Catalonia: between national and social agendas. *Linguistics and Education*, *21*(3), 229–243.

Pujolar, J., Fernàndez, J. A., & Subirana, J. (2011). Language, culture and identity in the global age. *Digithum*, May, 79–84.

Razum, O., Sahin-Hodoglugil, N. N., & Polit, K. (2005). Health, wealth or family ties? Why Turkish work migrants return from Germany. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *31*(4), 719–739.

Riessman, C. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. California: Sage.

Rodon, T., & Franco-Guillén, N. (2014). Contact with immigrants in times of crisis: an exploration of the Catalan case. *Ethnicities*, *14*(5), 650–675.

Rodríguez-García, D., Solana-Solana, M., Ortiz-Guitart, A., & Freedman, J. L. (2018). Linguistic cultural capital among descendants of mixed couples in Catalonia, Spain: realities and inequalities. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, *39*(4), 429–450.

Serrano, I., & Bonillo, A. (2017). Boundary shifts and vote alignment in Catalonia. *Ethnicities*, *17*(3), 371–391.

Silverman, D. (2006). *Interpreting qualitative data: methods for analysing talk, text and interaction* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.

Squire, C. (2013). From experience-centred to socioculturally-oriented approaches to narrative. In M. Andrews, C. Squire, & M. Tamboukou (Eds.), *Doing narrative research* (2nd ed.) (pp. 47–71). London: Sage.

Tartakovsky, E., & Walsh, S. D. (2016a). Testing a new theoretical model for attitudes toward immigrants: the case of social workers' attitudes toward asylum seekers in Israel. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *47*(1), 72–96.

Tartakovsky, E., & Walsh, S. D. (2016b). Burnout among social workers working with immigrants from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopia in Israel: testing the connections between personal value preferences, immigrant appraisal and burnout. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *53*(1), 39–53.

Tartakovsky, E., & Walsh, S. D. (2019). Are some immigrants more equal than others? Applying a Threat-Benefit Model to understanding the appraisal of different immigrant groups by the local population. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. doi: 10.1080/1369183X.2019.1565402

Tortella, G. (2017). *Catalonia in Spain: history and myth*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Touraine, A. (2000). *Can we live together? equality and difference*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Triadafilopoulos, T. (2011) Illiberal means to liberal ends? Understanding recent immigrant integration policies in Europe. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *37*(6), 861–880.

Valentine, G., & Sadgrove, J. (2014). Biographical narratives of encounter: the significance of mobility and emplacement in shaping attitudes towards difference. *Urban Studies*, *51*(9), 1979–1994.

Vink, M. P., & Bauböck, R. (2013). Citizenship configurations: analysing the multiple purposes of citizenship regimes in Europe. *Comparative European Politics*, *11*(5), 621–648.

Wagner, A., Marin, J., & Kroqi, D. (2019). The Catalan struggle for independence and the role of the European Union. *Regional Science Policy & Practice*, *11*(5), 787–803.

Walsh, S. D, Tartakovsky, E., & Schifter-Weber, M. (2018). Personal values and immigrant group appraisal as predictors of voluntary contact with immigrants among majority students in Israel. *International Journal of Psychology*, *53*(1), 1–8.

Williams, S. (2018). *Rethinking stateless nations and national identity in Wales and the Basque Country*. Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.

Wilson-Daily, A. E., Kemmelmeier, M., & Prats, J. (2018). Intergroup contact versus conflict in Catalan high schools: a multilevel analysis of adolescent attitudes toward immigration and diversity. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *64*(2018), 12–28.

Wimmer, A. (2008). Elementary strategies of ethnic boundary making. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *31*(6), 1025–1055.

Wisthaler, V. (2016). South Tyrol: the importance of boundaries for immigrant integration. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *42*(8), 1271–1289.

Woolard, K. (2016). *Singular and plural: ideologies of linguistic authority in 21st century Catalonia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Zapata-Barrero, R. (2006). Setting a research agenda on the interaction between cultural demands of immigrants and minority nations. In R. Zapata-Barrero (Ed.), *Immigration and self-government of minority nations* (pp. 13–38). Brussels: Peter Lang Publishing.

Zapata-Barrero, R. (2009). Building a public philosophy of immigration in Catalonia: the terms of debate. In: R. Zapata-Barrero (Ed.), *Immigration and self-government of minority nations* (pp. 125–161). New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

Zapata-Barrero, R. (2014). The limits to shaping diversity as public culture: permanent festivities in Barcelona. *Cities*, *37*(2014), 66–72.

Response to Reviewers

The final version, edited by the author.