Citation style


First published: https://journals.openedition.org/mcv/12024

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Soon after the Spanish football team won the World Cup in South Africa, a historian who came of age during the Franco regime regaled me with a story of how he had gone to the movies in Madrid with some friends on that championship day. After exiting the theater, he saw crowds of people in the streets, shouting, and carrying Spanish flags. His first impulse was to think that there had been a coup, until somebody alerted him to Spain’s victory, thus demonstrating a version of Michael Billig’s concept of banal nationalism. Billig’s main thesis, that nationalism is represented and replicated in numerous «banal» ways—flags, songs, advertisements, weather reports—so that people imbibe their nation daily and feel a sense of national belonging, allows people to display national pride without resorting to jingoism. Billig’s 1995 work transformed the field of nationalism studies when it came out, but the work was not translated into Spanish until 2014. Ondear la nación, edited by nationalism scholars Alejandro Quiroga and Ferran Archilés, seeks to test out Billig’s ideas within the context of Spain’s history, from the nineteenth century to the present. As the editors and contributors argue, Spain is a good test study for this work because of its long history as a multi-lingual, multi-cultural nation-state. The editors admit that there are periods in Spain’s history where banal nationalism as an analytic concept works better than in others, but they wish to provide «un análisis novedoso de los procesos de nacionalización de la población» by focusing «en lo cotidiano y en cómo “vivieron” la nación española amplios sectores de la población», relegating «en segundo plano las construcciones nacionales de las élites políticas e intelectuales» (p. XI). The volume succeeds in demonstrating the first premise but is less able to accomplish the latter goal.

In chapter i, Quiroga skillfully guides the reader through Spanish historians’ receptions, applications and critiques of Billig’s work since it was first published, providing an intellectual framework from which the essays in this volume. Chapters ii and iv by Xavier Andreu Miralles and Ferran Archilés, respectively, explore Spain’s multi-lingual character during the nineteenth century. Looking at the creation and solidification of the liberal state (1800-1868), Andreu Miralles argues that regional languages proved no threat to the liberal state. In the early nineteenth century, elites from regions like Catalonia viewed castellano as the language of administration and high culture, but not necessarily as the national language. By the late-nineteenth century, however, one could use the regional national language in domestic spaces and the more common «national» castellano in others without being politically suspect. Linguistic differences were not an obstacle to national unity, but they became so at the close of the nineteenth century. Archilés comes to similar conclusions in his fascinating analysis of Blasco Ibáñez’s 1894 novel Arroz y Tartana. His chapter explores how banal nationalism plays out in a fictionalized Valencia and discovers that Valencian worked as a popular language, while castellano was the language of official culture and marked one’s social class.
Chapters iii (Jordi Roca Vernet) and iv (María Pilar Salomón Chéliz) apply the framework of banal nationalism to the study of political culture. Roca Vernet analyzes how the liberal revolution was commemorated in Barcelona’s civic festivals between 1820-1843. He concludes that the liberal revolution was converted into a monarquismo banal, a national identity based on older forms of power, such as monarchy, Catholicism, and territorial unity, combined with the liberal ideas of national liberties and national sovereignty. Salomón Chéliz looks at newspapers from March 18, 1932 to determine if they reproduced Republican culture and the nation in banal form. She determines that Republican newspapers accomplished such a task, while other newspapers, like monarchist ones, did not. Her conclusions make sense, but it seems that using Republican newspapers when illiteracy rates were high makes studying banal nationalism problematic.

The diffusion of banal nationalism under dictatorships is the theme of chapters v (Marta García Carrión), vii (Claudio Hernández Burgos) and viii (Andrea Geniola). Using Valencia as a case study, García Carrión makes a convincing argument that the Spanish nation was reproduced on movie screens by the Spanish film industry, even though the industry was independent of the state, and not part of Primo’s official nationalizing project. Hernández Burgos tries to tease out banal forms of nationalism during the nationalistic Franco regime and concludes that television and radio shows aimed at women and children, and tourist and entertainment displays of flamenco, bullfights, and soccer, did more to diffuse a banal Spanish nationalism than did the regime’s more explicit channels of propaganda. Geniola argues that understandings of nationalism and regionalism under Franco were contradictory, reflecting the many ideological elements that made up his power base, and finds the concept of banal nationalism useful for uncovering the many discourses of nationalism.

Chapters ix (David Parra Monserrat and Josep Ramon Segarra Estarelles), x (Vega Rodríguez-Flores Parra), and xi (José Carlos Rueda Laffond) employ banal nationalism as a tool to understand pedagogical regimes, the CPE, and historical memory. Chapter ix explores how nationalism was deployed to students across two centuries and how textbooks and other educational outlets diffused and essentialized national identity. Chapter x grapples with the paradox of how a political party that was partially founded on an ideology of anti-nationalism—the Communist Party of Spain—had to navigate its support of the Spanish state and regional nationalisms in the context of the Transition. He convincingly articulates that the CPE had a national identity separate from that of the Soviet Union, but his argument that the identity was a banal one is weaker. Finally, chapter xi looks at how banal nationalism was discursively diffused throughout Spain through two very different outlets, the popular television show *Cuéntame cómo pasó* and the political advocacy of Podemos. Both, Rueda Laffond argues, perceived the memory of the Transition as seminal to their understanding of Spanish nationalism. *Cuéntame* portrayed the Transition in a positive light, as a coherent domestic and political system that led to a
democratic constitution. Podemos, which arose in 2014 out of the 15-M Movement, reframed the policies of the European Transition as an extension of the Regime of ‘78, which to them meant oligarchy, caste, and continuity with the Franco regime. Podemos provided a «contra-memoria» of the Transition (232).

Although this volume would have been stronger had there been detailed analysis of the relationship between banal nationalism and gender, scholars who work on Spanish national identity and national identity in multi-ethnic or multi-national states will find this volume highly engaging in the way that it both answers and provokes lots of questions. It demonstrates both the strengths and the limits of applying Billig’s analytical framework