AESTHETIC COMMUNITIES, PERIPHERAL IDENTITIES AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

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ABSTRACT: After centuries of symbolic and political oppression, Galicia has been recognized by the Spanish constitution as a historic nationality. However, despite a certain degree of political autonomy, Galician identity is threatened by increasing homogenization in the economic, social, cultural and linguistic fields. In the early 1990s the aesthetic movement Bravú constructed an aesthetic community, sustained by an ideological project, and with the aim to, on the one hand, prevent Galician culture from becoming folklore stuck in a time warp and, on the other hand, to validate Galician identity. The Bravú artists refused the historically inherited outsider position and contributed to a reinvention of Galician identity and of a political ideal within a cosmopolitan, internationalist framework and by reversing social stigmas through their works and performances.

KEYWORDS: Peripheral identities, Galicia, nationalism, Bravú, political community, aesthetic mediation

The concept of resistance, often accompanied by a qualifier, refers to multiple realities. One can talk of armed resistance, passive resistance, political resistance and social resistance. However, making such distinctions should not make us forget that the effectiveness of resistance depends on a combination of activities of different but complementary natures. While each of them is worth considering, the cultural dimension calls for special attention. Indeed, we work on the assumption that the latter is not only present in all forms of resistance, but is an essential, integral part of it. In other words, whatever its form, a resistance movement necessarily includes cultural resistance. It is enough to remember that art and culture have always been the ultimate bulwark against injustice, oppression and barbarism. The particularity of cultural mediations resides in their ability to touch the innermost subjectivity and individuality of the human being.

Culture is the location of those elements of civilization that allow for the emergence of collective and individual identities. Culture encompasses not only the formation of individuality through a conscious appropriation of values, but also the formation of ethnic, linguistic, social and political structures. The cultural factor is therefore significant,

especially if we consider that the submission of a human group can be obtained, to some extent, by the neutralization of its culture. Conversely, the processes of emancipation of oppressed societies are intrinsically linked to the vitality of their cultural practices. Indeed, it can be reasonably assumed that most major political events, be they social movements, revolutions, or the birth of nation-states, could hardly have occurred had they not been preceded by intense activity in the literary-aesthetic sphere.[1]

A closer look at the social and geopolitical tensions facing the contemporary world reveals that many of them stem from the fact that most nation-states are home to several so-called peripheral identities with very diverse political statuses. From the indigenous peoples of Chiapas to the Scots, from the Sahrawi to the Kurds, such communities suffer, at times tragically, from the lack of recognition of some of their rights. As a result, for some groups within these communities their inherited identity becomes an object of social contempt, and they lose the ability to respect themselves as a community.[2] Recent works have shown that the discrediting of a peripheral identity by a dominant culture is accompanied by a weakened sense of identity among the members of the minority group. Representatives of the multiculturalist current maintain that this issue should be urgently given priority by our democratic systems.[3] This lack of recognition, seen as oppression by the minority group, is regularly—but not often enough—denounced in public. Public space thereby becomes the scene of political and cultural mediations. These mediations allow the individual to adopt a position of resistance and in doing so, to step out of crippling passive humiliation. At the same time, the individual enters into a new, positive relationship with him or herself, a relationship which is essential to the development of any societal project. As lucid witnesses of the suffering of their fellow human beings, artists and intellectuals are expected to play an essential role in these processes of resistance. The publicising of aesthetic and literary works, and the subsequent visibility of their authors, renders difficult any passivity on the authors' part. As a result of this, they become authors of their own political involvement.[4]

This introduction intends to outline the context of a reflection on the resistance movement in the cultural field of an autonomous community of the Spanish state. His analysis will focus on the specific case of the aesthetic movement 'Bravú' in Galicia during the 1990s, and it will raise many questions about the relationship between art, socialization, identity, ideology and other topics. We do not intend to answer these questions in depth, but rather to outline an initial explanation of each of them, thereby providing an overview of the dynamics of resistance specific to so-called peripheral cultures. Thus, we will first trace the origins of the collective action undertaken by the Bravú group of artists in an attempt to understand its social discourse and political logic. Subsequently, a study of the political meaning of cultural mediations and their potential connection to an ideology will allow us to highlight how an aesthetic movement

1. See, in particular, the work of Roger Chartier on the cultural origins of the French Revolution (Roger Chartier, *Les Origines culturelles de la Révolution française*, Paris, Seuil, 1990).

2. Axel Honneth, *La Lutte pour la reconnaissance*, trans. P. Rusch, Paris, les Editions du Cerf, 2000.

3. Charles Taylor, *Le malaise de la modernité*, trans. C. Melançon, Paris, les Editions du Cerf, 2002.

4. Luc Boltanski, *La souffrance à distance*, Paris, Métailié, 1993.

can contribute to the construction of individual and collective identities. Finally, we will consider the extent to which Bravú was a proactive force which facilitated the establishment of continuity between a territorial and historical singularity, and a cosmopolitan hyper-periphery.

FROM OPPRESSION TO THE QUEST FOR AUTONOMY

With its own parliament, government, flag and even anthem, the Galician 'autonomous community', with nearly 2.7 million inhabitants, is recognized by the Spanish constitution as a 'historic nationality', together with Catalonia and the Basque Country. In 1978, following tough negotiations during the post-Franco transition to democracy, the committee in charge of drafting the Spanish constitution took into account a series of historical, geographical, anthropological, cultural and linguistic specificities, thus initiating a process that would eventually grant Galicia gradual access to a relative degree of autonomy. Thirty years later, the debate around the status of these historic nationalities is more heated than ever and their peoples are being brought to think about the future of their autonomous institutions, the granting of further areas of competence and the status of their relationship with the Spanish state. The stakes are high because beyond the redistribution of institutional powers, the citizens of these regions are constantly being forced to rethink their individual and collective identity. As a result of this permanent process of reflection, they continuously update the social contract through their choices and commitments.

Despite some institutional progress during the 1970s and 1980s, the growing autonomy of Galicia cannot be considered part of a natural process. So far it has proceeded in stages, each of which results in a temporary stabilization of the balance of power among the different social and political actors both within Galicia and in Spanish society as a whole. No-one can predict the future development of this process because of the obstacles it continues to face. For nationalist currents, the significance of this process goes beyond that of a mere quest for emancipation; they consider it to be the resumption of normal development in a society that has suffered oppression throughout its history.[5] Attempts by the central government to assimilate peripheral nationalities are inseparable from the economic and political subjugation that forms part of a centuries-long process of unification of the State, one that has been punctuated by particularly dark episodes.[6]

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5. 'Nationalism springs, as often as not, from a wounded or outraged sense of human dignity'. The nationalism of stateless nations is often confronted with the ignorance, indifference or lack of will that characterizes the state. The latter tends to resist pressure to take account of its multinational nature, and to grant the right to self-determination to minorities living in its territory. In most cases, such nations have memories of a time when they had their own self-governing institutions. The processes that put an end to this situation have left a mark of conflict and the experience of oppression. Thus, so-called peripheral nationalism can be understood as "the result of wounds inflicted by someone or something on the natural feelings of a society, or of artificial barriers to its normal development.' (Isaiah Berlin, *The Sense of Reality*, Pimlico, London, 1996, p. 248)

6. One could easily imagine that the last of them, thirty-five years of Franco's dictatorship referred to as 'a night of stone' ('a noite de pedra'), was one of the most difficult to overcome.

These attempts have been accompanied by symbolic violence[7] and, particularly, by a deliberate depreciation of local and regional cultures and languages, so as to promote a singular so-called 'national' culture as the exclusive vehicle of modernity and progress.[8] The imposition of this cultural hegemony led to immediate social selection in that one of its main consequences was to oblige actors in the economic and political life of Galicia to deny their cultural heritage.[9]

In such a context, the analysis of the dynamics of resistance that are the basis for the collective action undertaken by the Bravú aesthetic movement, must logically take into account its social, political and historical dimensions. This approach involves the examination of a very low-intensity conflict, leading our analysis to go beyond the merely cultural[10] and linguistic fields, where the symbolic battles that primarily capture our attention are waged. The decision to express the form of struggle for the recognition of an autonomous community in the form of cultural demands is revealing to some extent, because it ultimately reflects the need to compensate through culture for a stark economic and political dependence. The desire for autonomy that guides the involvement of many actors in Galician society manifests itself primarily as an awareness of repression, while at the same time it is associated with a lack of the socio-economic means to struggle for Galicia's autonomy. All in all, Galician autonomism is primarily cultural because it has no actual power.[11]

IS MODERNITY A THREAT TO PERIPHERAL IDENTITIES?

Like any other identity, Galician identity is an elusive and evolving reality,[12] a cluster

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7. Weber defines the state as 'a human community that (succesfully) claims the monopoly of legitimate use of physical force within a given territory.' (Max Weber, *Economie et société*, Tome I, Paris, Pocket, 1995, p. 97) Therefore, to that physical coercion we must add the symbolic violence designed to unify the people.

8. Monserrat Guibernau, 'Entre autonomie et sécession: la prise en compte du nationalisme minoritaire en Catalogne', in R. Le Coadic (ed.), *Identités et Démocratie. Diversité culturelle et mondialisation: repenser la démocratie*, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2003, p. 280.

9. Michael Keating, 'Culture, institutions et développement dans huit régions d'Europe', in R. Le Coadic (Ed.), *Identités et Démocratie. Diversité culturelle et mondialisation: repenser la démocratie*, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2003, p. 45.

10. See Bourdieu's work on the heteronomy of the cultural sphere (Pierre Bourdieu, *Les Règles de l'art. Genèse et structure du champ littéraire*, Paris, Seuil, 1992).

11. The desire for autonomy emerges through the consciousness of repression but, at the same time, it is informed by the absence of the socio-economic means that are necessary to defend this same autonomy. See Michel de Certeau, *La culture au pluriel*, Paris, Seuil, 1993, pp. 127-134. See Michel de Certeau, *La culture au pluriel*, Paris, Seuil, 1993, pp. 127-134.

12. Mattelart insists that it is necessary to consider the logic of 'reterritorialisation', which is in turn connected to the 'related concern for the vital impulse that is the return to the subject'. Mattelart locates in this process the 'desire to re-appropriate a reality in which, under a certain set of transformations, the local, according to certain diverse and local interactions, the regional, the national and the international are renegotiatedcome together. This set of territorial and mental belongings defines identity as a shifting reality, as opposed to new integrationist concepts of identity that exclude the foreign and the dissonant'. See Armand Mattelart, 'L'espace et le temps des médiations', in Miège, B. (ed.), *Médias et communication en Europe*, Presses Universitaires de Grenoble, 1990, p. 199.

of territorial affiliations, but also a mental construct that combines the permanent and the invented.[13] Bravú was located within a historical process and, at the same time, it was one expression of a desire to reclaim a reality in which the local, the national and the international interact. Throughout the 1990s Bravú, by way of its activism and drawing on its double anchorage within both the territorial and the historical, sought to reinvent *galeguidade* ('Galicianness') as a socio-historical expression of Galician identity. The representations proposed through Bravú's stage performances, through literary publications and through audiovisual productions, intended to reclaim symbolic public space with the aim of contesting an outdated, folklorist vision of Galician culture and, in particular, of confronting the stigma and social downgrading of speakers of Galician. The movement is both the cause and the consequence of actions and of aesthetic activism—or 'artivism'—which expressed the commitment to resistance and which sought to expand the horizons of Galician culture and identity, which were threatened with asphyxiation.

Assaults on Galician culture which have consequences for Galician identity, social relations and, ultimately, the exercise of citizenship, are the work of several socio-political and economic forces. Three of these forces deserve particular attention. First of all, we have already stressed the centralizing tendencies of a state concerned with unifying its people. These tendencies are at the origin of the process of cultural homogenization that is imposed—to some extent violently—by an administration that shows little interest in cultural and linguistic diversity. A second danger comes from the processes of social homogenization that have been accelerated by the recent transformation of capitalism. In just a few decades, goods have been replaced by services at the heart of the economy, and cultural industries, along with new information and communication technologies, have provided access to the knowledge economy. These processes encompass two threats. Firstly, Galician cultural industries have a marginal weight compared to the cultural production in both Spanish and English, and secondly, as illustrated by the work of Bernard Stiegler among others, the new cognitive capitalism might boost the destruction of social ties and the processes of 'disidentification'.[14] At the same time, an internal enemy can be added to these external political and economic forces. There are many social and political players who, by way of their public statements, perpetuate this socio-cultural purge at the very heart of the Galician public sphere. They instil a feeling of self-hatred so as to break any emancipatory impulse, thereby facilitating social control of this peripheral society.

CULTURAL MEDIATIONS AND THEIR POLITICAL MEANING

It is possible to undertake an analysis based on the observation that the action and discourse of the artists involved in the Bravú movement were the product of two

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13. For de Certeau, identity is the result of a combination, which includes at the same time what remains and what is invented. Based on this model of autonomy and the possibilities it opens up, de Certeau has developed his reflections about the concept of 'cultural tactics'. See Michel de Certeau, *La culture au pluriel*, pp. 238-239.

14. Bernard Stiegler, *Réenchanter le monde. La valeur esprit contre le populisme industriel*, Paris, Flammarion, 2006, p.44.

types of mediation: cultural and political. Indeed, the movement's numerous aesthetic productions, in music, literature, poetry, painting or theatre, have found an echo in other kinds of discursive productions that have a clearly performative purpose (newspaper articles, petitions, manifestos, etc.) and could be considered as interventions in the political arena. However, this first reading might trick us into an undue dichotomy, while we should bear in mind that any cultural mediation has a political dimension and, conversely, that any political mediation is deeply rooted in cultural practices. Even though we need to differentiate between the political and the cultural sphere from an epistemological point of view, it seems difficult to conceive of the two as fully separate spaces. The cultural sphere must be seen as a symbolic space for political ideals, one that ultimately allows politics to gain the consistency and the sublime representation of an ideal. Through their involvement in processes of cultural mediation, the members of the Bravú movement have contributed to the expression of a political ideal. Through the emotional and intellectual responses that have been encouraged by their work, this ideal becomes more than an abstraction or a vague idea; it turns into a set of forms and manifestations that are real, discernible, interpretable and assessable in the actual reality of the public sphere.[15] The artistic creations of the Bravú movement constitute an aesthetic sublimation of sociability and of the social contract. They make social subjects conscious of sociability and the social contract, in the form of representations that feed the normative construction of society, thereby helping to modify social practices. Indeed, one of the social functions of aesthetic experiences such as these is to define the practical sphere as a continuation of the aesthetic one, since the reception of artistic production is accompanied by a creation of meaning by the public and a creative appropriation of standards and models of social exchange.[16] Social norms are thus created and validated in the public sphere through the judgement of taste and through the intersubjectivity required by an appreciation of aesthetic mediations.

THE BRAVÚ MANIFESTO AND THE DYNAMICS OF ITS SOCIAL DISCOURSE

The official birth of the Bravú movement dates back to a meeting held on 31 October 1994 in Chantada, a small town in the heart of Galicia. During that meeting "rock bands from one place—Galicia—singing in a language—Galician—, committed themselves to publicly demonstrating their pride for their culture".[17] After the meeting, in which musicians,[18] a number of journalists and writers participated,[19] the 'Manifesto of Viana' was written. It established the name of Bravú and the ideological position of the group which was 'not exclusively about music'. Even though the movement initially inspired

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15. Bernard Lamizet, *La médiation culturelle*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1999, p. 52.

16. Laurence Allard, 'Pluraliser l'espace public: esthétique et médias', *Quaderni*, n° 18, 1992, p. 149.

17. Xavier Valiño, *Rock Bravú. A paixón que queima o peito*, Vigo, Edicións Xerais, 1999.

18. Rastreros, Os Diplomáticos de Montealto, Skornabois, Os Impresentables, O Caimán do Río Tea, Papaqueixos.

19. In particular, journalist Alberto Casal and writer Manuel Rivas.

mainly alternative rock, Bravú aesthetics spread rapidly during the 1990s to other modes of expression within the Galician aesthetic sphere, including literature, graphic arts, and audiovisual creations.[20]

The Bravú manifesto gave political visibility to a group of artists who were renewing the Galician aesthetic and literary scene. This first engagement was followed by other collective actions[21] such as the organization of events, the circulation of petitions and, in particular, the release of an eponymous magazine. It is necessary to examine the scope and intent of this type of social discourse production, so we have to bear in mind that a literary or artistic manifesto creates and comes from a movement formed, at least partly, with the more or less explicit intention to agitate against something or someone. A manifesto is 'a prescriptive act, a guide for action, a program for what should be done, or a justification for what has been done. It is a normative statement because it defends values, and it is prescriptive because it incites action. Also, it is a "performative" utterance, according to John L. Austin's definition of any statement that performs the very fact that it seems to be describing. Thus, the utterance of a manifesto constitutes, first and foremost, the creation of a group. Apart from a prescriptive act, the manifesto is also an act of grouping'.[22] Indeed, this type of activism (re)activates some of the mechanisms of aggregation and legitimation within the cultural field, having effects at three levels: firstly, it triggers a network dynamic, since a member's public exposure grants them access to the networks where public opinion is constructed and circulated. Secondly, it provides distinction, with the double meaning of differentiation and ennoblement, since only a chosen few, often related to an avant-garde or intelligentsia, succeed in publicizing their commitment this way. Finally, it asserts a collective and individual identity since, by forming part of the network, individuals undergo a process of socialization. Therefore, it remains clear that an aesthetic collective such as Bravú cannot be understood as merely a framework for intervention nor as a set of natural data to which individuals can adhere. Its analysis requires an interdisciplinary approach. Concepts proposed by the social sciences are helpful here. The study of commitment or resistance from artists and intellectuals in a group requires that attention be paid firstly, according to Max Weber, to the very processes of socialization that trigger those instances, and secondly, to the general relationship between the 'individual' and 'society', as defined by Norbert Elias.

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20. Many Galician artists contributed at the time to Televisión de Galicia (the Galician public TV channel). This included such shows as *Xabarín Club* (The Club of the Boar), an educational cartoon show partly inspired by Bravú aesthetics.

21. Each of them is a research topic that should be developed separately. We focus our remarks on the social discourse function and the internal dynamics of the manifesto.

22. Since the 16th century, it has the meaning of "a written statement, public and solemn, in which a government, a person or a political group sets out their program, justifying their position". Only in the 19th century the meaning of 'manifesto' was extended to that of 'a theoretical exposition launching a literary or artistic movement.' (Nathalie Heinich, *L'élite artistique. Excellence et singularité en régime démocratique*, Paris, Gallimard, 2005, pp. 170-171)

COLLECTIVE ACTION AND SOCIALIZATION: EMOTIONS, RATIONALITY AND FUNCTIONALITY

The socialization process, essential to the emergence and renewal of individual and collective identities, draws on communal and associative relationships, two ideal types borrowed from Weberian sociology. These two ideal types lead us to look at the social collectives that are under discussion as social constructs. These social constructs are guided by a logic that combines the emotional and the rational in proportions which are difficult to assess. By 'communal relationship' *(Vergemeinschaftung),* Max Weber means the following:[23]

> A relationship will be called 'communal' if and so far as the orientation of social action … is based on a subjective feeling of the parties, whether affectual or traditional, that they belong together.

A communal relationship can be based on any type of emotional or traditional foundation.[24] To some extent, the artists of the Bravú movement have followed the process of constructing a communal relationship which is, according to Norbert Elias, on the one hand necessary for the construction of a collective identity, and on the other hand consubstantial with the process of individuation.

The second Weberian ideal type to which we refer, the 'associative relationship' (*Vergesellschaftung*), designates[25]

> a social relationship … if and insofar as the orientation of social action within it [the social relationship] rests on a rationally motivated adjustment of interests or a similarly motivated agreement, whether the basis of rational judgment be absolute values or reasons of expediency. It is especially common, though by no means inevitable, for the associative type of relationship to rest on an agreement by mutual consent.

If this is so, one might wish to explore the repercussions that this notion might have on the theories devoted to political commitment and in particular on the concept of 'political community', as conceptualized by Hannah Arendt.[26]

In contrast to the methodological individualism of Weber, the work of Norbert Elias has shown that the individual cannot be studied independently of his or her given or gained place within a society. In other words, the individual human being can say 'I' only if he or she can also say 'we', because, according to Elias, the mere idea of 'I am' assumes the existence of other people and the coexistence within a group and society. Essential to the understanding of any collective action, the inevitable inclusion of any 'I'

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23. Max Weber, *Economy and Society,* ed. By Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, Vol. 1, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1978, p. 41.

24. The element of socialization that involves a strong promotion of togetherness and spontaneously shared emotion may be culminated within the activist community in festive practices and the advocation of transgressive pleasures.

25. Max Weber, *Economy and society,* ed. By Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, Vol. 1, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1978, p. 41.

26. Hannah Arendt, *La Crise de la culture*, trans. P. Lévy, Gallimard, 1972.

within a 'we' explains why the interweaving of actions, projects and goals of many 'I's' causes something new to arise that has not been planned, wanted or created as such by any particular individual.[27] This new 'something' is what we might call a collective entity (the Bravú movement being a perfect example), the emergence of which meets the need for sharing and mobilizing resources in order to assume, according to Elias, a function within society. Let us remember that Elias, whose work is marked by a willingness to go beyond the traditional opposition between holism and methodological individualism, considers the relationships of individuals and social groups as interdependent functional relationships, that is as a set of functions performed by one individual for other individuals. Therefore, it is within the context of a relationship of functional dependency, of a permanent social (re)configuration, that the actions of an individual make sense, and are actually required within the society.[28] The purpose here is certainly not to define precisely the social function of the Bravú movement in Galician society according to the concepts proposed by Elias. Nevertheless, we might ask ourselves to what extent this resembles the function usually assumed by the intelligentsia within processes of nation-building.[29]

POLITICAL COMMUNITY AND INVOLVEMENT

This early approach to the relationship between collective action and socialization processes, as expressed by the sociology of Weber and Elias, must be complemented by a second approach, which reflects the political dimension of collective action when it is public and publicizing. This leads us to the works of Hannah Arendt, in particular to those devoted to political action. She defines 'political action' as any joint action in a public space of appearance, where the players manifest themselves and their guiding principles.[30] This space of appearance, frequently opposed to the deliberative model described by Habermas, is necessary for the action to take place; and conversely, the action is necessary for the unfolding of the space. Arendt argues that consequently, collective action becomes political because it forms part of certain processes that are simultaneously the origin and the representation of political communities within which people are exposed. 'Exposed' in the primary sense of the word means that people assume a public position and accept a social role in a political public space which is similar to a stage.[31] In so doing, they take a stand. The definition of the political space as one of shared interaction and in which people can be exposed to each other through their actions, permits Arendt to define politics as 'the power to act together.' The Bravú movement illustrates how political links are generated through a visible common

27. Norbert Elias, *La société des individus*, Pocket, Paris, 1997, p. 105.

28. Elias, p. 52.

29. Hans Kohn, *Historia del nacionalismo*, trans. S. Cossio, FCE, Madrid/Mexico City, 2a ed. 1984.

30. Hannah Arendt, *La Crise de la culture*, trans. P. Lévy, Gallimard, 1972.

31. In *Between Past and Future,* Hannah Arendt establishes an analogy between aesthetics and politics. That analogy does not intend to aestheticize politics but to underline that in both spheres of activity, what is at work is the human ability of judgement.

action, in which the movement is actually manifested as a political community. Thus, action does not presuppose the existence of an already bound-together community; this is illustrated by the fact that at the beginning of Bravú, most of the artists who signed the manifesto knew very little about each other. This type of action is the cornerstone of the Bravú community, which was constituted in the early 1990s and ceased to exist in the early 2000s. Therefore, the political community we are dealing with here involves a particular, increasingly common type of commitment, which can be described as emancipated and is distinguished by its ad hoc, precarious, fragile and ephemeral nature, which is mainly oriented towards the effectiveness[32] of action.[33] This kind of community does not aspire to become institutionalized, let alone to become professionals of the political field. Its 'members' intervene promptly when the situation demands it.[34] They make their resources available to a cause which they consider to be just, but once the action is complete, the ties weaken, following the specific terminology of social network analysis.[35] However, this does not mean that they disappear, because they may be reactivated in other mobilizations that will eventually give rise to new political communities.[36]

CREATION OF CONFLICT AND IDEOLOGIZATION

Once a political community takes its place in the public sphere, it makes visible the symbolic representations and discourses of a group of social stakeholders.[37] Thereby, the community takes a part in the process by which a social-discursive group is formed and manifests its existence. Through their performative nature, these symbolic and discursive activities inevitably create and nurture otherness and, to some extent, tend to enter into conflict with other social-discursive groups. Just as in the case of the socialization process, we should first think in terms of dynamics. Thus, it is not

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32. 'One of the most important abilities of the modern subject is that it can achieve its purposes. I call this "efficiency". Unable to influence the world around them and achieve their ends, ineffectual subjects would suffer deep humiliation'. (Charles Taylor, *Le malaise de la modernité*, trans. C. Melançon, Paris, Editions du Cerf, 2002, p. 85.

33. We refer the reader to the recent work on the concept of commitment undertaken by Jacques Ion (Jacques Ion, *L'engagement pluriel*, Publications de l'Université de Saint-Etienne, 2001) and Tim Jordan (Tim Jordan, *S'engager! Les nouveaux militants, activistes, agitateurs…*, trans. S. Saurat, Autrement, 2002.)

34. The magazine *Bravú* published 6 issues without any fixed periodicity. It was actually sub-headed: "The magazine that comes out when the situation so requires"("*A revista que sae cando a situación o require*").

35. Before disappearing in the early 2000s, the Bravú movement left behind a network of stakeholders with weakened bonds. In social network analysis these are referred to as 'weak ties' (Mark Granovetter, 'The Strength of Weak Ties', *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 78, n°6, 1973), but they may at any time be reactivated and come together with other social actors into a new visible collective action.

36. The group Burla Negra was created within the organization Nunca Máis by a group of artists who wished to express their disgust at the ecological and political crisis caused by the Prestige oil tanker disaster of 2002. Among the main protagonists in this unprecedented social movement in Galicia were artists and writers who, years before, had signed the Bravú manifesto (Xurxo Souto and Manuel Rivas, for example).

37. Here we are referring to all the discussions which make public the individuals' judgments of taste generated by the cultural and political mediations of the Bravú movement.

the existence of the conflict itself that deserves attention, but the concept of *conflict creation*. The tendency towards conflict has a decisive role in collective actions because it complements the call for mobilization. It involves a propaganda effort, that is to say, the dissemination of messages that condemn, belittle and express a direct (referring to itself) or indirect (referring to others) claim to uniqueness, depending on whether the group in question and its interests are defined against other groups and other interests.[38] The Bravú movement was born in opposition to a 'they', that is to say, to other social-discursive parties in what was a struggle over the imposition of a dominant discourse. Here, 'they' refers to all social stakeholders whose actions and discourses contribute to the depreciation and undermining of Galician culture and, at the same time, promote the political vision of a weak Galicia that is necessarily subservient to the Spanish state. Along with the construction of the 'I / we' identity mentioned above, there appears the dichotomy 'they / we',[39] bearing its own conflicting relationship. The tendency towards conflict is inseparable from the activism and strength of the stakeholders, so it should not be considered an objective situation, an element of the environment or a condition of existence,[40] but as the expression of this otherness built upon an ideology. Let us remember that the concept of ideology comes from the word 'idea', whose stem 'id' (from *'wid'* in Proto-Indo-European) refers to both 'know' and 'see.' An ideology is both a form of knowledge and a framework for the interpretation of reality; it assembles those knowledges that allow human beings to give meaning to sociability.[41] Ideologization enables and enhances the processes of socialization and individuation. It is a necessary element of the process through which the same individuals apply a broader meaning to actions, discourses and events. This meaning transcends the uniqueness of the place and time within which the individuals live. Therefore, the apparently local nature of the cause defended by Bravú must not distract from the universal dimension of the ideals that sustain it.

HISTORICAL ROOTS

At first, the type of *galeguidade* (Galicianness) expressed and proposed by Bravú should be regarded within its socio-political and historical context. As we shall see below, the movement can be considered the heir to a Galician cultural nationalism that, since the 19th century, has attempted to preserve the attributes of Galician cultural identity, the most important among them being the Galician language.[42] The ideology

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38. Michel-Louis Rouquette, 'Les communications de masse', in S. Moscovici (Ed.), *Psychologie sociale,* Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1984, p. 511.

39. Elias, p. 47.

40. 'On the contrary, conflict involves, in its very essence, construction and commitment by a series of stakeholders, that is to say, a decision of the issues raised. In the psychosocial field, there is no conflict without an element of invention' (Claude Fronty, 'Créativité et influence selon Moscovici: enjeu et scénario de l'intrigue psycho-sociale', in P. Malrieu (ed.), *Dynamiques sociales et changements personnels*, Ed. du CNRS, 1989, p. 249).

41. Bernard Lamizet, *La médiation politique*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1998, p. 288.

42. Language has always been considered 'the most essential attribute' of Galician collective identity.

of the Bravú movement, inspired by the same peripheral nationalism that it helps to regenerate, allows anyone—a creator, a performer or a member of the public—to participate as a political player in this process of self-construction. This implies giving one's actions the symbolic dimension by which one is actually recognized as a political player, and registered as such in the consciousness and memory that constitute the political culture of a nation. The aforementioned ideologization contributes to building a genealogy, a collective past providing individuals with responsibilities that drive them to complete a mission beyond the simple present. In this case, the construction of a view of life centred on an activist and militant belief system amounts to connecting oneself with a long, collectively constructed history which people perceive as a memory. Their present activities are situated within and justified by this history-perceived-as-memory. The emancipated type of commitment characteristic of the Bravú movement implies the discovery of a 'historical consciousness'[43] resulting from the inclusion of personal projects within a movement whose history, victories and defeats alike, warrant the discharge of a 'debt of recognition.'[44] The capacity for initiative, for Arendt in particular, characterizes collective action, given that the latter cannot only be driven by tradition or by repetition. But the sense of collective action is inevitably amplified and perpetuated if we analyze it from the point of view of the tradition from which it draws its principles. To the profane link that unites individuals in their acts and in the joy of common action, we must add a secular, almost mythological link that connects actions and men in time for the recognition of a common history from which they can weave the tale of their identity. Through their many references to the greatest Galician authors such as Castelao or Rosalía de Castro, the Bravú artivists provide confirmation that to the visible link of collective action, we must add the invisible link of an authoritative memory.

TOWARDS AN ECOLOGICAL APPROACH TO CULTURE AND IDENTITY

Initially most Bravú artists barely knew each other and the impact of their artistic activities was confined to the local level. However, they shared a strong political commitment and, although their beliefs (anarchists, nationalists, environmentalists) were as diverse as their musical styles, they all seemed to pay particular attention to *galeguidade* as a central element of individuality, way of life and aesthetic which, in turn, were conceived of as in direct contact with the material world. Proof of this is

From its earliest manifestations, Galician nationalism was positioned as a cultural nationalism (as opposed to Basque ethnic nationalism, for example). A movement of cultural renaissance, '*O Rexurdimento*', emerged in 1846, led by the Galician intelligentsia and aspiring to renew the Galician language and culture. The Real Academia Galega (Galician Royal Academy) was founded in 1905. Other nationalist currents emerged, such as Solidaridad Gallega (1907) and Irmandades, both of which were very active between 1916 and 1936 (the year of the military coup).

43. The *Irmandades* held their first meeting in 1918, making their findings public in the form of a document known as the 'Lugo Manifesto.' This was certainly known by the signatories of the Bravú manifesto assembled in Chantada, a town located in the province of Lugo.

44. Olivier Ihl, *La fête républicaine*, Gallimard, 1996, p. 126.

the neologism 'bravú', which comes from the word '*bravío*,' which refers to the taste and smell of wild game and, in general, of any meat from an uncastrated animal. Therefore, the Bravú manifesto can be interpreted as an invitation to rediscover the pleasure and beauty of the original creations of the Galician land. It is also a return to the wilderness and a search for an authenticity free from any process of domestication or acculturation. Being territorially rooted, the Bravú movement participated in a reflective debate by and for those who, even though they had by then come to live in the suburban neighbourhoods of larger cities, understood themselves to be the sons and daughters of Galician farmers and sailors.

The aesthetic mediations of Bravú invited people to 'rebirth' Galicia, and to do so by drawing on its own roots, as in the conceptualization by Xosé Chao Rego. After recalling that Marx advocated a radical approach to the relationship between humans and nature by arguing that the roots of humans are the humans themselves, Chao Rego develops this argument by way of a pun, when he says that for humans the roots are the 'humus', that is to say the earth.[45] He re-contextualizes the ideal of Bravú within its natural setting and its ecology, thus emphasizing that the proposal of the Bravú movement goes beyond the staging of an ideal of sociability.[46] The relationship with nature had been introduced as one of the diacritical features of the national identity by Castelao,[47] father of Galician nationalism. The attempt to understand aesthetic mediations through which human beings represent themselves as products of nature[48] necessarily implies, from an epistemological point of view, a return to the foundations of social interactions and specifically, a reflection on the perception of the human being as the continuity of other material and biological activities. One would need to enquire into whether and to what extent such an approach could be qualified as 'socio-ecological'. While this issue is not central to the argument put forward in this article, it invites a multidisciplinary analysis of social relationships and aesthetic mediations within a broader context (geographical, architectural, and with reference to urban architecture).[49]

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45. Xosé Chao Rego, *Eu renazo galego. Ensaio sobre identidade galega*, Edicións do Castro, 2004, p. 154.

46. In his last major work, *L'avenir est notre affaire* (1977), Denis de Rougemont shows that the regionalist and environmentalist movements are mutually reinforcing, being alternatives to short-term materialism and to the power hunger of nation states (Denis *de Rougemont, L'avenir est notre affaire, Stock, 1977)*.

47. Galicia is a nation because it possesses a series of objective distinguishing characteristics. In particular, there are three fundamental diacritic features: language, land and culture, the first one being considered as the key factor : '*se reitera una y otra vez que Galicia es una nación por concurrir en ella una serie de caracteres objetivos discriminantes : rasgos diacríticos que son fundamentalmente tres : 'lengua', 'tierra' y 'cultura', de las que la primera se alza como factor clave'*. (Ramón Máiz, *A idea de nación en Castelao*, Vigo, Xerais, 2000, p. 189).

48. It is not surprising that the most important social movement in the history of Galicia was sparked by the contempt shown by the authorities during the environmental disaster caused by the oil-tanker Prestige in 2002.

49. Inevitably, this reading of social issues questions all the approaches that assume the absolute singularity of the human psyche, whether it be the more dated approaches stemming from radical phenomenology or several contemporary forms of innatist cognitivism (Jean-Paul Bronckart, 'Les différentes facettes de l'interactionnisme socio-discursif', in *Calidoscopio,* Vol. 3, n. 3, 2005, Unisinos, pp. 149-159).

GALEGUIDADE AND COSMOPOLITANISM: TRANSCENDING AFFILIATIONS WITHIN THE OUTER PERIPHERY

Even though Bravú anchors itself within the socio-historical and territorial context of Galicia, it is essential to point out the compatibility of these positions with an outward-looking cosmopolitanism. Carmen Alén Garabato has demonstrated that Bravú rock combines *galeguidade enxebre* (authentic Galicianness) with an emphasis on the cultural hybridity of contemporary Galician society and culture. From a socio-linguistic point of view, the *enxebre* side is expressed through the use of traditional Galician. Lyrics in traditional Galician are then put to music that fuses a variety of musical styles, among them traditional Galician music (muiñeira, pandeirada), brass band music, Latin American rhythms, punk, ska, heavy, raggamuffin, or even hardcore.[50] Bravú is part of Galicia's response to the reorganization of social relations by transnational communication, which are simultaneously deconstructing and restructuring national and local spaces. This response consists of a combination of resistance, mimicry, adaptation and re-appropriation, but it also articulates a critique of the logics of reterritorialization and relocation.[51]

Culture is a legitimate and even necessary battlefield that, far from necessarily encouraging separatism, can stimulate interaction beyond differences. At the dawn of the 21st century, the Bravú artivists called on members of the Galician cultural field, on the Galician public, and on Galician civil society to rethink Galician identity and its place in what we propose to call 'hyper-periphery.' This term refers to a sphere of transnational resonance where minoritized, oppressed and stigmatized social groups can recognize each other in a community of fate, and can interact in their quest for emancipation. Other members of the 'hyper-periphery' include, among others, the rural cultures of Latin America's indigenous peoples, and certain urban neighbourhoods of large Western cities whose identity is being rethought by the children of African immigrants. These marginalized peripheral identities share a tendency towards socialization processes which are driven by ideological and political projects. The Bravú movement reached the rank of political community by inserting itself within this transnational sphere. By way of engagement with and openness towards others, political affiliation entails in this context going beyond any other affiliation (domestic, professional, social or cultural) that could cause a potentially isolating assertion of identity.

Bravú explicitly defined itself as an internationalist movement. Its members saw the group's relationship to the world as a continuum with Galician history, which is deeply marked by emigration and political exile. References to the maritime tradition[52] and to Galician migrations in Bravú productions stage a contemporary Galician identity which is permeated by other cultures and revitalized by cultural hybridity and cosmopolitanism.

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50. Carmen Alén Garabato, 'A textualización dos funcionamentos diglósicos nas cancións do Rock Bravú e no discurso que acompaña este movemento', *Verba. Anuario de Filoloxía Galega*, Universidade Santiago de Compostela, vol. 28, 2001.

51. Armand Mattelart, *La communication-monde. Histoire des idées et des stratégies*, Paris, Editions La découverte, Paris, 1999, pp. 272-273.

52. See the fourth issue of the magazine *Bravú*, entitled '7 portas, 7 mares' ('7 doors, 7 seas').

Pursuing this historical tradition, Bravú developed ties to the rest of the world, for example with the French association[53] *La Caravane des Quartiers*.[54] Together, members of Bravú and *La Caravane* organized events like *Galicia Tropical* (Lyon and Barcelona in 1997) and *A Feira das Mentiras* (Santiago de Compostela in 1998). As a multidisciplinary and multicultural festival, *A Feira das Mentiras* brought together Galician, South American, African and French musicians, theatre performers, street performers and graphic artists, among others. This event confirmed that Bravú aesthetics and their corresponding political ideal were compatible with those of other aesthetic movements, which were also marked by the socio-political commitment of their members.

CONCLUSION

The emergence of Bravú as a political and aesthetic movement in the 1990s results from a wish to join together, on the part of artists and performers who saw themselves as both witnesses to and facilitators of a dialogue between tradition and modernity, rural and urban, *galeguidade* and cosmopolitanism. At the same time, Bravú appealed to a commitment, at a time of increasing tensions between the indigenous, Spanish and Anglo-Saxon socio-cultural models. Bravú called for the public to position themselves and to intervene in a sociolinguistic conflict that is increasingly apparent at the heart of a diglossic zone where Castilian and Galician collided. Ultimately, Bravú enlisted the individual to participate in an act of resistance on behalf of a peripheral socio-cultural identity which was facing a double threat: from the hegemonic power of a centre supported by an ideology sometimes verging on ultra-conservative,[55] and from a lifestyle promoted by a supposedly cognitive capitalism which is responsible for disenchantment around the world and for the destruction of social ties.[56]

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53. This is an illustration of the strength of weak ties: these two networks were brought together by the French musician Manu Chao, who is of Galician origin.

54. *La Caravane des Quartiers*, founded in 1989, brought together various social players from French working-class suburbs together with artists (musicians, circus, theatre and street performers, etc.), in order to liven up those neighbourhoods while increasing their inhabitants' awareness of the concept of citizenship. The group was conceived from an approach of active citizenship, encouraging each district to work together in the organization of a festival (concerts, circus, performances, workshops, exhibitions, etc.). The diversity of activities and their quality were essential for the members of the group. The shows had to be accessible to people of all ages, all generations, all social groups and all communities. Thus, each event encouraged the opening up of the neighbourhood towards different types of otherness. By bringing together several local civic and cultural associations, *La Caravane des Quartiers* set up a touring festival with nearly 500 volunteers and 300 artists. They all shared the common vision of enlivening the more disadvantaged neighbourhoods of the larger French cities, and abroad as well (Belfast, Barcelona, Liège…).The festival reached mostly foreigners or French youth of immigrant origin, who are often kept away from politics. 'Going beyond the local, travelling, helping friends from other cities, promoting projects of common spaces such as musical cafés, learning about our own history, celebrating …', were the collective's main goals, according to its founders and coordinators.

55. The idea of a 'one and indivisible' Spain, a legacy of Francoist ideology, is now defended by the most conservative currents of the Spanish right, with the support of Opus Dei, whose network penetrates several sectors of Spanish society (associations, the media, academia, the corporate world, etc.).

56. The industrial model resulting from Fordism systematized the dissociation of the *milieux* and generalized

The creativity that fuelled this necessary reaction was drawn from the Galician cultural tradition and from social practices that some have tried to reduce to a populist nativism. Bravú intends to take back what lies at the origin of the founding links of sociability, and to reinvent a social pact, or *foedus*[57], consubstantial to Galician national identity. The Bravú artists proposed a journey into the hinterland, to the heart of rural life, even though rurality had actually fed the inferiority complex of the Galician people and contributed to their suppression and to a social stigma inherited from centuries of symbolic oppression inflicted by the Spanish state. Their commitment entails the conspicuous assertion of a rural and suburban aesthetics. The resulting artivism refuses the outsider position inherited from History and, through politicized representations of belonging, reverses the stigma attached to Galician identity. Importantly, whichever aesthetic form representation takes in the context of Bravú—whether it is inscribed in the language of music, in that of painting, or in any other practice—it seems that these representations always simultaneously bear the meaning of Bravú's aesthetic ideal, and of the political ideal held by s/he who enounces them. In this sense, culture represents at once the social mirror of these political affiliations, and the political mirror that reflects the meaning of these affiliations with respect to the ideal of sociability that they convey. For this reason the cultural forms and practices associated with the Bravú movement must be interpreted both aesthetically and politically, in terms of both their forms and their commitments.[58] The culturally hybrid dimension of Bravú aesthetic creations (especially in literary and musical productions) redefine *galeguidade* by staging a meeting of tradition with modernity, and of here and elsewhere. This contemporary *galeguidade* is brought into direct contact with the social reality[59] experienced by Galicians and, staged in this way, is aestheticized, appreciated, validated and promoted.

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proletarianization. When this affects the symbolic *milieux* and social relationships across the service economy, dissociation becomes the cause of great social and existential suffering. Therefore, dissociation is the destruction of social relationships, that is to say, the destruction of the associative relationship (Bernard Stiegler, *Réenchanter le monde. La valeur esprit contre le populisme industriel*, Paris, Flammarion, 2006).

57. The *foedus* represents the internalization by the members of the social space of the laws and practices on which their membership is based. This internalization is a social dimension of identity, since it enables individuals to recognize a mutual belonging (Lamizet, *La médiation politique*, p. 29-30).

58. Lamizet, *La médiation culturelle*, pp. 50-51.

59. There are at least two ways (which we might call inward and outward) of studying the relationship between here and elsewhere in Galicia, in the light of two historical facts that still have a major impact today. Firstly, we must pay attention to the thousands of pilgrims that have been arriving for centuries in Santiago de Compostela, completing their journey to the end of the world in the small port of Fisterra (the 'end of the earth'). Secondly, we can follow the traces left by human migration, particularly those left by Galician emigrants to Latin America, whose history is so closely linked with that of Galicia that the word 'gallego' is used in Latin America as a metonymy for anyone of Spanish descent. Moreover, it is customary to say that Buenos Aires is the largest Galician city.

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