

Catalan Nationalism and Heritage.

The construction of the born as an independence icon
(Barcelona, Spain)

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The old Born market is a building located in the heart of the historic center of Barcelona (old Ribera neighborhood), built in the heyday of the "Iron architecture" in the purest modernist style (Art Nouveau). The market closed its doors after almost a century of activity (between 1876 and 1971), and remained waiting for a new function. After decades of debates between the entities of the neighborhood, civic organizations and local authorities, in 2002 work began to convert the enclosure into the central library of Barcelona. Now, taking advantage of the fact that building had been built on the archaeological remains of the ancient Ribera neighborhood that was destroyed during the War of the Spanish Succession, various political initiatives managed to paralyze the works, proposing to reconvert the space and the old market in a cultural center that will honor the memory of the resistance of 1714, war in Catalonia and the city of Barcelona lost their old charters and privileges.

The process of conditioning the site, almost a decade later, coincided - from the point of view of political conjuncture - with a Catalan nationalist government both in the Barcelona City Council and in the regional government. This political context,

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together with the proximity of the tricentennial of the end of the War of the Spanish Succession and the anniversary of September 11th, 1714 (day of the surrender of Barcelona, currently National Day of Catalonia), determined the orientation of the discourse of the cultural center, from the information panels to the same menu of the restaurant inside the center, defined in a nationalist key. In this sense, the national view is present in all parts of the enclosure, from the interpretation of the archaeological remains (routes, points of interest, unique buildings), passing through the information panels, even reaching the menu of the restaurant, based on the names of the resisters, those of the 'enemies' themselves and even the weapons and the name of the resistant companies (the *Coronela*, for example).

With no doubt, this is a case of exclusive patrimonialization of the Born for make it an emblematic place of radical nationalism, in its struggle to become independent from Spain. The interpretation or narrative in code strictly nationalist - from a radical point of view of the same, it could be said - is related with various circumstances coinciding in time: on the one hand, the commemoration of the tricentennial of September 11, 1714 and the defeat of Catalonia to hands of the Bourbon forces, an event that also featured various acts parallels such as the organization of a congress entitled Spain against Catalonia. Secondly, to shore up the independence bias that since the year 2010 and especially since 2012 and 2014, the Catalan nationalist parties began. It should be noted, on the other hand, that the Born cultural center became the central piece and almost unique of Route 1714, which includes various centers of interest and other landmarks linked to the War of the Spanish Succession. This paper reviews, based on a bibliographic, hemerographic and qualitative field work analysis, the process of space transformations and its conversion into a nationalist icon at a time when Catalan ideologies point towards a scenario of

greater confrontation with social groups and non-nationalist parties.

References

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