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The Ritual Experience in the Catalan Pro-Independence Movement and Everyday Activism*

La experiencia ritual en el movimiento independentista catalán y el activismo del día a día

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〈Resume〉

Basado en una investigación etnográfica llevada a cabo en el distrito de Gràcia, en Barcelona, este artículo explora cómo los activistas catalanes viven la manifestación anual que se da cada 11 de Setiembre, el Día Nacional de Cataluña y cómo estas experiencias afectan el sostenimiento del movimiento independentista catalán. Enfocado especialmente en la participación de los activistas en la manifestación de la 'Vía Catalana' del 2013, este estudio presta una atención especial a cómo la fuerte experiencia emocional que los activistas experimentan mediante el 'ritual de resistencia' se convierte en una fuente para continuar su activismo en la vida cotidiana. A medida que el movimiento se hizo patente a nivel de los barrios, donde el nivel de intimidad y familiaridad es muy alto, la

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participación en el movimiento independentista catalán de la gente sin experiencia previa de activismo se incrementó notablemente. Tal como los activistas empezaron a preparar la manifestación anual, las interacciones sociales se incrementaron y el ambiente se cargaba de emoción. En el día de la manifestación, los activistas comenzaron sus tareas para simbolizar la independencia catalana como la 'voluntad popular' y podían sentir 'efervescencia colectiva' mediante este ritual. La experiencia emocional que los activistas tuvieron durante el ritual duró más allá de finalizado este ritual, operando como un recurso para continuar y ampliar el activismo en su vida cotidiana.

Palabras Clave: Independentismo Catalán, Nacionalismo, Ritual de Resistencia, Efervescencia Colectiva, Vía Catalana

Ⅰ. Introduction

Two weeks after the Spanish Supreme Court's ruling on the Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia[1], on 10 July 2010, there was a demonstration

1) In 2005 the modification of the second Statute of Catalonia which has been in effect from 1979 was approved by the Catalan government and by the Spanish Congress next year. It was also ratified in a referendum. In 2006, the Spanish nationalist party PP (Partido Popular) filed against the revision of the Statute and the Spanish Constitutional Court abolished 14 articles and ordered 27 articles to be reinterpreted. It was a decision made after four years of deliberation. Catalan government's competence has been cut back significantly and the preamble of the Statute stipulating Catalonia as a nation was declared to have no legal validity. To find more about the relation between the Spanish Constitutional Court's decision and the rise of the Catalan pro-independence movement, please refer to Colino (2013).

around the city of Barcelona, named "We are a nation. We decide" (Som una nació. Nosaltres decidim). More than a million people went into the streets to protest against the ruling of the Court. As witnessed by many of the residents of the district Gràcia, this was the first time that Catalan citizens together cried for "Independence", instead of "Autonomy" or a "Federal State". A 38-year-old man from Gràcia who had supported the federalist option his whole life revealed his fury against the Court by saying, "Franco is still in power. He has never left the Spanish state and this would be the last chance granted to the Catalans". Indeed, the Court's ruling triggered the anger of Catalan citizens and it became the starting point of a still on-going pro-independence mobilisation.

Since then, there have been various scholarly attempts to explain the reasons for this political acceleration. Contrary to the prevalent supposition that the Spanish economic crisis was a trigger for the independence claim, scholars pointed out that the reasons for the current phenomenon cannot be explained in only one or two ways. For example, Serrano (2013) pointed out that the national identity issue had still played an important role in the rise of the recent independence fervour. Colino (2013) also criticised the viewpoints that consider the Spanish economic crisis beginning in 2008 as having exclusively triggered the current political upheaval and instead suggested two other points as important reasons: the Spanish Supreme Court's disapprobation of the Catalan statute in 2010 and the end of the violence in the Basque Country.

Although this research has contributed to an understanding of the complex reasons for the rise of independentism, they cannot explain how

these reasons were organised into a form of social movement, characterised by regular collective actions and continuous mass mobilisations. The pro-independence movement is not a consequence of the rise in independentism, but it is a political process of uniting dispersed opinions and exhibiting protesters' power by mobilising various resources.

As scholars studying social movements from a resource mobilisation perspective argue, the simple accumulation of complaints and disappointments do not trigger or sustain movements. The rise of social movements require resources, such as "material, human, cognitive, technical and organizational [ones]" (Edelman 2001, 289). This is also true in the case of the Catalan pro-independence movement. For example, Vilaregut (2012), taking the case of the "Platform for the right to decide" (Plataforma pel Dret de Decidir, PDD), analysed the five categories of mobilisation resources: organisation, collective action, discourse, affiliation, and individual experiences. Although this research synthesised a broad spectrum of mobilisation resources, it could not show how these resources were circulated or perceived by activists in the actual field of the movement, since the study provided limited ethnographic data. However, Clua (2014) effectively demonstrated how activists' discursive strategy worked in the field of the Catalan pro-independence movement. According to the author, the change in traditional hegemonic nationalist discourses to focus more on "shared citizenship" and "democratic participation" in activists' assemblies and campaigns changed the attitude of the people who had been against the independence of Catalonia. This analysis demonstrated that the vicissitude of movements depends also on how participants recognise their conditions and

future possibilities.

However, what was also essential in the expansion of the Catalan pro-independence movement was participants' emotional experiences such as enthusiasm, confidence, and feelings of solidarity, most of which were generated in the course of participation. Movement resources do not *a priori*, but are continuously constructed or reconstructed as participants' experiences are accumulated. Collins (2004) highlighted the importance of "emotional energy" obtained at protest ritual to generate activists' solidarity, confidence and enthusiasm. These emotional energy has a long-lasting affect, thereby becoming a possible resource to further social movements. For example, in the study of the anti-globalisation movement of Barcelona Juris (2008) paid attention to "affective solidarity" constituted through the Prague March. According to the author, this solidarity "prepares activist bodies for action" (Juris 2008, 126) for the future mobilisation. In the case of the anti-nuclear movement in Japan, Park (2012) affirmed that people adopted "sound demonstration" as a new form of protest from 2011, and that the "pleasure" people could experience through this new form of demonstration was an important factor in expanding the mobilisation. As these cases show, participants' emotional experience and attendant cognitive changes in mobilisation should be taken into account to explain why social movements are sustained.

In this vein, this study explores how Catalan activists experienced the annual demonstration on the National Day of Catalonia (Diada nacional de Catalunya)[2] and how these experiences affected the sustenance of the

2) Please refer to chapter III-1 for more information about the day.

Catalan pro-independence movement. To do so, this article focuses particularly on Gràcian activists' (people from the district Gràcia, Barcelona) participation in the Catalan Way (Via Catalana) demonstration organised by the Catalan National Assembly (Assemblea Nacional Catalana, ANC) in 2013. Amongst many types of collective actions carried out by Catalan independentists, the annual demonstration on the National Day of Catalonia is significantly important for its scale of preparation and participation. Here, what I pay special attention to is the strong emotional experience had by activists during the demonstration and its lasting effect on their quotidian activism. Ever since the Catalan pro-independence claim arose, traditional activists well versed in various repertoires of mobilisation have been using annual demonstrations on the National Day of Catalonia in order to not only express their demand, but also inspire political confidence in Catalan citizens. Especially for the rank-and-file participants with no previous experiences of political participation, the experience of successful demonstrations accompanied by strong emotions and excitement became the origin of self-confidence, generating further commitment to the movement and their making themselves active agents of the pro-independence mobilisation. In this article, I will delve into what type of dramaturgical tools, such as songs, slogans and dances, were employed during the annual demonstration, and how these tools affected the intensity of demonstrators' experience. In my opinion, these dramaturgical tools contributed to generating strong emotional experiences for participants, the effects of which lasted even after the ritual and that have been instrumental in expanding pro-independence activism in recent years.

Collective actions and individual life do not exist separately, but are intimately connected and influence each other. Anthropological insights regarding the relation between the ritualistic and non-ritualistic life world help in understanding the emotional power of the Catalan annual demonstrations carried out in recent years to prompt the continuation of activism in people's everyday life. Beyond the narrow definition of ritual limited within the religious or supernatural realm, anthropologists have been defining ritual as a repetitive and symbolic activity affecting humans' behaviour and thoughts (Kertzer 1988). Sometimes, these rituals are employed by subordinated groups to challenge dominant ideologies as a "ritual of resistance" (Kelly & Kaplan 1990, 135). In such a way, annual demonstrations carried out by pro-independence activists on the Catalan National Day can be defined as a ritual of resistance. Traditionally, anthropologists have looked into the capacity of rituals to regenerate lives at non-ritualistic moments. For example, Mauss (1979[1904]) and Evans-Pritchard (1969[1940]) divided respectively the Eskimo and Nuer societies into two periods. One is when people maintained a more dispersed or scattered lifestyle, living or working individually. The other is when people gathered or concentrated, thereby experiencing intensive social interactions. They discovered that the intensified social interactions and uplifted atmosphere experienced during the "period of concentration" lasted in non-ritualistic spaces and time, or in other words, over the "period of dispersion". Especially, ritual, which falls at the peak of the period of concentration, and the strong emotional experience that individuals have during this moment is essential to maintaining and continuing community

life. As Durkheim (1995[1912]) has said, participants in rituals can feel "collective effervescence", a strongly uplifted feeling that generates a sense of community and energy to last in their lives on normal days. In this article, I will analyse the reciprocity between the periods of concentration and dispersion manifested in the Catalan pro-independence movement, especially focusing on how activists' experiences during the period of concentration had an influence on quotidian activism after the ritual.

Amongst a series of annual demonstrations carried out in recent years, this article focuses its analysis on the demonstration of the Catalan Way organised by the ANC in 2013. The ANC has been playing a pivotal role in leading the Catalan independence movement from the civil society sector and leading annual demonstrations on the National Day of Catalonia from 2012. The Catalan Way in 2013 was the very first occasion when strong performative factors, such as uniforms, carefully designed symbols, and a rally route, were employed for the demonstration. The use of these highly performative factors for the first time significantly impressed the participants emotionally, and therefore became an exemplar for the demonstrations of the following years. This fact makes the experiences of participants in the Catalan Way of 2013 an adequate object of analysis for looking at how activists use the ritual of resistance and how the experience of it becomes a source of energy to continue the movement. In my opinion, this analysis might help in part to understand how the Catalan independence movement maintained its mobilisation in the last few years rather than being transient or ethereal.

For this investigation, I carried out intensive ethnographic research in

Catalonia, mainly around the city of Barcelona, during four months (Aug-Dec, except for October) in 2013. Later, I again visited Barcelona during the autumn (Sep-Nov) of both 2014 and 2015, to follow up on the change in the Catalan political atmosphere and conduct some complementary research. In the field, I participated in various activities organised by Catalan independentists, such as public conferences, concerts, and collective actions. Then, I engaged with the movement first-hand, as a member of the Extension Committee (Comité d'Extensió) of the ANC in the district of Gràcia, a middle-class neighbourhood of Barcelona. Gràcia was an adequate place to conduct research since the neighbourhood has various local associations, and is therefore considered as the core of the activists' network. The ANC has been a leading organisation of pro-independence activism since 2012, and it had 30,131 members with full rights at the end of 2013. By participating in the members' assembly, making leaflets, arranging street campaigns, and so on, I was able to be close to many participants. From then, I conducted 18 interviews with activists to understand more deeply how they experienced the movement[3]. The members of the ANC Gràcia provided me with a great deal of help in carrying out this research and were always eager to explain to me in detail Catalan society and the process of the independence movement.

My previous living experience in Barcelona, as a student (2008-2010) and during a short visit (Aug-Oct, 2012), and learning the Catalan language there

3) 〈Table 1〉 Interviewees' demographic information

Sex distribution		Age distribution			
Male	Female	Above 60	Above 50	Above 40	From 20s to 30s
10	8	3	4	5	6

also facilitated my gaining a better understanding of the current political process in Catalonia. During this research, most communications were conducted in the Catalan language, except during the street campaigns in the districts where the majority of residents felt comfortable speaking the Castilian language.

Ⅱ. Expansion of the Pro-Independence Movement: the Neighbourhood as a Centre of Mobilisation

Various neighbourhood or cultural associations in Catalan districts constitute the core of Catalan civil society and played a pivotal role in mobilising the population throughout its history, as is the case of the movement of the neighbourhood association during the final years of Franco's dictatorship (Andreu 2015) and strong voluntarism shown at the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona (Hargreaves 2000). Even though the political protagonism of these associations was diminished later as the Spanish state became a democracy (Alabart 2003), these places have been working as a communicative channel through which the neighbourhood's problems are discussed and public opinion is articulated. The activities of local associations during the "Indignants Movement" (els indignats) of 2011, such as organising assemblies at the Catalonia Square (Plaça de Catalunya) and leading massive rallies, are an example of the entities that mainly deal with the neighbourhood's problems, enhancing their debate and scale of

engagement to a greater level.

Ever since the Spanish Supreme Court's decision in 2010, interactions between these associations have increased and the local network of neighbours has been re-established through some irregular collective actions, such as the non-binding Catalan independence referendums from 2009 to 2011[4]. During this period, traditional independentists could confirm their willingness to achieve the independence of Catalonia, their willingness to realise this hope, by forming an organised movement. Different from the "new independentists" (nou independentistes), which make up the majority of the current population of independentists, traditional independentists have always had a strong belief in Catalan independence and usually have been involved with the Catalan nationalist movement. In the case of Gràcia, there were residents previously engaged with the nationalist movement via the "Assembly of Catalonia" (Assemblea de Catalunya) in the 70s, the "Pro-Language Platform" (Plataforma per la llengua), "Omnium Cultural" etc., and they later constituted the leading activist group of the assembly of the ANC Gràcia. These people were more accustomed to social mobilisation, knowing how to organise discourses and possessing an activist network, and made the neighbourhood a centre of pro-independence mobilisation.

As the assembly operated on the basis of neighbourhood, it opened the

4) A non-binding referendum to ask the support for Catalan independence was held in Arenys de Munt on 13 September 2009 and this referendum spread throughout the country until 2011. According to *El Periodico*, a total of 885,993 citizens of Catalonia participated in it and 89.68% voted yes for Catalan independence in the capital of Catalonia. *Naciódigital* confirmed that in the district Gràcia 33.57% of the electorate voted in the referendum and 327 volunteers participated in the organisation of the process.

door for ordinary neighbours to participate in the movement relatively easily. For example, because activists knew each other as neighbours before joining the movement, they did not have to make an extra effort to break the ice. With long-time school friends, neighbours in the same flat, parents of the kids from the same school, and fellow choral members, the local assembly was not unfamiliar for the majority of the participants. Established relationships helped to make the assembly's atmosphere more natural and comfortable and it became a crucial factor in attracting more new people.

In addition to this, assemblies, group meetings, and street campaigns were occasions at which previously forged relationships, such as those with family, friends, and co-workers, were newly experienced as an activist community. As "submerged networks" (Melucci 1989, 56-57) emerged and were reorganised in the course of mobilisation, discovering a new facet of habitual relationships became an opportunity to consolidate trust in each other.

Neighbourhood-centred movement dynamics also opened the way for volunteers without experience of social movements to contribute more directly to the movement, as participants' local knowledge and personal network were essential in expanding the movement. Even though there was central guideline on how to develop the movement, individuals' knowledge about their resident area was crucial since activists groups developed the movement in such a way that suggested it was tailored to each particular district where volunteers resided. For instance, when volunteers had to carry out a street campaign at Hospitalet where most residents were of Spanish origin, a group of volunteers from this district wrote a leaflet

considering the characteristics of the population. At the same time, they found adequate places to install campaign tents, places where the campaign could reach out to as many random pedestrians in the town as possible. Although they did not have any previous mobilisation experience or relevant skills, they finished the campaign fluidly and were very proud that they could contribute to collective action. Possibilities for this type of intimate contribution to collective action lowered the entry barrier to the movement and became a source of pride for volunteers.

As has been shown so far, neighbourhood-based mobilisation encouraged ordinary people's participation in the Catalan pro-independence movement. In other words, the majority of the volunteers in Gràcia were people with no previous experience of political engagement. They gradually became involved with the movement, enjoying the relationship with local people and feeling a sense of contribution by using their local knowledge. Their sense of commitment to the movement was even more intensified even more upon experiencing the ritual of resistance in the summer of 2013.

Ⅲ. The Catalan Way and the Experience of the Ritual of Resistance

1. Preparation for the Demonstration: the Beginning of the Period of Concentration

Ever since the Catalan independence movement was accelerated five years

ago, mass demonstrations have been carried out regularly. Especially, the demonstration carried out every year on the National Day of Catalonia, 11 September, has been important for its symbolic status. The Catalan people consider 11 September in 1714 as the day when they lost their sovereignty to Spain as the Catalan capital surrendered to the Bourbon King Philip V of Spain during the War of the Spanish Succession (Guerra de successió espanyola). It was first commemorated in 1886 and the commemoration of this day was prohibited under Francisco Franco's dictatorship for its symbolic significance. Later, it recuperated its official status in 1976 and the Catalan government started to hold an institutional commemoration from 2004 in Ciutadella Park (Parc de la Ciutadella). For Catalan people, it has been the day of remembering a sense of national belonging and claiming the national rights of Catalonia through various cultural events or demonstrations (cf. Balcells 2008).

From 2012, the activists of the ANC have played a pivotal role in leading demonstrations on this day. Their demonstrations can be characterised as dramatic performances, employing various dramaturgical tools, such as a specially-designed rally route, colourful uniforms, songs and slogans. In 2014, almost a million and a half people filled Diagonal and Gran Via Avenues to form the figure of the letter V, signifying "Vote, Way, Wish, and Victory" (Votar, Via, Voluntat i Victoria). In the next year, almost 2 million people went into Meridiana Boulevard, which symbolised the "Gateway to the Catalan Republic" (Via lliure cap a la República Catalana). Creative protest repertoires have been effective not only for conveying independentists' protest message, but also for exhibiting their political strength to the wider

public. For both Catalan and Spanish society, the number of participants in the street on this day has been a barometer of independentist opinion in recent years.

Such a dramatic visualisation of independentist power began in 2013. The leaders of the ANC organised a demonstration named the Catalan Way (Via Catalana) in 2013. When the project was pronounced for the first time, nobody expected that they could make it in terms of the scale of mobilisation. In that year, activists suggested building a 400km-long human chain passing through Catalonia, similar to what Baltic people had done to symbolically reveal the national minorities oppressed under the Soviet Union[5]. By using this historical reference, Catalan leaders hoped to voice their claim to international society and refute the Spanish government's argument that a minority group of demagogues or Catalan politicians had instigated Catalan independence. Unparalleled with any other mobilisation, the Catalan Way was a challenge for Catalan citizens in its scale and breadth. A 400km-long line of people was divided into 275 divisions and required at least 400,000 people to fill the whole line. The activists of the ANC and other neighbours volunteered to be responsible for respective divisions, securing a peaceful mobilisation and being precautious of any emergent situation on the day.

As this plan was announced, residents of Gràcia began to prepare for the demonstration from the end of August. With an ambivalent feeling between

5) As a result of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (1939) between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania fell under the Soviet rule. On the 50th anniversary of this pact, two million people from the three Baltic States joined to form a human chain claiming the independence from the Soviet Union. Its emotionally captivating scene had a broad international repercussion beyond Baltic areas (Dreifelds 1996, 34).

hope and doubt, they organised some preliminary events to promote participation in the Catalan Way in parallel with the local town festival during the third week of August. Residents who maintained their individual lives during normal days began to organise collective events together and in such a way that the "period of concentration" was begun. Family members scattered around the world began returning to their homes in order to participate in the Catalan Way. For example, a 27-year-old man living in London for his master's degree arrived in Barcelona at the end of August to participate in the demonstration of Catalonia's national day. Many family members of Gràcia residents returned to Catalonia from Madrid, Paris, New York, and other cities for the same reason. As people gathered for the celebration of the Catalan Way, the expectations for the National Day gradually grew.

During this period, interactions between neighbours also increased. For instance, residents of the neighbourhood shot a video of their neighbours making a mini human chain at the Park Güell, a landmark of the district of Gràcia and one of the top sightseeing destinations in Barcelona. Activists brought their family members and friends, and almost 50 congregants recorded the video together, shouting "independence" and making pro-independence speeches together in front of the camera. These types of activities during the period of concentration intensified the social interactions between residents of Gràcia and became a means to enhance a sense of solidarity.

〈Picture 1〉 Activists and residents of Gràcia collaborating for the recording of a promotion video for the independence of Catalonia at the Park Güell (17 Aug 2013. Photo by the author)

The festive atmosphere reached a peak on the day of a candlelit march. On 18 August, neighbours of Gràcia organised a candlelit march around the square of Pi i Maragall. At noon of the celebration day, around 30 residents of Gràcia congregated to place candles in the form of the blue starred flag (Estelada blava)[6], signifying support for Catalan independence. As evening

6) Different from the Senyera, the official flag of Catalonia, Estelada or starred flag is used by Catalan independentists to express their support for Catalan independence.

shadows fell, people began to enter the square, and the candles were lit one by one by the activists. Gazing upon the lit candles shaping the starred flag, people were moved and began to tremble. Although people in the square did not know each other, they could feel a sense of community in yearning for the independence of Catalonia.

〈Picture 2〉 Activists and residents of Gràcia gathered to participate in the candlelit night and wish for the success of the Catalan Way at the square of Pi i Maragall, Gràcia(18 Aug 2013. Photo by the author)

At an individual level, activists made an extra effort to ensure the success

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Estelada is divided into two types, one with a white star in a blue triangle (Estelada blava), and the other with a red star in a yellow triangle (Estelada vermella). These two flags have been used as an independentists' symbol since 70s. The blue starred flag claims Catalan independence, while red starred claiming the independence of the Catalan Countries' (Països Catalans), territories speaking Catalan language.

of the demonstration. Some of them visited designated places in the days leading up to the demonstration, in order to prepare to better help ordinary participants on the demonstration day. In the case of the less populated towns around Tarragona, people from other places were required to fill the line. Many activists from Gràcia, along with other citizens of Barcelona, volunteered to go to the southern towns, as was the case of a 42-year-old volunteer living near Verdi Street who rented a van to go to Tarragona with 10 members of her family. Activists had to rent buses from some French companies, as Catalan companies were running out of buses to carry the people at the end of August. Through these processes, activists became conscious of their responsibility as leaders in the Catalan independence movement.

2. Aestheticising the Will of the People and the Experience of Collective Effervescence

1) Symbolising the Will of the People

On 11 September 2013, the Catalan Way demonstration began as Catalan citizens went all over Catalonia to constitute a 400km-long human chain. The residents of Gràcia went to the places they had volunteered to go, whether by bus or by their own car, including Agullana, Reus, and the centre of Barcelona. Almost 1,500 people from Gràcia and 1.6 million people in total transferred to designated places with excitement. By carrying out mass mobilisation, activists wished that every participant would feel like a leader in the independence process, thereby encouraging them to engage

more actively with activism in the future. For this purpose, activists employed some discursive and symbolic strategies, strengthening images of Catalan independence as the popular will.

Activists described the rally on this day as a "battle of democracy", emphasising the pro-independence claim as the popular will. This was a discursive strategy both to reject the Spanish State's definition of democracy and their prioritising the Constitution rather than meeting popular demand to hold a referendum, and to inspire participants to feel as true conveyers of democracy. One of the leading activists from the district of Horta, while on the bus heading to Reus, emphasised the democratic characteristic of the rally as follows: "The inflexibility of Spanish legalism, in the name of democracy, will be questioned, today, by people in the street, the real democracy. This is a battle of democracy". An activist from Joanic Square used her microphone to stress that, "From today, the international society will take notice of who has the legitimacy to claim democracy, Catalan citizens or the Spanish Constitution". As shown in these discourses, activists juxtaposed democracy based on the "people" with the State's legal democracy, and this technique of contradicting the two democracies helped protesters to imagine themselves as true agents of democracy. By emphasising the democratic legitimacy of the independence protest in their speeches, activists attempted to legitimise the independence claim as well as to bind participants' commitment to future processes. People on the bus applauded these speeches and recognised gradually the importance of their role in the movement.

To effectively reveal the "people" as the protagonist of democracy, various

symbolic tools were employed by activists as well. The Catalan Way has become a "total language" (Gérôme 1988, 4) full of symbols emanating the popular will. On the day of the rally, all participants were advised to wear a yellow T-shirt to accentuate their unity and will to achieve independence. On the way to the city of Reus, volunteers stopped at a gas station and were surprised upon seeing the place packed with yellow T-shirts. Although they had never met before, people in the service area greeted each other and together chanted one of the famous activist slogans, "In, inde, independence" (In, inde, independència!). Wearing the same T-shirt not only visualised the popular will symbolically, it became a medium through which a sense of unity was experienced.

〈Picture 3〉 Activists at a gas station on the way to Reus. Even though they did not know each other well, the fact that they were wearing the same coloured T-shirt boosted a sense of togetherness. (11 Sep 2013. Photo by the author)

The actual sites of the demonstration were selected to represent the "popular will" as well. Traditionally, the institutional commemoration of the National Day of Catalonia has been carried out in Ciutadella Park located in front of the Parliament. As the Government of Catalonia held the commemoration every year in this park, this place has materialised as a symbol of institutional commemoration. Bearing in mind the significance of Ciutadella Park, activists selected the Catalonia Square instead as the main stage for the ritual. The square has been a centre of historical protests in Barcelona, such as a demonstration to reclaim the autonomy of Catalonia in 1977, a massive mobilisation against the Iraq War in 2003, the recent protest of 15-M Movement during 2011-12. Based on the history of its use, the Catalonia Square has gained the symbolic status of "popular resistance" in Catalan society (cf. Delgado 2003). Therefore, activists chose the square as the centre of the 400km-long human chain to represent at the maximum level the people as the protagonist in the Catalan independence movement.

2) The Experience of Collective Effervescence

As squares and streets filled with slogans and flags, the atmosphere around the activists became elevated little by little. Even though activists were scattered all over Catalonia, they could follow what was happening at the Catalonia Square by radio. Some memories and symbols inspired a sense of nation for the participants. For instance, the image of a Catalan ancestor appeared on the screen set up at the Catalonia Square. Catalan cellist Pau [Pablo] Casals' 1971 speech at the White House supporting Catalan independence was broadcasted. Remembering one of the greatest

Catalan musicians in history and the firmness of his conviction in Catalan independence, protesters felt a sense of nationhood, ordinarily forgotten, then applauded and together shouted "independence". In addition to this, some Catalan historic references were invoked in a symbolic way that gave participants a dramatic experience of a sense of community, one sharing the same history and politics. When church bells around Catalonia rang at 17:14h, numbers referring to the date of the Catalan defeat to Spanish troops, people began to sing "the Reapers" (els Segadors), the national anthem of Catalonia. Remembering their common history by singing together and raising a fist into the air, activists' faces became resolute and their voices became choked as the emotions rose.

Even though not all protesters likely thought about independence, the simple fact that they acted together generated feelings of solidarity (Kertzer 1988, 67). For example, the poetic characteristics of the slogans shouted along the human chain enhanced the emotional experience of each participant. Many slogans shouted on this day have been reiterated throughout history, and this fact led them to have fixed forms and contents regardless of the ritual context. This process of "entextualisation" gives slogans the quality of "transcendence", so that these slogans can be used without pinpointing the specific context of the ritual (cf. Bauman and Briggs 1990). Therefore, many slogans used in the mobilisation on the National Day may not have specified the context of the Catalan Way, and perhaps their meaning was not equally shared by participants. However, through their rhythmic characteristics, participants became elevated emotionally as they shouted together. For example,

〈Slogan 1〉
In, Inde, Independència! (In, Inde, Independence!)[7)]
In, Inde, Independència! (In, Inde, Independence!)

〈Slogan 2〉
Leader: Què vol aquesta tropa? (What does this troop want?)
Altogether: Un nou estat d'Europa! (A new state of Europe!)
Leader: Què vol aquesta gent? (What do these people want?)
Altogether: Catalunya independent! (Independent Catalonia!)

These two slogans are typically repeated in any pro-independence movement and so are not precisely relevant for the context of the Catalan Way. However, the poetic characteristics of the slogans contributed to enhancing demonstrators' emotions, thereby regenerating their energy to continue the movement. For example, in the case of the first slogan, people shouted the word "independència" several times in a row, dividing the word into three parts by accentuating the first, second, and sixth syllables respectively. This regularity led shouters to feel a sense of rhythm, and each time they repeated it they became more excited. In the case of the second slogan, people shouted in a question-and-answer form using a cheerful tune. Through this melodic interaction, both leader and respondents were uplifted. By chanting and singing slogans together, trust between activists was consolidated.

A feeling of unity was exacerbated through together dancing the "Sardana", a Catalan traditional dance. In a motorway near the city of Reus, a group of students took out instruments to play "Cobla", the musical

7) All English translations of the slogans in brackets are mine.

accompaniment of Sardana and some activists began to perform the dance hand- in-hand. Along the lines of this cooperative nature, Brandes (1990) confirmed the Sardana "implies mutual trust, the confidence that each person's performance will redound to everyone's enjoyment"(p.32). Stepping and turning around together, activists built mutual solidarity with other participants and purely enjoyed the moment as a community of performers.

Activists became highly elevated as they moved, chanted, and sang enthusiastically. The chanting grew faster every second and independence flags waved incessantly. In the middle of the excitement, a human wave, improvised, and its starting point unknown, was generated. This unexpected joy made people more excited and "electrified", as an activist from Providència street described. The Catalan Way has reached its zenith, finally. Activists began to shout the slogan, "We don't want to be an occupied country. We want the Catalan Countries!"[8] (no volem ser país ocupat, volem, volem, volem països Catalans). By dancing, chanting, and singing together, participants of the Catalan Way could feel a "collective effervescence" (Durkheim 1995[1912]) in reaching the apex of the ritual. In the middle of the jovial atmosphere, activists on the spot came together to cheer each other for their efforts and again began to chant together "independence". By encouraging each other, they felt a sense of unity as an activist community and grew proud of themselves as protagonists of the mobilisation.

8) Please refer to footnote seven for more information about the Catalan Countries.

〈Picture 4〉 Activists participating in the demonstration of the Catalan Way at a motorway on the way to Reus. (11 Sep 2013. Photo by the author)

On the way back to Barcelona, activists were busy sharing their feelings about of the successful celebration of the Catalan Way. Once doubting the success of the Catalan Way, activists' faces were now full of joy and excitement. The democratic, pacific, and festive rally of the Catalan Way gave activists confidence in what they were doing.

Ⅳ. After the Ritual: the Expansion of Pro-Independence Activism in Everyday Life

To celebrate a successful demonstration the Catalan Way, activists of the ANC Gràcia, approximately 50 people, held a dinner at Lluïsos, a civic

centre in Gràcia. Activists were surprised at the number of participants at the dinner, which was unparalleled by any other reunion at the local assembly. Having dinner together was a ritual to announce the end of the period of concentration and a return to everyday life, or to mark the restart of the period of dispersion. However, the deep emotions that activists had experienced during the ritual lasts even into their everyday lives. While eating together, activists shared their experiences of the Catalan Way with full joy, as one woman did in the following way.

〈Speech of a 55-year-old woman at the dinner of Lluïsos〉

> Indeed, I didn't expect that we would make out the Catalan Way as well as we did. When the bell rang and people around me started to sing the anthem, like this (with her hand making a fist), I almost burst into tears. I was so moved…, and suddenly a wave came to me from far away and my husband and I almost fell off. We enjoyed a lot. It was so spectacular! I've never had such experience before in my life. I was so proud that I played an important role in it. I know that this is not the end of our battle, but we should keep going on. If we can mobilise more than a million people with such a festive atmosphere, we would overcome any hard moments in the future.

As the above speech of a 55-year-old woman shows well, the strong emotional experience that she had had during the ritual turned out to be the origin of her pride as an activist leading the pro-independence movement. Other activists at the dinner were also busy sharing their stories, from those of preparations during the hot summer to those of uplifted

feelings at the demonstration. By sharing these moments of hardships and joy, individual activists' feelings materialised into collective one, which would work as a cognitive resource for the future pro-independence mobilisation.

The everyday lives of activists changed little by little after the ritual. Now, more convinced of what they were doing, participants were not afraid of telling others that they were in favour of Catalan independence. The summer before the Catalan Way, activists hesitated to enter stores or restaurants where they were part of the clientele, to avoid fostering an unpleasant mood by handing out political pamphlets. An activist in her 60s who had always been in favour of Catalan independence but had never "come out from the closet" until then, for the first time visited her favourite pharmacy with a leaflet of "7 reasons for Catalan Independence". According to her, she no longer hesitated over revealing her political identity after the Catalan Way, since she was relieved at finding out that the majority of Catalan society would support the independence of Catalonia. Compared to the social mood where people in favour of Catalan independence were for a long time considered as idealists or extremists, and even kept the starred flag hidden in their bags until arriving at nationalist demonstrations, the strong emotional experience on the day of the Catalan Way inspired people to feel more firm in their convictions and free to declare themselves as "independentists".

Activists became more proud of themselves as others recognised their role and appreciated their efforts. One day, when a group of activists of the ANC Gràcia went to a supermarket in Verdi Street looking for a shopping

cart to store campaign materials, they were able to obtain one easily when the manager of the store discovered that they were the "people who made a new history of Catalonia". The manager, who had never expected to see such a great number of people go into the streets with the starred flags, kindly lent them a cart. Many of the members of ANC had a similar experience of acknowledgement with their families, friends, and colleagues. Along with this social recognition, activists' belief in their activism was continually fortified.

Their confidence and self-assurance became a source of energy for them to expand the independence movement in their everyday life. By putting up a starred flag on the balcony, members revealed their political identity openly. Catalan people used to hang their flag only on the National Day of Catalonia as a symbol of commemoration, but now they let it hang every day to demonstrate their support for Catalan independence. With a political symbol appearing on the balcony, this private space where plants and sundries were located haphazardly became a public space replete with political connotation. The appearance of political symbols can increase anonymous social interactions in people's everyday life in either a hospitable or a hostile way. When a neighbour living in Mozart Street came out to the balcony to smoke, a woman watering her plants on the opposite balcony made a "4 stripes[9]" (4-barres) sign to him as a symbol of support for Catalan independence. Without knowing each other, people exchanged their political beliefs by means of balcony symbols, and felt sympathetic with one another. Not all of the interactions happening on the balconies,

9) This sign represents the 4 red stripes of Catalan flag.

however, were as amicable as the aforementioned example. In contrast to that, a woman who had suspended a blue starred flag on her balcony, woke up the next morning to find that a Spanish flag had been hung on the balcony of the neighbour opposite to her. In either in hospitable or hostile ways, members of the ANC Gràcia were delighted to have these experiences, as they were proof that vivid discussions on Catalan independence were continuing, and were a reason why they had to be more intimately engaged with the movement.

〈Picture 5〉 Independence flags hung on the balconies of the Gran Via, Barcelona (1 Oct 2013. Photo by the author)

The excitement of the ritualistic moment lasted into the quotidian lives of activists, and was repeatedly invoked as activists displayed symbols on themselves. These items are the means by which wearers are reminded of

the moments of exaltation of rituals. After the Catalan Way, neighbours of Gràcia often wore yellow T-shirts on normal days, manifesting their stance on Catalan independence to the public. In other Catalan nationalist demonstrations not precisely having to do with Catalan independence, protesters appeared wearing yellow T-shirts. For instance, on 29 September, the day when people congregated in Barcelona to protest against the language policy of the Mallorcan government, activists went to the Sant Jaume square with their yellow shirts on and they remembered the excitement of the Catalan Way again by shouting "independence". The memory of collective demonstration was then condensed into the form of a portable symbol and began to work as a "communication currency" (Munn 1973, 580), forging social interactions with anonymous people. On the day after of the Catalan Way, yellow became a colour of resistance and solidarity, thereby working as a source of energy for people to continue their activism.

Besides yellow T-shirts, other types of national symbols also became omnipresent after the Catalan Way, especially in the form of body accessories, such as badges, bracelets, scarves, etc. The patterns of these accessories were typically inspired by Catalan nationalist symbols, such as the starred flag, Catalan donkey, FCB, etc. Members of the ANC wore them in their everyday life, and in this way, their bodies became a kind of sign emitting political messages on ordinary days. A member of the ANC in her 30s living near the "Freedom Market" (Mercat de Llibertat) said that by wearing a nationalist symbol not only was she manifesting her political will as an active participant in the Catalan independence movement, but she

was also made to feel more proud of the important role she had played in organising the Catalan Way, such an important act in Catalan history. For members of the ANC, wearing theses ornaments was as much a part of their daily activism as it was a source of energy revival for carrying out mobilisation.

Following the ritual, assuming the role of activist was accompanied by not only changes to the appearance, but also a change in linguistic practices. Some members began to reflect upon their everyday language use. On normal local assembly days, activists corrected each other by pointing out the way to say something in the Catalan language. For example, to give the hour and minute, members were accustomed to saying it in the Castilian way. Now, this way of expressing the time was considered as inadequate, especially for those trying to be pioneers in the independence process. Members of the Gràcia district corrected their own errors or corrected the errors of others by saying, in a tone between one of half-joking and half-seriousness, "We are the people who build the movement" (*Sóm la gent que fa el movement*). Once unproblematic, one's attitude towards language had become an index of whether one was a proper activist or not, and members tried to reflect on this unconscious language attitude beyond the activist circle. A member in her mid-40s explained that she no longer changed the language she used from Catalan to Castilian in coffee shops or supermarkets ever since she was able to confirm on the day of the Catalan Way that supporters of Catalan Independence were the majority. According to her, she was the only person in her family – though every member of the family supported

Catalan independence – that would not change the language she used, and sometimes her family criticised her for being a trouble-maker. By changing appearance and habits, the Catalan Way led members of the ANC to "embody" activism in their everyday life.

Finally, some members experienced a reversal in their participation at work and their movement participation. A man who worked at a German company said that he dedicated at least two hours a day to the tasks of activism, such as collecting information, developing arguments, and scheduling. There were members who brought activist tasks to their offices in order to fulfil their responsibility. They judged, generally, that participation in the movement took priority over their day jobs. Involuntarily, activism pervaded every corner of their quotidian life, but activists did not show reluctance to it, since it was something hopeful and enjoyable. They differentiated it from normal office work, which was one of life's obligations and inevitable for bringing in the bread and butter. Moreover, activism was something that made activists proud of themselves as leading agents of the Catalan Independence Movement.

Ⅴ. Conclusion

Catalan citizens' desire to build their own republic has increased from 2010. Different from other relevant research that has attempted to explain the reasons for this demand, this article analysed how it was structured into the form of an organised movement. Considering the importance of the emotional experiences participants gained during the "ritual of resistance" for

sustaining the movement, this article examined how participants experienced the Catalan Way in 2013, the annual demonstration organised by the Catalan National Assembly. Based on ethnographic methodology, the research was mainly conducted around the district of Gràcia, a middle-class neighbourhood in the city of Barcelona, during four months (Aug-Dec, except for October) in 2013 and the autumn (Sep-Nov) of both 2014 and 2015.

Catalonia has a very strong association culture, and the human network built around local associations helped independentists to develop the pro-independence movement around neighbourhoods. As activism was intimately linked with local life, neighbours could engage with the movement easily, and this increased the incorporation of ordinary people with no previous experience of political engagement. Enjoying the relationship with local people and feeling a sense of contribution by using their local knowledge, they gradually became engaged with the movement.

As they began to prepare for the annual demonstration, activists entered into a "period of concentration", in which social interactions on normal days between people increased. The heightened level of interactions generally uplifted activists during this period. The level of excitement reached its zenith on the day of the demonstration. Employing various symbols and discourses, activists felt themselves to be protagonists of popular democracy. At the same time, by chanting, singing and dancing together, activists could feel a sense of unity and a "collective effervescence", which would work as an emotional resource for continuing their political engagement.

The strong emotional experience activists had at the peak of the ritual of

resistance became the origin of confidence and energy to expand their pro-independence activism even into their everyday life. With confidence and self-assurance as leading agents of the movement, activists revealed their political identity by announcing their support for independence or wearing independence symbols, and by changing their linguistic habits by avoiding the use of Spanish words. This change in attitude increased their social interactions, in either hospitable or hostile ways, with others. By expanding the pro-independence movement even into their quotidian life, activists became more committed to pro-independence mobilisation. The intensified activism following the ritual demonstrates that movement resources, rather than being granted *a priori*, are continuously in the process of making on the basis of the activists' experiences of togetherness and solidarity.

The series of annual mass rallies carried out over the last five years made Catalan citizens into protagonists of an on-going pro-independence movement. Ever-present independence symbols around the balconies of Barcelona draw anonymous people into voiceless dialogue with one another, invoking the memory of collective effervescence and consolidating their mutual willingness to continue the fight. Once considered extreme and radical, or sometimes taboo to mention, Catalan independence, and how to achieve it, became a subject of everyday discussion in Catalonia. If Catalan politicians have been leading the debate over Catalan independence for a long time, then nowadays Catalan citizens balance this role, developing their own protest idioms and repertoires. This change does not mean the immediate arrival of Catalan independence, but at least, Catalan citizens

have created their own social space in which they can talk about their political future without borrowing the voices of others.

In this sense, the current pro-independence movement of Catalonia can be understood in the broader sense of cultural transformation. Catalan citizens invent their own discourses, symbols, and ideologies through everyday interactions, and these new inventions are challenging traditional values, such as party politics and representative democracy. How this cultural change will develop and affect the political future of Catalonia remains to be seen.

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〈Abstract〉

Based on ethnographic research conducted around the district of Gràcia, Barcelona, this article explores the experiences of Catalan activists during the annual demonstration on the National Day of Catalonia, and how these experiences affected the sustenance of the Catalan pro-independence movement. Especially focusing on activists' participation in the demonstration of the Catalan Way in 2013, this study pays particular attention to how a strong emotional experience had by activists during the "ritual of resistance" became a source of energy for activists to continue their activism in everyday life. As the movement became accessible from the neighbourhoods, the participation of ordinary people with no previous experience of activism increased in the Catalan pro-independence movement. As activists started to prepare for the annual demonstration, social interactions increased and the local ambiance became energised. On the day of the demonstration, activists began to perform a ritual symbolising Catalan independence as the popular will, and they could feel a "collective effervescence" during this ritual. This strong emotional experience during the ritual lasted even after the ritual was finished, thereby inspiring the continuation and expansion of pro-independence activism in their quotidian life.

Key Words: Catalan Pro-Independence Movement, Nationalism, Ritual of Resistance, Collective Effervescence, Catalan Way

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