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Catalan “Apaches”? Stereotypical Depictions of Foreigners and Minorities in Barcelona before the Spanish Civil War (1918–1936)

#4 / 2022 HISTORY IN FLUX PP. 95-108

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UDC 314.15: 930.85(460.235)"1918/1936"
https://doi.org/10.32728/flux.2022.4.4
Original scientific paper

Catalan "Apaches"? Stereotypical Depictions of Foreigners and Minorities in Barcelona before the Spanish Civil War (1918–1936)

When Barcelona became the industrial center of the Iberian Peninsula in the second half of the 19th century, it began to attract thousands of people searching for work. The integration of working migrants in Barcelona was rather successful until the beginning of the First World War. This process was facilitated by the fact that most of the people who came to Barcelona in search for work at that time originated from Catalonia or other Catalan-speaking areas and shared the same language and the same local traditions. The situation changed dramatically in the interwar period, when the percentage of migrants coming from other parts of Spain and from abroad grew significantly. Due to rising Catalan nationalism and the high rate of unemployment caused by the Great Depression, attitudes toward foreigners and other minorities in Barcelona turned hostile. This process was also reflected in the stereotypical depictions created by the local press. This paper examines three minorities in Barcelona: "gypsies," internal migrants, and foreigners. It elaborates on the questions of how "the other" was perceived in Barcelona before the Civil War and which prejudices were established.

KEYWORDS:
Barcelona, Catalanism, xenophobia, stereotypes, criminality, migration, print media

"Entire populations that had been firmly settled for centuries are now set into motion to leave their hometowns. This mass movement, which surpasses even the Migration Period, seems to continue, even though in many places one can hardly speak of overpopulation in the countryside anymore, where the workforce is steadily decreasing."[1] This quote, taken from Werner Sombart's book *Der moderne Kapitalismus*, published in 1927, shows that the German sociologist considered migration to urban areas to be one of the most significant phenomena of his time. Referring to the urban historian Friedrich Lenger in his opus magnum *Metropolen der Moderne*, this was not just the personal impression of a contemporary witness, but a global trend that had started in the second half of the 19th century.[2] The integration of the "stranger," who was defined by the urban sociologist Walther Siebel as the "prototype of the urbanite" became one of the main tasks of the cities' authorities.[3]

In Spain, the first wave of migration started at around 1900, which was a few decades later compared to other European countries. In comparison to other western European countries, the Industrial Revolution in Spain had taken place much later. Consequently, many regions were still agricultural at the beginning of the 20th century. In contrast, thanks to its leading role in cotton production, Catalonia had become the industrial center of the Iberian Peninsula in the 19th century. Its capital Barcelona started to attract thousands of people searching for work.[4] Between 1887 and the early 20th century, the number of inhabitants in Barcelona almost doubled.[5] The birth rates during this period were rather low, so the immense population growth had been caused by the incorporation of the neighboring villages Les Corts, Gràcia, Sant Andreu, Sant Gervasi, Sant Martí, Sants, and Horta.[6] Much more significant, however, was the first wave of working immigrants.

The integration of working migrants in Barcelona was rather successful until the beginning of the First World War, when the wave of nationalism that had affected most European nations also started to affect Catalonia. During the Second Spanish Republic at the beginning of the 1930s, attitudes toward foreigners and other minorities in Barcelona turned hostile, mainly because of radicalizing Catalanism. This process was also reflected in the stereotypical depictions created by the local press. The aim of my article is to examine from a microhistorical perspective how "strangers" were perceived in Barcelona before the Civil War and to elaborate on the question

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1 Werner Sombart, *Moderner Kapitalismus. Historisch-systematische Darstellung des gesamteuropäischen Writschaftslebens von seinen Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, (München: Duncker & Humblot, 1927), 3:383. Translation by the author of this chapter.

2 Friedrich Lenger, *Metropolen der Moderne. Eine europäische Stadtgeschichte seit 1850* (München: C. H. Beck Verlag, 2013), 84–96.

3 Walter Siebel, "Soziologische Dimensionen von Integration und Fremdheit in der Stadt," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 46 (2006): 473.

4 Jordi Nadal, "Der Fehlschlag der Industriellen Revolution in Spanien 1830–1914," in *Europäische Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, ed. Carlo Cipolla (Stuttgart: Fischer, 1977), 4:397.

5 Immaculada Julián, *L'urbanisme a Barcelona entre dues exposicions (1888–1929)* (Barcelona: Els Llibres de la Frontera, 1988), 113.

6 Carme Massana, *Indústria, ciutat i propietat. Política económica i propietat urbana a l'Área de Barcelona (1901–1939)* (Barcelona: Curial, 1985), 129.

of what stereotypes and prejudices had been established at that time. The main focus of this article will be on the migrants who came to Barcelona from other parts of Spain, but it will also analyze stereotypical depictions of two other minorities in Barcelona at that time— "gypsies" and foreigners.

Stereotypical depictions of *gitanos*

> For several months, Barcelona has been suffering from a true gypsy invasion of international proportions. Gypsy caravans have settled down in our city which, due to the indifference and the carelessness of our authorities, they consider a territory available to be captured. The attitude of the authorities is hard to understand because it is pretty obvious that, for the gypsies, a respectable way of living is unknown. Furthermore, the gypsies pose a constant threat to the neighborhood. The sight of these folks, a source of dirt and infections, could hardly be more disturbing.[7]

This report by the local newspaper *El Diluvio* from July 29, 1919, illustrates the main stereotypes of *gitanos* (gypsies) in Barcelona's upper and middle classes. In this report, the concept of "gypsy" remained as obscure as it was at the time in Germany, for example, where from the late 19th century onward, anyone without a permanent home was labeled as a *Zigeuner*.[8] Further on in the article, it becomes clear that the author finds it especially annoying that these "gypsies"—at least in his or her perception—had started settling in the center of Barcelona. Philipp Altenburg, when analyzing the case of *Zigeuners* in Frankfurt am Main in the mid-1920s, concluded that the urban public only began to see them as a threat when they became visible in the city center.[9]

In Barcelona, reports of people identified as *gitanos* date back to the late 15th century.[10] Until the early 20th century, they were not able to assimilate and lived in the outskirts of the city.[11] One of the areas in Barcelona where, according to public opinion, many *gitanos* were living, was the western part of the district El Poble-Sec at the foot of Montjuïc. In October 1912, Joan Vallès i Pujals, who later became the president of the Barcelona city council, described the people who lived there in a newspaper article as follows: "The usual inhabitants are ragpickers, beggars, gypsies, and thieves. There you also find unemployed people desperately searching for work in order to be able to rent a flat and escape that hellhole. This is how people live in that place where you cannot hear any Catalan spoken."[12]

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7 N.N. "Gitanerias", *El Diluvio*, July 29,1919, 1.

8 Leo Lucassen, "'Zigeuner' in Deutschland 1870–1945. Ein kritischer historiographischer Ansatz," *1999 – Zeitschrift für Sozialgeschichte des 20. und 21. Jahrhunderts*, no. 5. (1995): 88–89.

9 Philipp Altenburg, *Machtraum Großstadt. Zur Aneignung und Kontrolle des Stadtraums von Frankfurt am Main und Philadelphia in den 1920er Jahren* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2013), 198–200.

10 Alejandro Vargas González and Carmenchu López Méndez. "Los gitanos en el corregimiento de Barcelona a fines del siglo XVIII. Un intento de asimiliación social," in *Història urbana del Pla de Barcelona: Actes del II Congrés d'Història del Pla de Barcelona celebrat a l'Institut Municipal d'Història els dies 6 i 7 de desembre de 1985*, ed. Ajuntament de Barcelona, (Barcelona: Ajuntament de Barcelona), 173.

11 Max Bembo, *La mala vida de Barcelona. Anormalidad, miseria y vicio* (Barcelona: Edición Mancá, 1912), 103–104.

12 Joan Vallès i Pujals, "Les Hurdes barcelonines," *La Veu de Catalunya*, October 17, 1912, 3.

At the turn of the century, the Catalan writer Juli Vallmitjana published several novels and plays set in this area. In his works, he concisely described the people living in barracks at the foot of Montjuïc. While also emphasizing their miserable living conditions, he attributed to them supernatural powers such as magic and witchcraft. As Vallmitjana was a very popular author, he made a huge contribution to the *gitanos*' mystification.[13]

Whereas reports on *gitanos* by the local press were frequent in in Barcelona in the 1920s and 1930s, they became much rarer in the interwar period. During the 1929 World Exhibition, which was staged at Montjuïc, the barracks at the foot of mountain were pulled down, and the people living there had been forced to move. At the same time, working migrants from other parts of Spain became the biggest group of foreigners in Barcelona by far.

Prejudices against *murcianos*

> The migrant from Murcia can be searched for and found in many places, anywhere, that is, but one: the resident's registration office. Because of that, it is not possible to provide exact statistics for immigration from Murcia and Almeria…Consequently, we must verify their quantity and quality by indirect means: in the hospitals, in the tribunals, in the courts, in the employment office, and also by visiting certain districts.[14]

This excerpt is from an abstract of a report in the Catalanist magazine *Mirador* on *Murcianos*, and that was part of a series by local journalist Carles Sentís that ran between November 1932 and January 1933. This term referred not only to migrants from Murcia but also to migrants from several parts of Andalucia who had come to Barcelona searching for work due to the desperate economic situation in their native region. According to Sentís, the band of people he described lived in miserable surroundings separated in La Torrassa, a district of L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, Barcelona's neighboring city in the west. Furthermore, he alleged that they were responsible for spreading sexually transmitted diseases and a high rate of juvenile delinquency.[15]

These stereotypical depictions were backed up to some extent by several academics. A few months before the beginning of the Spanish Civil War, Josep Vandellós i Solà, who had been chair of the Institute of Statistics at the University of Barcelona since 1933, published the book *Catalunya, poble decadent* (Catalonia, a Decadent Nation). In this work, he argued that, in the early 20th century, the difference between "natural" growth, meaning a demographic increase due to the number of births exceeding the number of deaths, and "total" growth was rather small (33,687), but increased in the next decade (206,954) and reached its peak between 1921 and 1930 (322,000). He came to the following conclusion: "We are not going to judge the positive or negative aspects of migration to Catalonia, but the examination which

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13 Juli Vallmitjana, *Sota Montjuïc. Criminalitat típica local* (Barcelona: Arola, 2004 [1908]) and Juli Vallmitjana, *De la raça que es perd* (Barcelona: Edicions de 1984 2005 [1906]).

14 Carles Sentís, "Múrcia. Exportadora d'Homes. La vida en un nucli tocant a Barcelona," *Mirador*, December 8, 1932, 2.

15 Carles Sentís, "Un perill de la immigració: el trachoma," *Mirador*, January 7, 1933, 2 and Carles Sentís, "El problema més greu, el de la infància," *Mirador*, January 19, 1933, 2.

we have just made should worry anyone who is concerned for the future of our homeland."[16] The view expressed Josep Vandellós i Solà expressed in his book was quite popular in Catalonian academic circles in the early 1930s. Migrants were depicted as unhygienic and blamed for spreading disease. This openly racist theory was most radically promoted by Pere Màrtir Rossell i Vilar (1882–1933), a veterinarian and race theoretician who disapproved of mixed marriages of Catalans and Spaniards for biological reasons.[17]

While Vandellós argued in *Catalunya, poble decadent* that the Catalans themselves were to be blamed for the decadence of their "race," in another book, *La inmigració a Catalunya* (Migration to Catalonia), published in the same year, he claimed that migrants were responsible for the high crime rate in the city and defamed them as murderers and criminals, stating: "Violent acts like crimes of passion crimes, assassinations, bar fights, and robbery-murders are attributed to the immigrants to a large extent."[18]

Both of the central arguments of this xenophobic discourse—the degeneration of the Catalan "race" due to external factors and migrants' predisposition to crime and disorder—can be traced back to the beginning of the century. In 1917, a local source claimed that 70 percent of all vagrants and criminals in the city could be migrants.[19] Ten years later, local politician Francisco Puig y Alfonso argued that migrants would resort to begging if they could not find a job, while Catalans would "heroically" resist begging.[20]

Although stereotypes of migrants from other parts of Spain already were taking shape in Barcelona in the 1920s and 1930s, they were not nearly as prominent as they were during the Second Spanish Republic. Jacques Valdour, a French writer who had traveled through Spain in 1912 and 1913 and later published his impressions in a two-volume book on "the Spanish industrial worker," quite optimistically predicted the integration of working migrants in Barcelona: "The Catalan masses will incorporate the migrants; industrial work will unify them, and they will obtain the same appearance and the same temper as all the others."[21]

In a somewhat outdated, but still very instructive article, the German historian Klaus-Jürgen Nagel agreed with Valdour's judgment, claiming that Barcelona was on its way to becoming a "multicultural society" in the early 20th century. With this term, he wanted to affirm that, between the two world exhibitions staged in the city in 1888 and 1929, working migrants would have no issues with integrating into in Barcelona's society. Nagel came to the conclusion that, "Barcelona's average worker lived in a very heterogeneous social environment, in which he had lots of contact with members of other social classes…The neighborhood of people who differed according to their

16 Josep Vandellós i Solà, *Catalunya. Poble decadent* (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1985 [1935]), 53–54.

17 Pere Màrtir Rossell i Vilar, *La Raça* (Barcelona: Catalonia, 1930).

18 Josep Vandellós i Solà, *Catalunya. La inmigración en Cataluña*. (Madrid: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 2011 [1935]), 199-200.

19 Quoted in: Antonio Junglar, "En torno a la condición obrera en Barcelona entre 1900 y 1920," *Anales de Sociología* 1 (1966), 103.

20 Francisco Puig y Alfonso, *La beneficencia en Barcelona* (Barcelona: Talleres Gráficos Casa Providencial de Caridad de Barcelona, 1927), 88.

21 Jacques Valdour, *L'ouvrier espagnol. Observations vécues* (Lille: René Giard, 1919), 1:234.

social position, origin, and political views highly contributed to the integration of the first waves of immigrants into Catalan society."[22]

Based on the observations of contemporaries and Nagel's empirical analysis, it seems reasonable to conclude that the integration of working migrants in Barcelona was rather successful, at least until the First World War. During this time, most of those who came to Barcelona in search of work had come from rural areas in Catalonia or from other Catalan-speaking regions such as, for example, Valencia or the Balearic Islands.[23] Their integration was facilitated not only by the Catalan language but also by many local Catalan traditions that had found their way into Barcelona's working-class culture. The most important of them were the building of human towers, known as *castells*, and a group dance called *Sardana*, both of which represented central elements of Catalan culture. In the period when the first wave of migrants arrived in Barcelona, these traditions were forcefully popularized by the Catalanists to illustrate the across-the-board character of the Catalanist body of thought.[24]

When classifying anti-migrant discourses in Barcelona's local press according to their political and social context, the final years of the Spanish Restauration monarchy from 1917 to 1923 should be considered as sharp turning point. When it became obvious that Catalonia would not profit from the rearrangement of the European state system after the First World War, many Catalanists took their demands for independence to the streets. They would occupy the Ramblas, which regularly ended in bloody fights with the police and Spanish patriots.[25] These clashes were soon overshadowed by a massive strike at the *La Canadence* electricity company, which brought the city to a complete standstill for several weeks. Barcelona's industrialists panicked, since it was the first time they had experienced the power of the anarchist trade union CNT, which had gained a great deal of influence among the working class in Barcelona. This conflict escalated to a point where both sides hired gunmen, so-called *Pistolerosto*, to eliminate representatives of the opposite site.[26] As the Spanish central state was unable to reconcile the social conflicts by legal means, Catalan entrepreneurs called for an "iron surgeon." They supported General Primo de Rivera in his coup d'état in September 1923. He ruled Spain as a dictator until 1929. Resistance was met with severe repression. Primo de Rivera managed to stop the bloody fights between entrepreneurs and workers in Barcelona by prohibiting and

22 Klaus-Jürgen Nagel, "'Multikulturelle Gesellschaft' und staatliche Interventionspolitik in der Stadt Barcelona zwischen den Weltausstellungen von 1888 und 1929," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 32 (1992), 14.

23 Jaime Alzina Caules, "Investigación analítica sobre la evolución demográfica de Cataluña," *Economica y Sociologica*, 1 (1955): 33.

24 Nagel, "Multikulturelle Gesellschaft," 17.

25 Florian Grafl, "World War I and its Impact on Catalonia," in *Small Nations and Colonial Peripheries in World War I*, ed. Gearóid Barry, Enrico Dal Lago, and Róisín Healy (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 130–32.

26 Francisco Romero Salvadó, "'Si Vis Pacem Para Bellum'. The Catalan Employers' Dirty War, 1919-23," in *The Agony of Spanish Liberalism. From Revolution to Dictatorship, 1913-1923*, ed. Angel Smith and Francisco Romero Salvadó, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 186–89.

prosecuting the CNT.[27] Although the Catalan upper class had supported his claim to power, Primo de Rivera strictly opposed Catalanism.[28]

The political system in Spain changed significantly at the beginning of the 1920, as did the migrants' situation in Barcelona. In the decade before the First World War, the number of inhabitants in Barcelona had stagnated.[29] Spain's neutrality made it possible to deliver goods to both sides of the armed conflict. This caused an economic boom mainly in Barcelona as the industrial center of Spain.[30] Consequently, Barcelona was affected by a second wave of working migrants. In contrast to the first one at the end of the 19th century, in this period, a large proportion of migrants came from parts of Spain other than Catalonia.[31] As they did not speak Catalan and did not share the same local traditions, their integration into Barcelona's urban community was more difficult. Not only contemporaries but also historians held the working migrants responsible for the radicalization of the labor struggles, because their arrival in Barcelona in large numbers coincided with the culmination of social conflicts.[32]

The large number of people coming to Barcelona in search of work increased the housing shortage among the lower classes. To find an affordable place to live proved especially difficult for migrants. Many of them had spent their all their money for the journey to Barcelona and were not able to put down a deposit on an apartment. Arriving in Barcelona, migrants usually had to stick to day-to-day employment to make ends meet, which in turn made it difficult for them regularly to pay the rent.[33] Consequently, public housing became the biggest challenge for social policy in Spain in the 1920s. Public housing was already on the agenda in 1911, but only ten years later the state supported it with considerable subventions. Nevertheless, only a few buildings were constructed during this public housing project in the final years of the Restoration monarchy. Only at the beginning of Primo de Rivera's dictatorship did another decree led to a notable increase.[34] However, it did

27 Walther Bernecker, *Geschichte Spaniens im 20. Jahrhundert* (München: Verlag C. H. Beck, 2010), 106.

28 Eduardo González Calleja, *La España de Primo de Rivera. La modernización autoritaria 1923-1930* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2005), 100–10.

29 Angel Smith, *Anarchism, Revolution and Reaction. Catalan Labour and the Crisis of the Spanish State, 1898-1923* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), 44.

30 Francisco Romero Salvadó, *Spain 1914-1918. Between War and Revolution* (London: Routledge, 1999), 24.

31 Javier Silvestre, Maria Isabel Ayuda, and Vicente Pinilla, "The Labour Market Integration of Migrants: Barcelona, 1930," *EHES Working Papers in Economic History* 3 (2011): 6–7.

32 Gerald Meaker, "Anarchists versus Sindicalists. Conflicts within the Confederación Nacional del Trabajo, 1917–1922," in *Politics and Society in 20th century Spain*, ed. Stanley Payne (New York: New Viewpoints 1976), 47 and 69.

33 Chris Ealham, *Anarchism and the City. Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Barcelona, 1898-1937* (Oakland: AK Press, 2010), 25.

34 Amador Ferrer Aixalà and Joaquín Sabaté Bel, "Zum Spanischen Billigwohngesetz vom 12. Juni 1911. Entstehung des sozialen Wohnungsbaus in Spanien 1853–1929," in *Die Kleinwohnungsfrage*, ed. Juan Rodríguez-Lores and Gerhard Fehl (Hamburg: Christians 1988), 427.

little to improve the situation of migrants, because in most cases, members of the middle class moved into the newly constructed houses.[35]

The most important housing project during the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera was the construction of *casas baratas* (cheap housing). These buildings were erected in the peripheral areas of Barcelona,[36] and migrants settled there.[37] The urbanization process could not keep pace with the growing population. In consequence, people had to live in miserable conditions, in many cases without electricity or water.[38]

After losing the support of the elites, Primo de Rivera was forced to resign in 1929. The Second Republic was proclaimed in April 1931. Due to the political tensions between the extreme left and the extreme right, this democratic attempt only lasted a couple of years until the Spanish Civil War broke out in July 1936. Whereas Catalan culture had faced severe repression during the dictatorship, in the Second Republic, for the first time, Catalonia gained considerable autonomy. Consequently, urban politics in Barcelona were dominated by the Catalanist party *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya* (Republican Left of Catalonia, ERC).[39] Although the housing shortage had scarcely been resolved, the wave of migration continued. By 1930, Barcelona had more than one million inhabitants.[40] In contrast to the 1920s, finding work became much harder for migrants because of the effects of the Great Depression and the end of the world exhibition, which was held in Barcelona in 1929.[41] At the beginning of the Second Republic, state support for the unemployed was introduced. But, as had already noted by contemporaries, due to the poor state of the economy, it proved to be almost completely ineffective.[42] In 1933, only 2.4 percent of the unemployed received financial assistance from the authorities.[43]

The ERC, in accordance with their Catalanist ideology, blamed migrants for the high unemployment rate in Barcelona. The *Comissió Pro-Obrers sense Treball* (Unemployed Workers' Commission) offered assistance for jobless workers, but only if they were able to prove that they had been living in Barcelona for at least five years. Many of the migrants were consequently excluded from this local welfare program as they had been living in Barcelona

35 Francesco Roca, *Política econòmica i territori a Catalunya 1901–1939* (Barcelona: Ketres Editora, 1979), 44–45.

36 Teresa Garcia Castro de la Peña, "Barrios barceloneses de la dictatura de Primo de Rivera," *Revista de geografia* 8, no. 1 (1974): 77.

37 Josep Roca Cladera and Enriqueta Díaz Perera, "La Torrassa. Un antecedent de barri-dormitori," *L'Avenç* 28 (1980): 69.

38 Nick Rider, "The new city and the anarchist movement in the early 1930s," in *Red Barcelona. Social Protest and Labour Mobilization in the 20th Century*, ed. Angel Smith (London: Routledge, 2002), 75.

39 Ealham, *Anarchism*, 56.

40 Pere Gabriel, "Red Barcelona in the Europe of war and revolution, 1914–1930," in *Red Barcelona. Social Protest and Labour Mobilization in the 20th Century*, ed. Angel Smith (London: Routledge, 2002), 44.

41 Ealham, *Anarchism*, 55.

42 Abel Paz, *Feigenkakteen und Skorpione. Eine Biographie (1921–1936)* (Lich: Verlag Edition AV, 2007), 55.

43 Albert Balcells, *Crisis económica y agitación social en Cataluña de 1930 a 1936* (Barcelona: Instituto Católico de Estudios Sociales de Barcelona y Ediciones Ariel, 1971), 127.

for a shorter period of time. The ERC also tried to reduce unemployment by repatriating non-Catalan migrants. Consequently, the ERC opted for forced repatriation, which nevertheless proved equally unsuccessful. In many cases, migrants resisted or immediately returned to Barcelona after having been sent back to their native regions.[44]

In the Second Spanish Republic, apart from working migrants from other part of Spain, foreigners became a significant part of Barcelona's population. They also faced stereotypical depictions, as demonstrated in the following section.

"Apaches" and other "International Bandits"

> It is a well-known fact that the majority of bandits acting in Barcelona right now are foreigners. Nowadays most of the suspects caught in the act are neither Catalan nor Spanish…In the fifth district of our city, the so-called Chinatown…all Apaches and bandits coming from France, Italy, and South America know perfectly well that they will not only find only shelter from the police but also accomplices to help them complete their criminal projects.[45]

This quote is taken from a report on "Apaches and international bandits" published in 1934 by the journalist Fernando Baragó-Solis. The term *Barrio Chino* (Chinatown) had been coined by journalists in the 1920s, and it referred to the southern part of today's El Raval district located between Barcelona's main boulevards Paral•lel and the Ramblas. This area had been one of the first workers' settlements in Barcelona, but during the First World War, its economic influence declined, and the factories were turned into bars and music halls. In the 1930s, the *Barrio Chino* had 230,000 inhabitants and was one of the most densely populated areas in Europe, which created unsanitary conditions. *Barrio Chino*'s bad reputation, however, was mainly because it, like other dockland areas in European port cities, became a center of drug traffic and prostitution. [46]

The term "Apaches" originated in Paris, where it was had been used since the early 20th century by the local press. It referred to people who were accused of all kinds of deviant behavior such as civil disobedience or acts of crime and violence. In its original context, the term did not have an openly racist connotations.[47] In the years after the First World War, however, journalists in Barcelona gave this term a xenophobic meaning by using the the word Apaches to refer to criminals of presumably foreign origin. For example, in December 1919, a local newspaper commented on the assassination of two policemen: "This type of crime is highly unusual. Even though Barcelona is a port city and is close the French border, despite the underworld and the

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44 Ealham, *Anarchism*, 67–69.

45 Fernando Baragó-Solis, Reportajes pintorescos (Barcelona: Progreso, 1934), 107–10.

46 Chris Ealham, "An Imagined Geography. Ideology, Urban Space, and Protest in the Creation of Barcelona's 'China Town', c. 1835–1936," *International Review of Social History*. *50* (2005): 378–80.

47 Bettina Schmidt, Jugendkriminalität und Gesellschaftskrisen. Umbrüche, Denkmodelle und Lösungsstrategien im Frankreich der Dritten Republik 1900–1914 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2005), 17–20.

Apaches, such criminal barbarism has not left any traces in the city so far. When they expelled the Apaches from Paris, they escaped to Marseilles and later settled in Barcelona in the streets *Calle del Mediodía* and *Calle de Cires*…From there, they systematically step out from the fringes of society to commit crimes that are completely alien to the spirit of this city."[48]

It is doubtful that many of these so-called Apaches had fled to Barcelona, as the article claimed. On the one hand, it is true that more than 5,000 French people were living in Barcelona around that time, but on the other hand, they were rarely involved in any more serious crimes. During the Second Spanish Republic, foreigners became more common in Barcelona. As the number of armed robberies rose significantly at the same time, many journalists began to draw a picture of international gangsterism in Barcelona. Josep Maria Planes, one of the first representatives of investigative journalism in Barcelona, wrote a series of articles titled *Els gangsters de Barcelona* (Gangsters of Barcelona). In the last article of the series, which was published in April 1934, Planes wrote about "foreign criminals" in Barcelona. According to him, they were mainly involved in drug trafficking, prostitution, and counterfeiting.[49]

In his aforementioned book, *La inmigració a Catalunya*, along with the internal migrants, Josep Vandellós i Solà also blamed foreigners living in Barcelona for the high crime rate at the time, claiming that, "We must become aware of the fact that there is a significant group of foreigners in Barcelona—some of them without residence permit—who are responsible for a large proportion of the crimes committed in the city. Maybe someday data could be used by the police to skim off both internal migrants and foreigners who endanger public order."[50]

It is true that some of the armed robbers operating in Barcelona were foreigners—mostly Italians—but to hold foreigners responsible for the high crime rate in Barcelona, however, seems to be a significant exaggeration and was rooted in prejudice.

Conclusion

This article presented selected examples to illustrate how "the other" was constructed in Barcelona in the decades before the Spanish Civil War and which stereotypes were produced in that context. In Barcelona's urban discourse, especially in the local print media, foreign ethnic groups such as the *Gitanos*, *Murcianos*, and Apaches were constructed, which in reality did not exist in this form. The Catalans then tried to distinguish themselves from these imagined communities by attributing negative characteristics to them.

Foreigners were blamed for the social and economic problems the urban community of Barcelona was facing at the time in the first years after the First World War, the increasingly violent conflicts between workers and

48 N.N. "Los crímenes de la ciudad," *La Publicidad* (Morning Edition), December 18, 1919, 1.

49 Josep Maria Planes, "Els gangsters de Barcelona. Final de la primera part…," *La Publicitat*, April 12, 1.

50 Vandellós i Solà, *Catalunya*, 199–200.

employers, and by the beginning of the Second Republic in the early 1930s, the high unemployment and crime rates caused by the growing poverty that accompanied it.

Until around the beginning of the First World War, the spread of stereotypes was still limited. This can be primarily explained by the fact that migrants in that era originated mainly from other Catalan-speaking regions. Thus, the Catalan language and local customs were important factors of identification, which made it difficult to stigmatize immigrants as "foreigners" and which facilitated their social and political integration into Barcelona's urban community.

The growing internal political tensions and the economic crises in the final phase of the Restoration Monarchy and during the Second Republic meant that fewer workers were needed in Barcelona and processes of exclusion became stronger. This is very impressively reflected in the urban geography. Immigrants were much less likely to live among locals in the neighborhoods close to the center, and instead they tended to settle on the outskirts or in the cities immediately adjacent to Barcelona.

During this period, Barcelona's urban geography was also characterized by foreign attributions. These began when one of the first shantytowns in Barcelona, later located in the Poblenou district, was named "Peking," thus externalizing its sanitary and humanitarian issues. From this, local journalists created the name *Barrio Chino* for the port district to emphasize its wickedness. In contrast, neighborhoods like La Torrassa, which had a high proportion of migrants, were frowned upon and referred to as "Little Murcia."

Spatial segregation went hand in hand with social exclusion, which was fueled by xenophobic and racist discourse propagated by various Catalan-language media and also within some Catalan intellectual circles. This discourse was also directed against foreigners, who were, for the first time, increasingly present in Barcelona's cityscape in that era. But first and foremost, the Catalans wanted to distance themselves from the Spanish migrants who increasingly came to Barcelona in the 1920s in search of work.

It goes without saying that the xenophobic discourses in Barcelona from the end of the 19th century until the beginning of the Spanish Civil War could only be presented in a very broad strokes in this article. Therefore, further studies would be desirable to better understand whether and in what form these stereotypes about "gypsies," Spanish migrants, and foreigners were reproduced in other regions of Catalonia. Furthermore, it would be interesting to explore how the stereotypes that have been elaborated on in this article changed as a result of the Spanish Civil War and to what extent they were taken up again in the course of the growing Catalan nationalism of recent years.

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