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*Graduate School*

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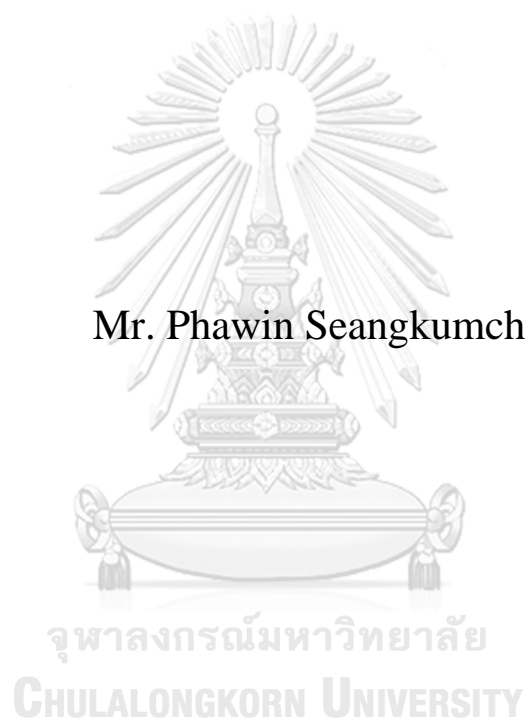
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# Football as a Tactical Innovation for Mobilization: A Study of FC Barcelona and the Catalan Independence Movement

Mr. Phawin Seangkumchoo



A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Arts in European Studies  
Inter-Department of European Studies  
GRADUATE SCHOOL  
Chulalongkorn University  
Academic Year 2021  
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การใช้ฟุตบอลเป็นนวัตกรรมสำหรับยุทธวิธีการเคลื่อนไหวทางสังคม กรณีศึกษาของสโมสร  
ฟุตบอลบาร์เซโลน่ากับขบวนการเรียกร้องเอกราชแห่งคาตาลัน



วิทยานิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต  
สาขาวิชายุโรปศึกษา สหสาขาวิชายุโรปศึกษา  
บัณฑิตวิทยาลัย จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย  
ปีการศึกษา 2564  
ลิขสิทธิ์ของจุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Thesis Title   | Football as a Tactical Innovation for Mobilization: A Study of FC Barcelona and the Catalan Independence Movement |
| By             | Mr. Phawin Seangkumchoo   |
| Field of Study | European Studies  |
| Thesis Advisor | BHANUBHATRA JITTIANG, Ph.D.   |

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จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย  
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ภาวิน แสงคำชู : การใช้ฟุตบอลเป็นนวัตกรรมสำหรับยุทธวิธีการเคลื่อนไหวทางสังคม กรณีศึกษาของสโมสรฟุตบอลบาร์เซโลน่ากับขบวนการเรียกร้องเอกราชแห่งคาตาลัน. (Football as a Tactical Innovation for Mobilization: A Study of FC Barcelona and the Catalan Independence Movement) อ.ที่ปรึกษาหลัก : อ. ดร.ภาณุภัทร จิตเที่ยง

ขบวนการเรียกร้องเอกราชแห่งคาตาลันเป็นขบวนการเคลื่อนไหวทางสังคมในภูมิภาคโซนภาคเหนือของประเทศสเปน ซึ่งหวังจะเป็นเอกราชจากประเทศสเปนเนื่องด้วยสาเหตุทางการเมืองและทางเศรษฐกิจ โดยการเคลื่อนไหวของกลุ่มเรียกร้องเอกราชแห่งคาตาลันไม่เพียงแต่ประท้วงบนท้องถนนหรือตามสถานที่ต่าง ๆ เท่านั้น แต่ขบวนการเรียกร้องนี้ยังมีส่วนในระบบการเมืองของสเปนอีกด้วย โดยในคาตาลันนั้นมีการทำประชามติเรื่องการแยกตัวเป็นอิสระขึ้นในปีค.ศ. 2009 ถึง 2011 ปีค.ศ. 2014 และปีค.ศ. 2017 ดังนั้นงานวิจัยชิ้นนี้จะเน้นศึกษาเรื่องนวัตกรรมสำหรับยุทธวิธีที่ขบวนการเรียกร้องเอกราชแห่งคาตาลันใช้ในการเคลื่อนไหวทางสังคมโดยใช้ฟุตบอลเป็นเครื่องมือในการต่อต้านประเทศสเปน โดยในการศึกษาในงานวิจัยนี้ คำว่าฟุตบอล หมายถึงทีมสโมสรฟุตบอลบาร์เซโลน่า หนึ่งในสโมสรฟุตบอลที่มีชื่อเสียงมากที่สุดในโลกปัจจุบัน

วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้มีจุดประสงค์จะวิเคราะห์ว่าฟุตบอลนั้นมีบทบาทอย่างไรบ้างในการต่อสู้เพื่อเอกราชของคาตาลัน โดยได้ใช้ทฤษฎีเรื่องนวัตกรรมด้านกลยุทธ์ของขบวนการเคลื่อนไหวทางสังคม ซึ่งขบวนการเคลื่อนไหวทางสังคมนั้นจะขัดขวางสถานการณ์ปกติของสังคม เพื่อเรียกร้องความสนใจของกลุ่มตรงข้ามหรือกลุ่มที่กำลังต่อต้านนั่นเอง (แมคคอตัมและสโนว์, 2010) การศึกษานี้จะค้นคว้าผ่านแหล่งข้อมูล เช่น วิเคราะห์ผ่านงานวิจัยหลัก ๆ บทสัมภาษณ์ รายงาน และสื่อต่าง ๆ

สโมสรฟุตบอลบาร์เซโลน่าสร้างผลกระทบต่อขบวนการเรียกร้องเอกราชแห่งคาตาลันใน 3 มิติด้วยกัน ได้แก่ มิติแรกคือบาร์ซ่าเป็นตัวแทนของคุณค่าแห่งแคว้นคาตาลัน มิติที่สองคือบาร์ซ่าเป็นพื้นที่ปลอดภัยสำหรับขบวนการเคลื่อนไหวทางสังคมของคาตาลัน และมิติที่สามคือบาร์ซ่าเป็นเครื่องมือในการส่งเสริมอัตลักษณ์ของชาวคาตาลัน สโมสรช่วยโฆษณาภาพการต่อสู้ดิ้นรนเพื่อเอกราชของคาตาลันสู่สายตาของชาวโลกและนี่คือกุญแจสำคัญที่ทำให้บาร์ซ่ากลายเป็นนวัตกรรมทางกลยุทธ์แบบใหม่ ดังนั้น ขบวนการเคลื่อนไหวของคาตาลันนี้ได้ใช้ฟุตบอลในฐานะที่เป็นการสร้างสรรค์นวัตกรรมใหม่ในทางกลยุทธ์ของขบวนการเคลื่อนไหวทางสังคมเพื่อประท้วง

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ปีการศึกษา 2564

ลายมือชื่อนิสิต .....  
ลายมือชื่อ อ.ที่ปรึกษาหลัก .....

# # 6284012520 : MAJOR EUROPEAN STUDIES

KEYWOR Football Catalan Spain FC Barcelona The Catalan Independence  
D: Movement

Phawin Seangkumchoo : Football as a Tactical Innovation for  
Mobilization: A Study of FC Barcelona and the Catalan Independence  
Movement. Advisor: BHANUBHATRA JITTIANG, Ph.D.

The Catalan Independence Movement is the movement in the Northern region of Spain which aims to be independent from Spain cause of problems in politics and economic. The Catalan mobilization not only marches on the street but also plays their role through the Spanish political procedure. In Catalan, the referendum on independence was issued in 2009-2011, 2014, and 2017. This study focuses on the Catalan mobilization tactical innovation which uses football as a tool against Spain. In this case, football which was used mean 'FC Barcelona,' one of the famous football club in the world.

This study aims to identify how football play role in the Catalan struggle. With the theory of tactical Innovation, social movement will disrupt normal situation to attract interest of group's opponent and the society (McAdam and Snow, 2010). This study explores through sources such as analyzing mainly research articles, interviews, reports, and other media outlets.

FC Barcelona has an impact on the Catalan Independence Movement in 3 three dimensions. First, Barça as representation of the Catalan values. Second, Barça as a save space for Catalan mobilization. And third, Barça as an instrument to foster Catalan identity. The club promoted the Catalan struggle issue to the world. One of the important keys to achieving aims is the creativity of the new tactical forms; therefore, Catalan mobilization use 'football' as creativity to create the new tactical innovation to protest.

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Field of Study: European Studies

Student's Signature

Academic 2021

Advisor's Signature

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to those who helped me, supported me, encouraged me, believed in me although I may not believe in myself anymore until I become successful with this thesis.

Firstly, I am truly thankful for Dr. Bhanubhatra Jittiang or Aj. Kaan, Lecturer of International Relations, Director of the M.A. and Ph.D. Program in International Development Studies (MAIDS-GRID) Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University, who decided to be my advisor. At that time I was nervous because I never did thesis before, I had only intention to do thesis but he was so kind and promised me that he would teach me and also help me to complete the thesis. And because of his help and support and also advice a lot of useful tools and techniques to do thesis all along my thesis journey, I truly thank you.

Secondly, I am thankful for my family who always support, have faith, believe in me and encourage me all the time through my thesis journey, because of their help and support, that is why I do not give up and started writing again and again and again and again and again until I am done.

Thirdly, I truly thank you to my college friends, Miss. Ananya Charoenwong and Mr. Dechathorn Sachdev who always help me all along the master's degree and also help me prove my thesis and always cheers me up and spend time together all along the master's degree. I feel so happy and learn a lot from you; however, I am still more awesome than you.

Fourthly, thank you to Associate Professor Natthanan Khunamas, Ph.D., and Assistant Professor Weera Wongsatjachock, Ph.D., who was the thesis' committee who give me advice with very useful and made my thesis become one among the good researches in the Chulalongkorn database. This was very honour to me. Especially Asst. Prof. Natthanan because of your advice to use Football in Catalan as a topic for my thesis, that was inspire me.

Lastly, thank you to Asst Prof Bhawan Ruangsilp Ph.D. and Asst. Prof. Natthanan and other who involve that decided to accept me to join the MAEUS field. I am so happy when I know that I passed your interview. Maybe because I went to

interview when I was still a monk. I can truly said that with the MAEUS course, this is the milestone in my life. This was very important and I will remember this chance since now.

Finally, thank you to myself to decide to do this thesis, although it was taken a long long time (a lot of money) and a lot of disappointment moments; however, this makes me stronger and developed me a lot which I can feel it and see it; So, this was very honour to me to do thesis. This is a huge step of my life, and I will never regret about this.

Phawin Seangkumchoo





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# Chapter 1: Introduction

## I. Introduction

Sports are activities created for leisure and entertainment (Steinberg, 2018). In games, there will always be a winner and a loser. The 1986 “Olympic Games” in Athens, Greece, was the first known modern sports competition event. Since then, sports activities have become popular as people dedicate themselves to sports competitions both as players and as an audience. For sports fans, there are ways to express their admiration for the teams or players, such as tattooing themselves with logos or symbols or as simple as cheering for games (Serra, 2015). Sports teams or sports stars can arguably affect society.

In recent years, sports and politics have been more closely related. Sports can influence public opinion and unite people for specific purposes. Sports events can serve as a political stage for expressing one’s concerns or pushing agendas for changes. Players and protesters have used sports avenues as a platform, including football matches, for social movements to gain audience support. The consequences of the Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in February 2022<sup>1</sup> provide some evidence for illustration. The European football clubs, such as Schalke 04, boycotted Russia and cut ties with the Russian companies from being a sponsor of the team (Al Jazeera, 2022). Sports, therefore, can be used for political purposes

Football is arguably one of the most popular sports on the planet. Many fans worldwide enthusiastically watch the matches on sites or from home and follow sports news daily. Therefore, any messages or forms of activism at the football stadiums can be transmitted quickly. For instance, there are the cases in the United States, such as Colin Kaepernick, a player in the National Football League (NFL)<sup>2</sup>, who refused to stand for the national anthem to protest against police brutality and racism (BBC

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<sup>1</sup> Russia invaded Ukraine on 24 February 2022 which became the marking of an escalation of the Russo-Ukrainian War. The conflict between Russia-Ukraine began since 2014 following the Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity. The invasion has caused Europe's largest refugee crisis that more than 5.1 million Ukrainians left Ukraine to escape from war.

<sup>2</sup> Football in Europe means a game which played between two teams of eleven people, where each team tries to win by kicking a ball into the other team's goal. While in U.S. understand in the word ‘soccer’.

News, 2020). His actions were able to affect society. Similarly, Jonathan Isaac, a National Basketball Association (NBA) star, refused to kneel for the U.S. anthem or wear a Black Lives Matter T-shirt in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter Movement (NZME, 2020). His action also had an impact on the society at large.

Meanwhile, in Europe, the Catalan Independence Movement was a social movement that used football for publicity and mobilization. The movement closely relates to FC Barcelona, a world-renowned team based at the heart of the Catalan region. As FC Barcelona's matches always attract a huge crowd, the movement has taken advantage of the team's and players' popularity for the causes of the Catalan people, including the Catalan Independence Movement. The movement initiated the "More than a club" campaign, from which the movement leaders convinced former and present FC Barcelona players and staff, such as Josef 'Pep' Guardiola and Gerard Piqué, to use media platforms to express their support for the political campaign. Guardiola, for instance, wore a yellow ribbon in support of the movement leaders to the point where the English Football Association (FA) punished him for breaking a political symbol rule (AFP, 2018). Piqué's interview on the political issue also put him at odds with his fellow Spanish national teammates (Dawson, 2017). Because of many incidents regarding FC Barcelona intentionally expressing their involvement in political activities, I believe that football has formed a part of the Catalan Independence Movement's tactical innovation. This thesis explores how the movement has used football to advance its political goals in this study.

### **Research question**

How does the Catalan Independence Movement use football as a tactical innovation for their independence struggle from Spain?

## II. Literature review

To delve into how football become a tactical innovation of the Catalan Independence Movement, I investigate how scholars have discussed the role of sports, particularly football, in political activism and the dynamics of the Catalan movement itself. I divide my literature review into two parts. The first part discusses the relationship between football and politics, and the second part discusses the study of the Catalan independence movement.

Does football affect the independence movement differently from the movements on other issues? How does the independence movements use football to achieve their goal? By exploring these questions, I aim to compare how football has been integrated into the independence movements' politics to find particular and consistent patterns across the board. In this study, I will focus on the case of football activism in the Catalan Independence Movement.

Football has played an essential role in politics and political activism on multiple fronts, from identity politics to international and domestic struggles. Flint and Kelly (2013) argue that football is central to the identity struggle among players and has also become a sport that fosters identities among fans. Their study of football in Scotland discusses how football ties closely to sectarianism, a cultural or political conflict between two groups within the same area. It has a significant impact on Celtic and Rangers football clubs.<sup>3</sup> In the stadium, Rangers fans will sing loyalist songs 'Sash Bashes,' while Celtic fans will sing republican songs 'Rebel Nights.' These songs were used to cheer and demonstrate clubs' feelings towards sectarian issues. Thus, football helps foster a shared identity among players and fans.

Within global corporates, football is also used to foster ties among workers. In Australia, Burke (2005) explains that workplace football allows employers to create a sense of identity and team spirit among the company's workers. For example, based on developing a common identity, J. S. M. Thompson in Victoria used workplace

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<sup>3</sup> The Celtic Football Club is a Scottish football club in Glasgow, Scotland. Celtic have won over 100 trophies in their history. While the rivalry, Rangers Football Club is also a Scottish football club in Glasgow. Both clubs were recognized as one of the world's biggest football derbies.

football to advance managerial authority and social control over his workforce. As a result, workplace sports helped retain, attract, and secure workers' loyalty to the firm.

In identity politics, scholars also investigate how social movements use football for gender purposes—mainly to politically alter gender relations. According to Engh (2010), football in South Africa was traditionally viewed as a game for men. In 1993, however, the first official South African women's national football team was established for recognition and to fight against discrimination, marginalization, and blatant sexism against women in football. Therefore, football is arguably a sport that allows women to foster their identity. In the case of Sweden, Hjelm (2013) explains that Swedish people share a similar attitude towards females and football as those in South Africa. To change this attitude, a fraction of the Sweden society has come up with a “Why aren't girls allowed to have a football team?” campaign, which preceded the creation of the Swedish female football team. The team's rise has led to the changing attitude of the people toward females in football eventually.

Bubalo (2013) states that football is a means to accumulate diplomatic advantages at the regional and international levels. For example, Australia uses football as a tool for diplomats to connect with other countries in Asia and foster political and cultural ties across the continents. Bubalo (2013) argues that Australia. The latter two nations successfully used the FIFA World cup in 2006 and 2010 to change their country's image and gain significant economic benefits from organizing football-related events. The author suggests that football matches have allowed Australia to gain political and business connections and promote local products, tourism, development, and education through football diplomacy.

Despite the growing number of studies on the relationship between football and politics, especially football and the fostering of social identity. However, the studies which focus on the football as a main tool for fostering social movement are not popular among journalist or academic topics; therefore, I believe there remains a gap in how football is used by other social movements, especially independence movements. Independence Movement is one political protest that tries to disrupt society to gain society's attention and achieve its goals. In this case, it can be seen as a



domestic protest against the central government, whose ultimate goal was gaining independence from Spain. This internal conflict could also affect the European continent if the Catalan succeeds.

Regarding the Catalan Independence Movement studies, most focus on its controversial history and historical dynamics between Spain and Catalan that illustrate how Catalan has had its own political, legal, and cultural structures for a long time and how the separatist sentiment has emerged in the Catalan region. Early works, such as Thomas (1962), argue that the Catalan movement against Spain could be traced back to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. After the Franco era, the revival of the Catalan language has helped preserve and foster Catalan identity and the separatist mind among these people. The common language allows Catalan people to distinguish themselves from the Spaniards. In the more recent works, Carrera (2014) argues that it was not the language that played a pivotal role in invoking the Catalan separatism but the loss of trust in the Spanish state since 1898 when Spain lost Cuba and the Philippines. These historical factors allowed the Catalan people to distinguish themselves from the rest of Spain, discussed later in Chapter 2.

On the one hand, the debates over the emergence of the separatist sentiment concentrate on the motives of the Catalan Independence Movement have turned into ones revolving around a separate state (Guibernau 2014). As seen from the 2012's demonstration, over 1.5 million people were on the streets of Barcelona calling for Catalan independence. This led to the Catalan sovereignty declaration by the Catalan Parliament in 2010, 2013, and 2017, judged unconstitutional by the Spanish Constitutional Court. On the other hand, Payne (1971) claims that it remains unclear whether the Catalan Independence Movement wishes to have independence or not. The Catalan people's movement occurred because they wanted to have their parliament and a fully autonomous regional administrative system reflecting their political values and social identities.

While several studies have focused on the Catalan Independence Movement, most previous works have emphasized separatist history. Therefore, I am determined

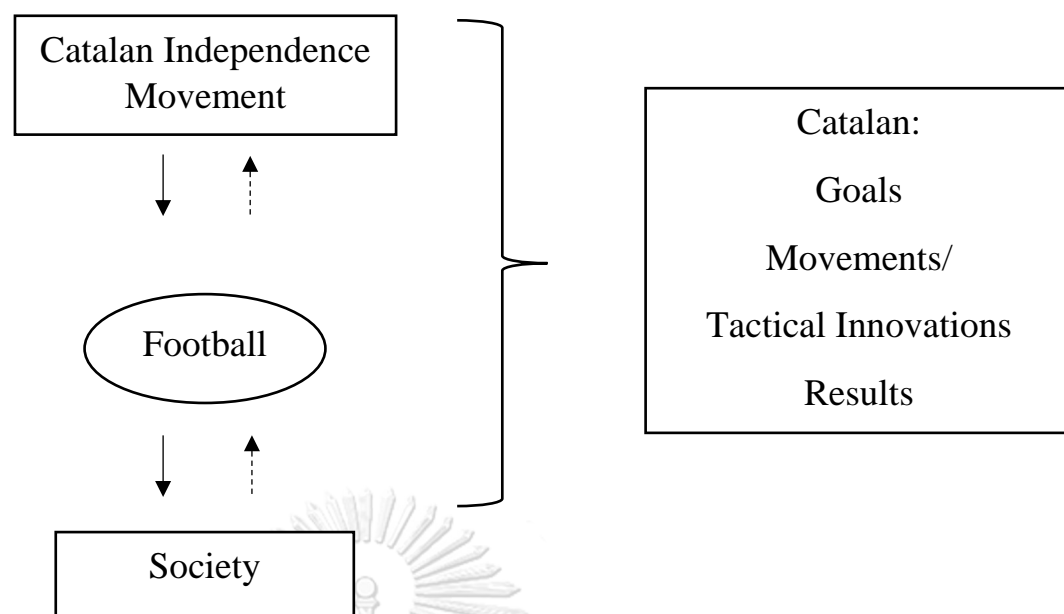
**to pursue this study to unpack football's role in the Catalan Independence Movement.** Because most of the Catalan Independence Movement journal and academic often mention the historical contexts which too narrow to understand the Catalan issued, therefore which use football as a focus for the tactical innovation for the Catalan, we could understand Catalan in different way and understand the mechanism of the Catalan society in difference lens.

### **III. Theoretical Framework and Arguments**

My research looks at how football functions in the Catalan Independence Movement through the socialization process that facilitates Catalan citizens' learning, absorbing, and developing of their Catalan identity. I argue that the Catalan Independence Movement has used football as a tool for societal change. Thus, this thesis explores how football is used as a tactical innovation in driving a social movement toward an independent country.

The Catalan Independence Movement used football to develop tactical innovations in their fights for independence from Spain. Football is used in two ways. First, football allows different parties in Catalonia to participate in the struggle by bringing them together in an event; second, it leads the movement to project the campaign to attract attention and support from elsewhere. Accordingly, football allows the Catalan Independence Movement to gain significant momentum in their fight for independence from Spain.

According to Kreisi, Koopmans, Duyvendak, and Giugni (2015), the concept of 'tactical innovation' can be employed to explain how the Catalan Independence Movement has developed the use of football as a tool against Spain. The impact of using football in the social movement can be measured in two dimensions, namely the internal impact and external impact. On the one hand, the internal implications include the social movement's result and the effect on the collective identity. On the other hand, the external mark consists of the impact on the political procedure, subsistence, political structure, and public attention.



*Figure 1 Research Framework*

#### **IV. Research Design**

I provide the photographic representation of the political activities of football and FC Barcelona, in particular, to investigate how a social movement has used football to push forward its political agenda to gain attention from the public. I use primary and secondary sources, namely research articles, interviews, reports, and media outlets such as the BBC, the Guardian, Sky Sport, CNN, El País, and social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook to provide essential information on the Catalan Independence Movement's socio-political contexts.

This research is divided into five chapters. First is this chapter, an introduction, and literature reviews. Chapter 2 demonstrates the history of the Catalan Independence Movement to highlight the relationship between Catalonia and Spain. Chapter 3 describes the role of football in the movement as a tactical innovation. Chapter 4, I assess the impacts of using football for mobilization and emphasize whether or not the Catalan Independence Movement has succeeded in using football for mobilizing support. I also explore its limitations in using football in the movements and the setbacks for the football club itself. The final chapter concludes this study and examines the future directions for the research on the topic.

## Chapter 2: History of Catalan's Struggle Against Spain

Catalan was once an autonomous political entity before becoming a part of Spain, situated in the country's northeastern region. This chapter explores the historical struggle of Catalan and explains why Catalan people have rejected to be part of Spain and acted against the central government of Spain. Some of the groups even aim to obtain independence for the Catalan people. To illustrate this, I provide a historical context of the Catalan and their endless conflict with Spain in five periods, namely, 1. the Emergence of the Catalan, 2. the first conflict between Catalan and Spain, 3. 'the Catalan Revolt War,' the War of the Spanish Succession, 4. The Catalan Renaissance, 5. the Spanish Civil war, 6. The conflict in the 1978 Spanish Constitution and 7. the rise of Catalan Separatism.

### The Geography of the Catalan Region



Figure 2 The Catalan map. Picture from <http://whereismap.net/where-is-catalonia-located-in-spain-map-who-are-the-catalans/>

Catalan, Catalonia, Spanish **Cataluña**, or Catalunya<sup>4</sup> are located in the northern part of Spain, where the Pyrenees Mountain is located and the Mediterranean. The Catalan region has four provinces: Barcelona, Girona, Lleida, and Tarragona. In the north, the area is next to Southern France and Andorra; in the east, it is connected to the Mediterranean; in the south is next to Valencia; and in the west is adjacent to the autonomous region of Aragon. The capital city of Catalan is Barcelona<sup>5</sup>. The total areas are 12,390 square miles or 32,091 square kilometers (Rodriguez, 2021). Catalan's population is approximately 1.6 million people.<sup>6</sup> In addition, Catalan speaks their own language<sup>7</sup>, which is different from Spanish<sup>8</sup> and not a dialect of Castilian Spanish<sup>9</sup>. Linguistically, the Catalan language combines French and Spanish with little influence from Portuguese and Italian languages<sup>10</sup>, which developed from Latin in northeastern Spain (Thomas, 1962).

Apart from those in the Catalan region, people in Valencia, the Balearic Islands, France (in the Pyrénées-Orientales area), Andorra, and even Italy can also speak or understand the language (Jessop, 2019). After the Spanish occupation, Catalan people have become bilingual, and the 1978 Spanish Constitution imposes Spanish as the official language of Spain (Vila, Lasagabaster, and Ramallo, 2017).

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<sup>4</sup> Throughout this research will use the term 'Catalan,' which stands for the current movement's name

<sup>5</sup> 621 kilometers from Madrid and 1,037 kilometers from Paris can transport via airplane, car, bus, public transportation, etc.

<sup>6</sup> The number based on World Population Review from <https://worldpopulationreview.com/regions/catalonia-population>.

<sup>7</sup> There are over 9 million people in the world who can speak Catalan. Moreover, more than 4 million used Catalan as a native language such as in Catalan, Valencia, etc. (Jessop, 2019).

<sup>8</sup> For example, Catalan language is different from Spanish because it lacks rising diphthongs (such as ie and ue; the word 'well,' Catalan use be and Spanish use bien; the word 'good,' Catalan use bo and Spanish use bueno). Catalan language has falling diphthongs (such as au, ou, eu; the word 'foot,' Catalan use peu and Spanish use pie; the word 'ox,' Catalan use bou and Spanish use buey) (Sala, 2015).

<sup>9</sup> Castilian Spanish, (or Peninsular Spanish), is the origin of Spanish language which use in northern and central Spain (Nario, 2021).

<sup>10</sup> Catalan, Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese, and many other European languages have their origins in Latin (or Romance languages); however, each language has evolved differently, and Catalan was similar to France. For example, the Catalan word for morning is *matí*, the French equivalent is *matin*, and the Spanish equivalent is *mañana*. (Jessop, 2019).

## **The Emergence of the Catalan Movement and Its Struggles**

The Catalan Empire first appeared in the early Middle Ages from the ninth century when there were the 'Hispanic' or 'Hispano-Romans,' the refugees who migrated from Septimania and Tarragona to the kingdom of the Franks, the Post-Roman barbarian kingdom in Western Europe. Later, with the expand of the number of the people in Hispanics within the Pyrenean land (the mountain range in the border between Spain and France). And this community was established in this area called a 'Trans-Pyrenean community.' The Trans-Pyrenean gave rise to the Neo-Latin language in the community, and later, this community developed through time and became Catalan (Cabré, Coroleu, Ferrer, Lloret, and Pujol, 2018).

The golden age of the Catalan Empire is believed to be during the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, when Catalan was under Peter the Ceremonious, King of Catalan and Aragon. He expanded its territories to the east of the Mediterranean area through the annexation of Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, and Naples (which belongs to Italy in the present) until 1714 (Cabré, Coroleu, Ferrer, Lloret, and Pujol, 2018).

Catalan had expanded its power to the east and Italy during the golden era. However, King Ferdinand II of Aragon and Queen Isabella I of the Aragon, Castile, and León, the region near Catalan, conquered Granada and gained control over all of the Iberian Peninsula to become the Christian empire under one crown in 1492 (Christiansen, 2020). Catalan was finally merged to become part of the united Aragon, Castile, and León in the fifteenth century.

With countless wars and territorial acquisitions throughout the region, the French and the Spanish had well-documented disputes over the Catalan region. This was due to the growing benefits from the Port of Barcelona at the heart of Catalan. The city became the center of the economics in Western Mediterranean region (Dankowski, 2019).

The first conflict between Catalan and Spain broke out in the sixteenth century. It was called 'La Guerra Dels Segadors' or 'the Catalan Revolt War.' The war occurred after Catalan was occupied by the Spanish Kingdom in 1516. It began through the uncertainties in Spanish politics caused by King Philip IV, the Spanish king (1605-1665), and Gaspar de Guzman de Olivares, a Spanish royal favorite of

Philip IV and the prime minister of Spain (1621-1643), they both agreed to proceed the annexation of Catalan to the Spanish kingdom permanently. Consequently, the problem emerged from the rejection by Catalan people who refused to let 16,000 Catalan men join the Spain military as they preferred to use the troops to protect their region from other armies' aggression, such as the French. Although Catalan was fighting against Spanish domination, Catalan was also involved in the 'Franco-Spanish war' in 1635. The Franco-Spanish War was the root of the Catalan War with Spain. This was led by France; France asserted a claim to protecting the people's rights, which led to the intervention of Portugal and Catalan. And later, Portugal and Catalan played a role as independent actors in this war. However, only Portugal succeeded in gaining independence, and Catalan failed. At the end of the Franco-Spanish War, France and Spain signed the Peace Treaty of Münster, which contained the concept of sovereignty (Croxtton, 1999). In the Franco-Spanish War, the battle took place in the Catalan region.

Accordingly, Gaspar de Guzman of the Spanish empire sent troops to Catalan to fight against the French for four years until the Spanish troops succeeded and forced the French troops to leave Catalan, which obtained the area of Roussillon, which became the southern region of modern France. The conflict between Catalan and Spain continued as General Pau Claris, the Catalan leader, decided to attack the Spanish troops. This attack led to the Catalan Revolt war in 1642. Without the French support, the Catalan forces could not resist King Philip IV's Spanish troops and surrendered in 1652. Spain successfully claimed victory over Catalan (Christiansen, 2020).

The second conflict between the Catalan and Spanish empires occurred in the early eighteenth century. It was known as the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714). The conflict was between the French and the Habsburg (Austrian)<sup>11</sup>. Catalan chose to side with the Austrian because they supported Prince Charles, who took the

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<sup>11</sup> The Austrian had an alliance with the Dutch and English which formally declared in May 1702, because of the reason that by the succeed of Prince Philippe d'Anjou (King Philippe V) to be the king of Spain, England had the opinion that this succeed of France, the French hegemony would disrupt the balance of power in Europe.

Catalan side, to be succeeded in line after the death of King Charles II of the Spanish Monarchy in 1700. The war was declared because Prince Philippe d'Anjou, supported by the French, was already appointed as an heir to succeed the throne by King Charles II right before he died (Christiansen, 2020). The result of siding with the Habsburgs in this war was the failure in attempting to gain independence from Spain. Prince Philippe d'Anjou, or King Philippe V, during his visit to Barcelona in 1702, offered the annexation of Sardinia and Roussillon territories to Catalan; however, it was unsuccessful. A year later, Prince Charles of Austria was crowned king of Catalan, Aragon, and Castile under Charles III (Christiansen, 2020).

In 1705, the revolution in Madrid during that time was affected to the Charles VI (Holy Roman Emperor or Archduke of Austria)<sup>12</sup>, over the Catalan region at that time. Thus, the Charles VI had to move to Valencia, the southern province of Spain. From this cause, in 1713, Spain pushed Charles VI to sign a peace agreement and again to leave Valencia. The action was meant to remove his influence over the Catalan region. The Catalan was left alone in the fight against the Spanish and the French. This was another moment that Catalan expressed their resistance to Spanish rule. However, Spain gained support from the French Bourbon troops to plague Barcelona on 11 September 1714. This was the day that the Spanish defeated the Catalan during the War of Spanish Succession. The happening symbolized the loss that Catalan failed to gain its independence and was punished for being rebellious. *Generalitat de Catalunya* (the Catalan political institutions) were eliminated; many Catalan leaders were executed; they lost their power over Minorca, Sicily, Sardinia, and Naples territories; and no longer gained any political influence over the region. More importantly, the Catalan cultural practices, such as the language and literature, were prohibited under the reign of King Philip V of Spain and the crown of Castile (Jessop, 2019).

After several conflicts against Spain and its allies, Catalan has been long suppressed since the end of the War of the Spanish Succession in the nineteenth

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG67072>



century. During the 1870s to 1880s, Catalan followed the Industrial Revolution<sup>13</sup> to boost their economy by seeking prosperity from the development of Port of Barcelona. This period was called the ‘Catalan La Renaixença’ or the Catalan renaissance because the Catalan language and culture were revived by the practice of a new generation of Catalan artists, authors, and playwrights such as poets as Roig de Corella and Ausias March, and Joan Martorell, author of *Tirant lo Blanch*<sup>14</sup>. Moreover, the Catalan language was also practiced in drama, fiction, science, etc. This period has dramatically impacted how Catalan people preserve their identity, which led to a strong sense of Catalan Nationalism (Christiansen, 2020).

### **The Spanish Civil War and the Catalan struggle**

Spain remained one of the European kingdoms until 1931. It turned into a republic due to the change in political idea among Spaniards, most of Spaniards at that time employed the left-wing idea and liberalism; they supported Spain’s republican party, which transformed Spain’s politics into a new era by the victory of the PSOE party or the Spanish socialist party, the social-democratic party in Spain<sup>15</sup>, in the election and the support from Spanish citizens. However, in 1936, the ‘Guerra Civil Española’ or the ‘Spanish Civil War’ broke out of complex social situations and political conflicts within Spain between the Spanish republican (left-wing) and the military led by General Francisco Franco. Catalan supported the former and had a clear vision of nationalism through the ideology of republicanism resulting from political changes in 1931. Catalan had stood against the conservative idea as they refused to be assimilated with other identities in Spain by supporting the Spanish Republican side and the idea of the leftist winning.

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<sup>13</sup> The First Industrial Revolution began in England in 1760 to 1820 and 1840. This revolution was transformed human and animal labours to machinery, such as the steam engine, coke smelting, processes building iron, etc. This revolution also renewed for global economic growth and increase the production and consumption of people (Mohajan, 2019).

<sup>14</sup> Novel of chivalry which was one of the favorites of Cervantes.

<sup>15</sup> The PSOE was founded in 1879 which was the oldest political party in Spain. The PSOE party played role during the Second Spanish Republic and also being part of coalition government from 1931 to 1933 and from 1936 to 1939 (during the Spanish Civil War).

The Spanish Civil War ended in 1939, changing Spain from a republic to an authoritarian regime. Franco himself became the leader of Spain from 1939 until 1975. The war was brutal and was followed by a massive loss of many people, both Franco's military and the Spanish Republican side. The rise of Franco and his dictatorship led to further suppression of Catalan. (Claudia, 2018).

In regional and global history, while other European countries struggled with the two World Wars in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Spain did not directly involve in the great wars and declared neutrality (Keene, 2007). However, Franco had a strong connection with Adolf Hitler, the leader of the Nazis in Germany, Benito Mussolini, the leader of the Fascist in Italy, and 'António de Oliveira Salazar,' the authoritarian leader of Portugal. Although Spain declared neutrality, it implicitly became an ally to the axis powers. Franco received support from Hitler, Mussolini, and Salazar to strengthen the Spanish military capacity against the Spanish republican. Such assistance lessened the chance for Catalan to proceed with any political negotiation. At the end of the Second World War, Spain took the side of the United States. They signed the air transport agreement, leading them to join the Allies, the winning side of World War II (Marquina, 1998).

During the Franco era, his authoritarian regime negatively affected Catalan. The period was plagued by 'Francoism,' the regime in which media censorship was implemented, and different aspects of citizen's life have been controlled. Franco had an idea to unite Spain by setting the national policies to strengthen Spain's national identity and eliminate other identities within Spain.

Accordingly, Catalan had to confront the great suppression of Francoist nationalism. For example, the Franco government prohibited all Catalan symbols that expressed the Catalan identity, such as the Catalan flag. The Catalan history lessons were also banned in the local schools, and the Catalan language was banned and replaced by Spanish as an official language in the Catalan region. Lastly, the government had formed a vast secret police network, the cooperation of secret Spanish agents and networks which shared personal information, to spy on and observe the Catalan citizens who might disobey Franco's orders (Ampuero, 2004). With no pressure from other countries or organizations against Spain under

Francoism, suppressed Catalan depended on themselves to fight back for democracy (Guibernau, 2014). During this era, a sense of Catalan nationalism had reemerged among the Catalan citizens as a reaction toward Francoism (further in the 20<sup>th</sup> century).

Catalan nationalism refers to the Catalan people's collective consciousness that demanded political independence, including their regional parliament and autonomous government, their rights to develop the local economy in their ways, and revive Catalan cultural traditions. This ethnonationalist sentiment does not equate to the Catalan separatism ideology that further demands independence (Payne, 1971). To illustrate this, in 1971, Catalan established the 'Assembly of Catalan,' the organization which supported the Catalan movement to protect the Catalan identity under Francoism. The Assembly of Catalan was established by a group of Catalan citizens, around three hundred people with different political, social, and professional backgrounds. This Catalan underground organization was enlarged and became the first Catalan movement since the Spanish Civil War ended. Furthermore, in the same year, Catalan ensured their desire to recover democracy, which could be seen from the winning of the MSC and the PSUC parties that got the left-wing or the democracy ideology. At that time, 'Catalonia's Socialist Movement' or the MSC, the Catalan leftist party, and 'the Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia' or the PSUC, also the Catalan leftist party, won over the support of Catalan citizens. Catalan citizens at that time under Francoism needed the left-side political ideology or democracy to protect the Catalan identity and seek Catalan autonomy (Guibernau, 2014).

The turning point in the struggle between Spain and Catalan was in 1975 when Franco died. His regime had finally ended. The country has switched from a dictatorship to a constitutional and parliamentary monarchy (Office of the President, Spain)<sup>16</sup>. Their first democratic election in Spain was held after the long period of Francoism in 1977 and established the new Spanish Constitution, which came from the consensus of the Spain political parties in 1978. During this transition, Catalan

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<sup>16</sup> As stated in the press release of the Constitutional Court of Spain, Office of the President. Get access:

[https://www.tribunalconstitucional.es/NotasDePrensaDocumentos/NP\\_2019\\_013/Press%20Release%20No.%2013.2019.pdf](https://www.tribunalconstitucional.es/NotasDePrensaDocumentos/NP_2019_013/Press%20Release%20No.%2013.2019.pdf)

found the opportunity to seek their rights to self-determination and freedom of expression in practicing and preserving their Catalan identity as they have been trying to do for centuries (Guibernau, 2014). The attempts have never been easy and always faced confrontation between Catalan nationalists and Spain's central government.

### **The Catalan and Spain Contention and the 1978 Spanish Constitution**

After the death of Franco, Spain drafted a new constitution. A new round of struggle between Catalan and Spain began during this period. In 1977, at the beginning of the post-Franco era, the Catalan government had re-established the 'Generalitat de Catalunya,' the government of the Catalan which was central to mobilizing Catalan citizens who supported the idea of independence. It was through this idea that Josep Tarradellas, the Catalan President of the Generalitat de Catalunya at that time, agreed with the Catalan nationalists to march on the streets along with over a million of the Catalan people to reject the administrative centralization<sup>17</sup> of Spain and demand an autonomous status for Catalan region (Petithomme and Garcia, 2013). During the protest, Catalan people also used symbolic tactics against Spain, such as hanging the Catalan flag around their region, shouting in the Catalan language during their daily protests, organizing a campaign to ban Spanish culture, etc.

In 1978, Tarradellas of 'the Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya' or the ERC party, the leftist party in Catalan, expressed a preference for the republic rather than a parliamentary monarchy. They also demanded the right for Catalan self-determination (Petithomme and Garcia, 2013). The Catalan parliament claimed that they succeeded in passing a statute of autonomy and deserved the right to self-govern to be written in the Spanish constitution preamble article one, which declared Catalan as a 'Nationality.' in 1979. Even though Spain provided autonomy to Catalan, which was put in the 1978 Spanish constitution in preamble article one; however, it did not make Catalan automatically grant themselves to be a nation-state (Claudia, 2020).

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<sup>17</sup> Centralization is the process which a particular group make a decision in the important decision-making and also planning strategies, powers and policies. Spain was use this regime before such as the period before the War of Spanish Secession which led to the rise of Catalan at that time.

Accordingly, with the transition of Spain into democracy and the success in passing a statute of autonomy, in 1980, the first election in Catalan was set in Barcelona city. And the result was the victory of ‘the Convergencia i Unio’ (CiU) party, one of the socialist parties in Catalan. During the role of the CiU party led by Jordi Pujol, the Catalan government was changed into a long-term period that focused on the political strategies to achieve more autonomous power during the transition to democracy in Spain, which affected the held of Catalan referendum which occurred in Catalan political party later (Levrat, Antunes, Tusseau and Williams, 2017). Additionally, the ERC at that time received fifth place in the election. During the 1980s, Catalan policies were influenced by the Catalan nationalists through the Generalitat de Catalunya, to which Jordi Pujol, the leader of the CiU at that time, agreed.

Moreover, with ‘the linguistic normalization’ policy, the Catalan language was allowed to use in schools, media, and formality. It helped recover and strengthen Catalan identity. With this policy, Catalan regained their identity and changed Catalan society to become bilingualism, which continues nowadays. From this cause, Catalan nationalism was build-up; moreover, the sense of nationalism in Catalan was more robust during the transition until it led to the desire for Catalan separatism. Furthermore, the CiU used this policy to promote democratic politics and bid for mutual agreement among Catalan citizens, which would support the development of Catalan politics to become a nation (Petithomme and Garcia, 2013).

Apart from the Catalan desire for autonomy, the Spanish central government developed dissension between Catalan and Spain. They suspected Catalan autonomy and Catalan parties such as the ERC and the CiU (Petithomme and Garcia, 2013). Therefore, in 2004, Catalan had the opportunity to revise Catalan autonomy. José Luís Rodríguez Zapatero, the leader of ‘the Partido Popular’ or the PP party, the Spanish conservative political party, the Spanish Prime Minister at that time, opened an opportunity for Catalan to revise the legal definition of what Catalan autonomy could mean for their rights to self-determination based on the consensus among the Catalan parties

Thus, in 2005, Catalan began to struggle with the desire to put the word 'Nation' in the Spanish Constitution. The Catalan parliament completed considered a revised statute of autonomy. In the Catalan revised statute, the preamble mentioned Catalan as a 'Nationality.' The previous sentence said Catalan as a 'Nation.' The Catalan Parliament declared to grant Catalan a nation. Then, Catalan sent this revised statute to the Spanish Parliament to approve (Petithomme and Garcia, 2013). However, the definition of 'Nation' became the conflict between Catalan and Spain in the 1978 Spanish Constitution. Finally, the argument of the word nation ended in 2010. After spending four years considering the definition of the word 'nation,' the Supreme court denied the nationhood of Catalan. Nevertheless, the PP party did not agree with the word 'Nation;' therefore, they forwarded the Catalan revised statute to the Spanish Constitutional Court to consider. After that, the court declared that the word 'Nation' meant Catalan could have their own parliament and autonomy; however, Catalan still was a part of Spain, and Catalan was under the rule of Spain, although Spain recognized that Catalan was unique.

In 2006, due to the declaration from the court, Catalan still fought for their stance. The Catalan parliament decided to form a referendum on the revised Statute of Autonomy. The result was the success of the Catalan parliament which won the support of Catalan citizens who voted for the Statute of Autonomy<sup>18</sup> (Tzagkas, 2018). After that, the Catalan parliament declared a referendum to challenge Spain (Maxwell and Turner, 2019). Finally, in 2010, the Supreme court described that the perspective of the word nation in the Spanish Constitution from Catalan could not be equal to Spain. Second, the word nationality means Catalans have the right to autonomy (Maxwell and Turner, 2019). The Supreme court judged that the definition of the word nation from Catalan was contrasted with Article One of the Spanish constitution, which declared that "National sovereignty belongs to the Spanish people from whom emanate the powers of the state." And article two proclaimed that "The Constitution is based on the indissoluble unity of the Spanish Nation, the common and indivisible

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<sup>18</sup> After a referendum in 2006, the Catalan citizens voted for the expansion of the Statute of Autonomy. By this cause, Catalan would be called a nation and would use the Catalan language as their official language (Tzagkas, 2018).

homeland of all Spaniards.” In short, from two articles that the Supreme court mentioned, only Spain could be qualified as a nation (Petithomme and Garcia, 2013).

Moreover, the Supreme court judgment was based on the Spanish constitution with three factors. First, the Catalan reference to the subsistence of the Catalan nation was no legal basis; in contrast, Catalan history and culture would still be recognized. Second, the Catalan status in the past was rejected, although the court acknowledged the Catalan characteristic of education. And third, the Catalan institution over the Spain administrative jurisdiction was unacceptable (Petithomme and Garcia, 2013).

As a result, after the judgment from the Spanish Supreme Court, Catalan did not agree with it. The loss in this conflict with putting the word ‘Nation’ in the 1978 Spanish Constitution, it led to the rise of separatism in Catalan among the Catalan citizens. Since 2010, the march of Catalan citizens has come to the street to protest Spain.

### **The rise of Catalan Separatism**

Catalan has always held the idea of Separatism since the past, which could see from the rise of Catalan in the past that struggled to separate from Spain; however, Catalan could not reach their desire to become independent from Spain. Nevertheless, the separatism idea remains in Catalan society, affecting the present.

Erica Benner 2013 argued that in modern societies, the term ‘Nationalism’ describes any political movement that seeks to make state boundaries correspond with those of self-proclaimed ‘Nations’ (Maxwell and Turner, 2019). For example, Scotland, another country seeking independence from the United Kingdom, also used the referendum to declare independence, similar to Catalan. However, in the case of Scotland, the UK government accepted the referendum from Scotland and admitted that the future of Scotland within the Commonwealth of England<sup>19</sup> was on the Scotland citizens to vote on (Guibernau, Rocher, and Adam, 2014). On the other hand, the case of Catalonia adheres to the Spanish Constitution, which made their

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<sup>19</sup> Commonwealth of England has four countries, England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales.

effort to hold a referendum on self-determination still illegal (Guibernau, Rocher, and Adam, 2014).

In 2010, after the Spanish Supreme Court denied the term ‘nation’ that Catalan proposed, the idea of separatism in Catalan grew more robust, leading to the Catalan Separatism movement, which aimed to be independent from Spain and to have their own sovereignty (Claudia, 2020). The survey made by Ivan Serrano in 2013 demonstrated that the percentage of the Catalan citizens who wanted Catalan to be independent from Spain increased from 40% to 50% of the total Catalan citizens. This percentage differed from the pre- 2010 period, with only 20% of all Catalan citizens who wanted to separate from Spain<sup>20</sup> (Tzagkas, 2018). The portion rose from the cause of economics, too, which will describe in the next paragraph. The denial of the term ‘nation’ in the Spanish Constitution fosters the idea of Catalan separatism in Catalan.

Due to the Catalan Independence Movement, another more recent reason that increased the separatist ideology in Catalan was the economic problem in 2008. When the monetary crisis exploded from the Subprime Mortgage Crisis in the United States of America, this impact affected Catalan from 2008–2013. Catalan faced a great recession with negative economic growth and unemployment rates. This economic crisis has increased the number of Catalan citizens who support the pro-independence policies in Catalan (Bel, Cuadras-Morató, and Rodon, 2019). Moreover, in the economic aspect of separatism, Catalan believed their region would be a better region without control from Spain, especially in terms of taxes. Because every tax in Catalan had to send to Spain, the problem was Spain provided financial support to Catalan in a lower number than Catalan contributed to Spain. The research of Christopher Connelly in 2013 presented that Catalan contributed 19% to Spain's GDP and Spain returned benefits to Catalan just 11% (Tzagkas, 2018).

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<sup>20</sup> Analysis by the ‘Centre d’Estudis d’Opinió’ or the ‘CEO,’ the organization in Catalan which has studied in terms of public opinion in the field of the Generalitat de Catalunya. And the data from ‘UpCEO,’ the CEO’s program as an analysis tool to study public opinion data matrix.



Thus, both factors in politics and economic problems between Catalan and Spain led to the idea of Catalan separatism, especially among the middle-class and upper-class citizens of the Catalan who became the major supporters of Catalan independence. The middle-class and upper-class citizens in Catalan wanted to raise the employment rate. Still, Spain's political procedure lost its authority in Catalan and believed that Catalan would be a better region with self-govern without the control from Spain (Tzagkas, 2018). With the shift in political ideology from nationalism to separatism in Catalan society, Catalan set a political project to be independent of Spain to become the Catalan nation and the new European State (Petithomme and Garcia, 2013).

The Catalan Independence Movement had two leading players: first, the Catalan political parties who favored pro-independence such as the CiU part, and the ERC party, and second, organizations that supported the independence movement, such as the Generalitat de Catalunya, and aimed to organize the demonstration and to march in Barcelona city and other provinces in Catalan (Tzagkas, 2018).

There were Catalan parties that favored independence in Catalan emerged which were first, 'the Ciutadans de Catalunya,' the party which represented the non-nationalists in Catalan. Second, 'the Solidaritat Cataloniana per la independència' or 'the Catalan Solidarity for Independence' or the SI, the party was established in 2010, operated for Catalan independence, and was led by the magnetic of Joan Laporta, the former president of FC Barcelona during 2003-2010. Third, 'the la Plataforma per Catalunya' or 'the Platform for Catalonia' or the PxC, a populist and anti-immigrant party founded in April 2002 (Petithomme and Garcia, 2013). Fourth is 'the Catalan European Democratic Party,' the party led by Carles Puigement (who would become the Catalan president that held the Catalan referendum in 2017.) Fifth, 'the Catalan Republican Left,' the party with the purpose of independence by the leading of Oriol Junqueras (who was involved with the Catalan referendum in 2014.) And lastly, 'the Popular Unity Candidacy' was a far-left radical party that did not seem intent on negotiating with Spain or Europe for the Catalan status after the Catalan independence declaration (Politico, 2017; Tzagkas, 2018).

Consequently, Catalan held the first referendum on Catalonia's independence in 2009 with support from the Catalan citizens in towns and cities (Guibernau, 2014).

Subsequently, in 2010, Catalan had an excellent opportunity to pressure Spain because the Spanish central government, at that time, both the PP and the PSOE party, confronted a decrease in the number of supporters because of the economic crisis from 2008 to 2013. Therefore, over one million Catalan citizens in Barcelona marched to protest the Spanish Constitution Court decision that rejected the term nation of Catalan.

Besides, in 2011, the Catalan movement took the street in Barcelona, demonstrating support for Catalan independence. And in 2012, 1.5 million Catalan citizens marched again in the Barcelona streets to support their stand for independence. Consequently, in 2013, the Catalan Parliament passed a declaration to declare a sovereign political and legal object for Catalan citizens and demanded a Catalan independence referendum. And in 2014, the Catalan government by Artur Mars, the leader of the CiU party, and Oriol Junqueras, the leader of the ERC party, agreed to set the Catalan referendum on independence in Catalan to vote. However, the Spanish Constitutional Court judged that the Catalan declaration was unconstitutional and thus invalidated.

Nevertheless, in 2017, the Catalan government again set the self-determination referendum by the leading of Carles Puigdemont, the president of Catalan at that time from the Catalan European Democratic Party, with the support of 2.2 million Catalan citizens who attended the polls to vote. Again, the Spanish Constitutional Court judged that this referendum was unconstitutional. Moreover, this time, the Spanish central government sent police to arrest Catalan politicians involved in the Catalan referendum, which was illegal.

Although the Catalan referendum in 2017 was judged illegal; however, the referendum was set on 1 October 2017 as Catalan planned. Therefore, the Spanish government sent policies to disrupt and prevent thousands of Catalan citizens who went to vote in the Catalan referendum. Police used violence, which caused more than 800 Catalan citizens to be injured from this chaos.

Moreover, after the referendum on 1 October, the Spanish Central Government reacted by implementing article 155 of the Spanish constitution, which allowed the

Spanish government to control an autonomous region if that region did not obey its obligation to the state. Therefore, the Spanish government led by Mariano Rajoy of the PP party decided to control the Generalitat de Catalunya and the Catalan regional government to limit Catalan powers (Tzagkas, 2018). And Carles Puigdemont, who set the referendum in 2017, was arrested for his sedition and rebellion against the state (Angela Dewan, 2018, CNN).

In conclusion, Catalans had their background, and their community developed their identity through history. However, with the rise of Spain and later, Spain succeeded in uniting Catalan as one of the Spanish territories; Catalan was always struggling to be independent of Spain, which could be noticed from the two conflicts before the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, although Catalan failed in both matches to be separate from Spain, Catalan could recover the Catalan identity, especially the Catalan language, after their identity was prohibited since the loss in 1714. However, in 1939, with the loss of Catalan again in the Spanish Civil War, Catalan was suppressed by Franco, which Franco prohibited Catalan identity furthermore, which led to the rise of Catalan Nationalism in Catalan society. After Franco died in 1975, Spain was transformed in politics from a dictatorship to a republic. Catalan struggled in demanding to put the word 'Nation' in the 1978 Spanish Constitution to grant themselves full autonomy. However, they had received the right to self-govern already. As a result, the Spanish Supreme Court rejected the term 'Nation' for Catalan, leading to the rise of Catalan separatism.

### Chapter 3: FC Barcelona's role in the Catalan Independent Movement

Although the Catalan had struggled for a long time to separate from Spain, the Catalan failed every time they stood against Spain. Moreover, Catalan was suppressed a lot during the Franco era, which increased Catalan nationalism and the movement of Catalan citizens to call out for their identity back. After the death of Franco and the end of Francoism, Catalan still fought for their sovereignty using political tools which tried to put the word “Nation” in the Spanish constitution to define Catalan; nevertheless, Catalan failed again after the judge from the Spanish Supreme court in 2010 which declared illegal for Catalan action. Therefore, Catalan citizens were frustrated with the judge, which gave rise to Catalan separatism in Catalan society.

The Catalan Independence Movement comprises different forms of social organizations and movements. In the previous chapter, I explore the trends driven mainly by the Catalan political parties. In Spain’s politics, Carles Puigdemont worked with his parties in the Catalan referendum; however, Puigdemont had other teams which helped him in the Catalan Independence Movement, including the Popular Unity Party, the *Ciutadans de Catalunya*, the *Solidaritat Cataloniana per la independència* (the Catalan Solidarity for Independence – SI)<sup>21</sup>, the *la Plataforma per Catalunya* (the Platform for Catalonia – PxC), the Catalan European Democratic Party, the Catalan Republican Left, and the Popular Unity Candidacy. These parties have supported and are directly involved with the movement for Catalan independence as part of their political goals. Apart from the political parties, two influential grassroots groups have worked closely with Catalan people: the *Òmnium Cultural* and the *‘Assemblea Nacional Catalana’* (ANC). Both organizations have actively promoted Catalan independence since their establishment (Cereceda, 2017).

#### Catalan’s Grassroots Organizations

Firstly, *Òmnium Cultural* this organization was established by six Catalan businessmen during the Franco period (1939-1975) to preserve the Catalan culture. In

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<sup>21</sup> The party which established in 2010 led by Joan Laporta, the former president of FC Barcelona during 2003-2010

addition, during the Franco period, the Òmnium Cultural was also confronted with the censorship of Catalan identity in Spain and support for the political institutions of Catalan, which was forbidden by the dictatorship in Spain. Moreover, the Òmnium Cultural, from 1963 to 1967, was based in Paris, France, and helped protect and promote the Catalan language and culture. The Òmnium Cultural has around 70,000 partners and 55 employees from over 40 offices. This organization's budget was more than 5.5 million euros, and they receive the most income from their membership fees (around 3.7 million euros) (Cereceda, 2017). Nowadays, the Òmnium Cultural also protects civil and human rights; moreover, the organization adds its objective, favoring social cohesion on broad consensus (Official Website of Òmnium Cultural, 2021).

Another organization is '*Assemblea Nacional Catalana*' (ANC). It was unofficially established during the internal vote among the social movement groups in Catalan in 2009, led by Jordi Sánchez, their president, and officially formed in 2011 (Cereceda, 2017). ANC defines itself as a cross-sectional and unitary organization. This grassroots organization brought around 80,000 people from Catalan society, including the differences in ideologies, nationalities, and religions, but all are pro-independence. The objective of the ANC is to achieve Catalan independence in an entirely peaceful and democratic way. In addition, ANC has supported Catalan by contributing to the foundation of a Catalan Republic based on the democratic principle, freedom, and social justice (Official website of the ANC, 2021). The ANC is organized in the bottom-up method, which means this method provides space for every member of the ANC to participate in the organization. ANC successfully led the most extensive mobilization in Catalan on 11 September 2012 and 2013 (the Catalan national day). Furthermore, the ANC organized **intense demonstrations of 1 million people for independence** in 2012 (Official website of the ANC, 2021). The ANC earned revenue from donations from Catalan citizens of around 1.7 million euros and sold merchandise for about 1.1 million euros (Cereceda, 2017).

In sum, besides the works of Catalan political parties, because of the power of both organizations to mobilize Catalan citizens were immense and more extensive

than other organization or political parties in Catalan; moreover, both had cooperated with the pro-independence Catalan political parties to send the intense criticism of the sensation of independence in the Catalan society. In this way, the grassroots organizations like the Òmnium and ANC are “the rhythm of democratic institutions of Catalan,” said Xavier García Albiol, the Partido Popular (Popular Party) leader in Catalan (Cereceda, 2017). With the support from these two grassroots organizations, they worked with the Catalan government on the pro-independence side against +Spain and protested for Catalan Independence.

Other than political parties and grassroots organizations, the passion for football in Spain and Catalan, in particular, has always been related the regional identification (Keene, 2007). For example, Real Madrid, one of the most successful clubs in the world, has been represented as a national pride of Spain since the Franco period, and FC Barcelona or Barça<sup>22</sup> that become a regional pride of Catalan. As Keene (2007) analyses how having a world-class football club as a regional pride reflects the idea of regional identity, this chapter explores FC Barcelona's role, which became a powerful innovation of the Catalan Independence Movement due to the popularity of Barça both in their region and global. Their political expression has always been firmed in communicating with the worldwide audience to seek attention for the Catalan struggle with Spain. Therefore, it is undeniable to separate national politics from football organizations in Spain (Hayward, 2017).

### **FC Barcelona and the Catalan Struggle**

For this chapter, I argue that football has become a *Tactical Innovation* for political mobilization, which was acted through FC Barcelona or Barça. Tactical innovation can be demonstrated in two ways: first, tactical innovation means that political tactics that newly emerged; and second, tactical innovation means the existing tactics of novel recombination (Wang and Soule, 2016). Moreover, two conditions are essential to tactical innovation, namely ‘*Internal Movement Features*.’ the movement characteristics which is generated by tactical innovation (Wang and

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<sup>22</sup> In this chapter will use the word ‘Barça’ interchanges with FC Barcelona

Soule, 2016); and ‘*External Movement Process*,’ the attempt to develop new tactics against the authorities and this process will innovate after the mobilization has defeat experiences (McAdam 1983, McCammon 2003).

According to Hanspeter Kreisi, Ruud Koopmans, Jan Willem Duyvendak, and Marco G. Giugni (2015), the internal impact includes the impact on the social movement itself and the effect on the collective identity; therefore, the inner development of the Catalan Independence Movement by using football which was argued that for Catalan Movement, with the rise of Catalan nationalism later, the Generalitat de Catalonia was established. Moreover, the impact on the collective identity was the contribution and development of the collective identity within the movement and trying to expand to the society, such as the Catalan Independence Movement, which tries to demonstrate the Catalan identity in the community.

FC Barcelona is seen as a tactical innovation for the Catalan Independence Movement through the literature review. Using football or sport for political protests is not new—for example, in the cases of Istanbul and Scotland<sup>23</sup>. Hence, a tactical innovation used in the Catalan Independence Movement is characterized by a second meaning. The Catalan people have used football to develop new tactics to strengthen their mobilization against Spain. The sense of Catalan nationalism was erected since they lost their sovereignty in 1714. However, the sensation of secession in Catalan was constructed since the Franco dictatorship. The movement was obviously since 2010 after Catalan set the referendum for independence. It can be considered an official day that Catalan declared their aim to be independent and become the Catalan Independence Movement which Catalan citizens supported, and FC Barcelona both clubs and football players until nowadays.

In the following section, I provide three dimensions that FC Barcelona has utilized in the Catalan Independence Movement. First, Barça is a representation of Catalan values. Second, Barça is a safe space for Catalan mobilization. And third, Barça is an instrument to foster Catalan identity.

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<sup>23</sup> In turkey, the social movement against the central government use football stadium to demonstrate the idea against government in the public such as Fenerbahçe, Galatasaray S.K. Beşiktaş J.K., etc., and in Scotland, fans of Celtics and Rangers, (see chapter 1).

### ‘Sport and Citizenship’: FC Barcelona as the representation of Catalan values

FC Barcelona or Futbol Club Barcelona or Barça is one of the world's biggest, most successful, and most famous football clubs, with numerous fans not only in Spain and Europe but worldwide. Barça's official Facebook page has over one billion likes and around 40 million followers on Twitter (Aziz, 2017).



Figure 3 The picture of the official Twitter account of FC Barcelona in 2022 with almost 40 million followers. The picture from <https://twitter.com/fcbarcelona>

Barça is based in Barcelona, the capital city of the Catalonia region, established by Joan Gamper, a Swiss-German athletic man, and a group of sportsmen<sup>24</sup> who lived in Barcelona in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century at the Solé Gym office on the 29th of November 1899. The Catalan society began to be interested in football, which was imported from Britain. In the early establishment (1899-1909), Gamper

<sup>24</sup> Gamper met Gualteri Wild, Lluís d'Ossó, Bartomeu Terrados, Otto Kunzle, Otto Maier, Enric Ducal, Pere Cabot, Carles Pujol, Josep Llobet, John Parsons and William Parsons.



and other founders had shaped and assimilated their team into Catalan identity, as in their club's principles and practices. Barça also affirmed the value of Catalan society through socio-political engagement, such as acknowledging the Catalan language as their official language and involving in not only football but multi-sport association, i.e., Basketball, Handball, Hockey, etc. The club members who paid an annual fee receive the right to vote for the Barça president. In 2017, the Catalan club had more than 144,000 members who could collaborate to make decisions by voting in sports and management. With this management, Barça is praised for being a democratic football club (Chadwick, 2017).

In the football philosophy, Barça has tried to play football in their style, 'Tiki-Taka,' to win every game. They believe this accounted for the success in football tournaments of FC Barcelona. Barça is accepted as the pride of Catalan. Barça's determination to support Catalan's self-determination because the club has a deep bond with Catalan society, which includes both Catalan nationalist and separatist movements (Müller, 2018). Barça's motto 'Sport and Citizenship' implies that Barça not only focuses on football activities but also on Catalan political issues (Official website of FC Barcelona, 2021).

'Sport and Citizenship' characterizes Barça as a pledge to freedom, democracy, and Catalan identity. To illustrate this, I provide a few incidents to prove that Barça has followed its motto truthfully. First, In May 1932 when Barça claimed that the club was a cultural and sporting association with the principle of democracy of Barça. The Catalan club was seen as anti-government during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and the Franco era (1939-1975). Barça was forced to change their official language from Catalan to Spanish, their membership decreased, and most of the Barça football players moved abroad because they did not want to risk their lives from being intimidated by the Spanish junta during the Franco dictatorship.

In 2014, Barça defended the right to self-determination as Barça by joining the 'National Pact on the Right to Decide,' which is the platform of Catalan political parties and Catalan organizations. This platform promoted the 2014 referendum for Catalan independence to affirm their ideological value and defend democracy,

freedom of speech, and self-determination (Badcock, 2017). The club had to confront the pressure from the Spanish football association in Madrid, which tried to inform Barça that the club should stop relating with politics; however, Barça still chose to stand with their Catalan citizens; hence, this means Barça challenged Madrid, and they would confront with the trouble.

Several vital participants engaged with the political decisions of Barça towards Catalan Independence Movements. For example, Josep Maria Bartomeu, the Barça president in 2014, wanted to postpone the match between Barça and Las Palmas, one of the Spanish football clubs in La Liga Santander, to act against the Spanish central government that sent the police forces from Madrid to Catalan to prevent them from voting the independence referendum by the reason that the referendum was announced illegal as this research mentioned in chapter 2. The statement on FC Barcelona's website before the 15:15 BST kick-off said that FC Barcelona condemned the events that took parts on that day's match (1 October 2017) in Catalan to prevent the citizens (Catalan citizens) who demonstrating their democratic right, the board decided that FC Barcelona in the game against Las Palmas would be played in closed doors following the refusal of the proposal for postponing this game from the Professional Football League's (the LFP) (BBC Sport, 2017). The Spanish police forces used violence toward Catalan citizens, resulting in more than 800 citizens getting injured. Barça decided to postpone this match to leverage the Spanish central government for their violence acted. However, 'Spain's Professional Football League' or the LFP did not agree with Barça's proposal and ordered Barça not to postpone the match, and if Barça did, the Catalan club would have lost 6 points of (what). The LFP described these 3 points for the indemnity and another 3 points as punishment for the refusal from Barça to play the match; hence, Barça had to compete with Las Palmas on 1 October (Hayward, 2017). Moreover, one of their most prominent partners of the Òmnium is Josep Pep Guardiola, the former Catalan football player and later a coach who worked for FC Barcelona between 2008 – 2012, which means that the Òmnium would get benefit from the popularity of Pep Guardiola through the media both football news and politics news, especially in Catalan and Spain (Cereceda, 2017).

Consequently, Bartomeu decided to allow Barça to compete with Las Palmas on 1 October. Although that day was the historical day of Catalan, Barça would compete for the closed doors.<sup>25</sup> However, this match between Barça and Las Palmas broadcasted on TV and media in 178 countries, although they played behind closed doors. Barça decided to compete under closed doors because the Catalan club worried about the safety of the Catalan citizens. Bartomeu intended to show worldwide that Catalan society was suffering from the deficiency of democracy (Müller, 2018).

Julio Alberto, the former director of La Masia academy at Barça, also said in 2017 that Barça increased political brochures and the independence flags inside Camp Nou (Müller, 2018). Apart from being the president, manager, and director, Gerard Piqué<sup>26</sup> has consistently demonstrated that he supports the Catalan Independence Movement through his interviews on social media, such as Twitter, Instagram which impact attracted the press and people to attend to the Catalan issue; his sense of the independence issue in Catalan which is noticeable like once he agreed to play the national friendly match between the Catalan national football team and Venezuela national football team. However, he was part of the Spanish football national team. His voice to support the Catalan Independence Movement, he faced an argument with Sergio Ramos, his Spanish national football teammate. The latter was dissatisfied with Piqué's reaction to the Catalan struggle; later, both could end this problem. Moreover, he received complaints from other Spanish football clubs and national team fans when he played during football matches which made him express later that he could quit the Spain national team to end the problem; however, he still played for the Spain national team (Chadwick, 2017). This act from Piqué, his voice raised the voice of the Catalan citizens to protest against Spain for independence, and he also can attract the media to interest and expanded the Catalan struggle issue broader; however, Piqué had to confront the pressure from people who disagreed with his acts both from football fans around the world and also his teammates.

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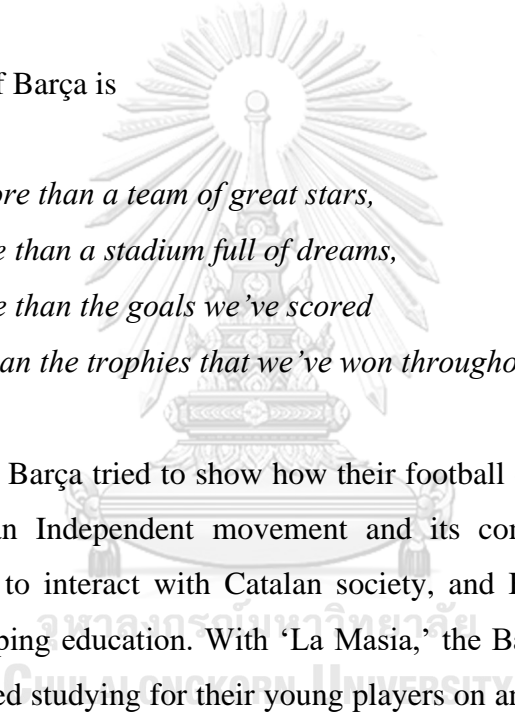
<sup>25</sup> The empty stadium meant no fans in the stadium and only two teams competed.

<sup>26</sup> The Barça football defensive player who joined the Catalan club in 2008 until now.

### ***‘Barça is more than a club’: Football as an instrument to foster Catalan identity***

Besides the motto “Sport and Citizenship” that I used to highlight how Barça represents Catalan’s democratic values, I take another slogan that first appeared on 17 January 1968 by Narcís de Carreras, the president of Barça during that time. He was the one who first expressed the idea that “Barça was more than a club” or ‘MÉS QUE UN CLUB.’ He believed FC Barcelona was more than a club because of the profound relationship between the club and Catalan society. Because of his initiative, Barça developed and used this quote as a slogan until nowadays (Official Website of FC Barcelona, 2021).

The whole motto of Barça is



*“We are more than a team of great stars,  
we are more than a stadium full of dreams,  
we are more than the goals we’ve scored  
and more than the trophies that we’ve won throughout our history.”*

This is how Barça tried to show how their football club cared for and became part of the Catalan Independent movement and its community. Barça launched numerous projects to interact with Catalan society, and Barça has constantly been involved in developing education. With ‘La Masia,’ the Barça football academy, the Catalan club allowed studying for their young players on and off the pitch. Moreover, the Catalan club's values were ‘humanity,’ ‘ambition,’ ‘effort,’ ‘teamwork,’ and ‘respect.’ The club claimed that all values were part of their philosophy to play football, seeking victory in every game.

“La Masia” is a football academy that brought Catalan kids and teenagers from around the world, such as from Argentina, to train with professional football players at FC Barcelona or collaborate with other football clubs across the globe, i.e., Club Atlético River Plate in Argentina, São Paulo in Brazil. The La Masia project is a massive part of the notion in Barcelona and Catalan as the club help nurture well-round Catalan citizens (kids) through education and sports to become good athletes

and citizens (Kelly, 2021). Moreover, this route this effect the Catalan identity (which impacted the Catalan Independence Movement) as this method would firmly root the sense of Catalan identity and the Catalan culture in their Catalan since they were kids (Kelly, 2021).

### **Barça's Camp Nou: A safe space for Catalan mobilization**

Since FC Barcelona was established in 1899, the club has supported Catalan society. As mentioned earlier, Barça had to risk punishment from the Spanish central government, such as banning matches and paying fines for political acts (Chadwick, 2017). However, Barça has been using '*Camp Nou*,' the football stadium of Barça, which has been considered a safe space for Catalan citizens since the Franco era. Therefore, this part will discuss the role of Camp Nou as a crucial platform for Catalan citizens to preserve their identity of Catalan while being oppressed outside the club by exploring the history of the club's main stadium, where the Catalan identity was protected and located in FC Barcelona and Camp Nou (Chopra, 2013) and how this place plays an essential part in the Catalan Independence Movement as the space for political protest while people were also enjoying the football matches.

In the 1960s, Barça helped integrate Catalan citizens and immigrants from Valencia, Murcia, Aragon, etc.; again, Barça used Camp Nou as a central place for Catalan citizens and immigrants to share their experiences through football. The cause was that migrants moved from Valencia, Murcia, Aragon, etc., to Catalan because they believed in the ideology of democracy and anti-centralism in Catalan (Official website of FC Barcelona, 2021). Barça has helped migrants integrate into Catalan society by changing the rules from the old one that Barça members had to be born in Catalan to open the chance for every citizen in Catalan to become members of the club; however, the new rules did not affect to the Spanish or Catalan citizens status. In this way, although this did not help migrants to get Spanish or Catalan citizenship status, these rules could help decrease the discrimination and help gather Catalan society. With the new regulations from Barça, the migrants could join and become a part of Barça, which brought the sensation of unity in Catalan among migrants. At the

same time, it also gives them a strong sense of becoming Catalan. Furthermore, the success of the Catalan club in 1960, which they crowned champion in the Spanish football league competition<sup>27</sup> over their central rival Real Madrid<sup>28</sup>, this success brought a happy moment to the Catalan society, which made the Catalan culture become more unified and developed decently (Official website of FC Barcelona, 2021).

During the La Liga 1975/76 season, on 28 December 1975, one month after the death of Franco, the match between Barça and Real Madrid took place in Camp Nou, and that football match was broadcasted on television. During the Barça and Real Madrid football game, the Catalan fans demonstrated Catalan identity by waving the Senyeres (See Figure 1), which significantly impacted the home club. In the end, Barça beat Real Madrid 2-1 with the victory goal in the 89th minute, the last minute of the game. With this sensational goal, Barça and its fans were not only happy for the result that could beat the main rival but also delighted that they could demonstrate their identity. Furthermore, in 1977, when the Catalan requested the Statute of Autonomy to Spain, Barça was engaged to officially become one of the Catalan identities (Official website of FC Barcelona, 2021).

Besides the organization of the Catalan club, with the Catalan society, Barça with their history alongside Catalan background, Barça maintained the Catalan identity and culture by using the Catalan language and implying the Senyeres on football jerseys (Official website of FC Barcelona, 1999). the Catalan flag, throughout the game time; and at the 17th minute of every home game of Barça, their fans would chant ‘indepèndencia’ to remind the defeat of Catalan in 1714 in the War of Succession when Catalan lost their autonomy to Spain (Aziz, 2017).

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<sup>27</sup> (The 1959-60 season) is also known as the ‘La Liga Santander’ nowadays.

<sup>28</sup> The famous and world-class Spanish football club that competes with Barça in football competitions every year is also known as the symbol of the The Spanish side in the Franco era, which is opposite Barça, the character of Catalan.





Figure 4 The picture of the ‘Senyeres’, the Catalan flag in Camp Nou by their fans to express Catalan identity. Courtesy Image: BBC News



Figure 5 The picture of the Camp Nou in 2014 when people ran the campaign “Let’s Us Vote” Courtesy image: <https://www.lagacetadesalamanca.es/>

## Conclusion

As discussed throughout this chapter, Barça can be considered a highly political club (Hayward, 2017) because the club has supported the right of Catalan citizens to vote for self-referendum and the Catalan mobilization as seen by their fans through the expression of Catalan identity. Football and politics are related to one another, as seen in how Barça aspires to be a club that only focuses on sports but plays a vital role in Catalan politics alongside the Catalan citizens.





#### **Chapter 4: The Impacts of Using Football on the Catalan Independence Movement**

In the previous chapter, I explored the involvement of FC Barcelona in the Catalan Independence movement to demonstrate that Barca and its stadium 'Camp Nou' has been a safe space for Catalan people to express their political desire and represent Catalan identity and values. This chapter will analyze the impacts of those involvements and the use of football as a tactical innovation for the Catalan Independence Movement. I will focus on the external effects of Barca on Spain's political structure and how the club attracted the public to pay attention to the Catalan Independence Movement and the Catalan struggle with Spain.

According to Kreisi, Koopmans, Duyvendak, and Giugni (2015), the impact of the social movement can be measured in two dimensions, namely, the internal impact and the external impact. On the one hand, the internal implications include the result of the social movement itself and the effects on the collective identity, which I explored in chapters 2 and 3 by demonstrating how the rise of Catalan nationalism drives the Catalan Independence Movement. On the other hand, the external impact consists of the effect on political procedure; subsistence, political structure, and public attention. For example, the establishment of the Generalitat de Catalonia, a political organization, was a vital structure of the movement. In addition, non-governmental organizations work on political ideology and cultural conservation, such as Òmnium Cultural and Assemblea Nacional Catalana (ANC) and even a football team. Especially, FC Barcelona, which I argue, is an example of tactical innovation, an instrument of the Catalan Movement. This tactic has fostered Catalan nationalism among the Catalan citizens in Catalan. For instance, Barça has implemented the Catalan identity as the club principle since its establishment in 1899; Catalan citizens used Barça as a carrier to protect Catalan identity and to raise the sensation of Catalan nationalism in the Catalan society, as seen from the act of Barça that agreed to open the Camp Nou, the Barça football stadium in Barcelona city, to become the space for Catalan citizens to express their frustration and political desire since the Franco era.

For this chapter, I focus on the *External impacts* of seeing football as a tactical innovation for the Catalan Independence Movement. As followed, I provide the four vital external effects based on “the Outcomes of New Social Movements” by Kreisi, Koopmans, Duyvendak, and Giugni (2015)

1. *Procedural impact*: it means the effect towards accessibility of the process of making political policy such as consultation and negotiation process. This idea refers to the accessibility of the challengers to access in a social system through the established consultation procedure or negotiations or access through formal methods of including challengers into the political system. This impact also can be categorized in two ways, namely ‘ad hoc’ access and ‘permanent’ access; the difference was the frequency or regularity of the accessibility of challengers.
2. *Substantive impact*: this impact is from the authorities' decision, which affects both ‘*Reactive*’ and ‘*Proactive*’ effects. Reactive Impact means that the challengers (the Catalan Independence Movement in Catalan) can avoid the worse situation even if the challengers fail to achieve their goals. It is the prevention of the new disadvantages. This way, the challengers could veto a decision-making or policy from political authorities, such as the Catalan party's veto against Spanish political parties. At the same time, proactive impacts mean that the challengers would get the essential substantive concession from policy authorities to make policies that introduce the new advantages, such as the Catalan parties suggesting the new approach in the Spanish Council Meeting.
3. *The impact on the political structure*: this impact is likely to change politics in the public debate. This impact refers to the possibility of movement which would generate something to change the aspects of the political context of their protest. This method might increase the chances of success for the movement. For instance, the Catalan Independence Movement affected the rise of the pro-independence political parties in Catalan, which could see from the high numbers of votes and support for the pro-independence parties in Catalan, i.e., the CiU party, the ERC party, the Ciutadans de Catalunya party, the SI party, the PxC party, the Catalan

European Democratic party, the Catalan Republican Left party and the Popular Unity Candidacy party.

4. *The impact on public attention or the sensitizing implications:* the ability to push the agenda or the desire of the social movement to become the public agenda, especially from the authorities and mass media. For example, Catalan Independence Movement made the European Union react to the internal conflict of Spain as the European Parliament, and the European Commission criticized the Spanish police over the violence during the referendum, which the EU was concerned about Human Rights in 2017.

Using football as a tactical innovation of the Catalan independence movement has an impact on drawing public attention and tackling the political structure of Spain. The way Barca has sensitized the public is not arousing a sense of Catalan nationalism among the Catalan society but also becoming a public plan that other organizations would express their concern or intention to participate in Catalan issues, such as the European Union and the United Nations. In the following section, I will focus on Barca's impact on Spain's political structure, how the club attracted the public to the Catalan Independence Movement and the Catalan struggle with Spain.

### **The external impact of using football as a tactical innovation**

The period between 2008 and 2020 was the best year for FC Barcelona because they succeeded by being crowned champions in several football tournaments in Spain, Europe, and the FIFA world cup (Official Website of FC Barcelona, 2022). Barça has become one of the best football teams in the world, with a vast number of fans around the world. From the popularity of Barça, the club takes this advantage to promote how they involve the Catalan struggles by attracting the global media to look at their political movement. They insisted that it would help increase the power of the Catalan Independence Movement against Spain. In other words, the more they

express their political voice, the more power they may gain in negotiations with the Spanish authority.

### **Sensitization of Catalan Issue to people around the world**

The high popularity of Barça has attracted mass media and visitors worldwide to visit the club in Barcelona city. Notably, the nature of mass media in the football community does not solely cover the topics concerning football matches but also other issues such as the personal lives of the players and their coaches, financial status or owner changes of the football clubs, and the history of football clubs, etc. Undoubtedly, the Catalan struggle is also one of the issues that have been circled in sports news at least in the past twelve years<sup>29</sup>.

In the early days of Barça, the club had the ‘Confederació Mundial de Penyes’ or the Penyes, the FC Barcelona supporters’ movement since 1919 which aimed to support FC Barcelona, which became the vital instrument for Barça to promote the Catalan region and issues to the world. The Penyes worked as an ambassador of Barça on the independence issue and worked for society, such as charity. With the Penyes, Barça used this instrument by providing funds and support for the Penyes to promote the sense of Catalan identities, such as the Catalan language and culture, to strengthen solidarity in Catalan, and to support the resistance of the Spaniards who were anti-fascist in Spain (Ranachan, 2008). Furthermore, in 2015, Barça also established ‘The FC Barcelona Supporters’ Clubs World Confederation,’ which became a global organization and had an extensive network of 1,247 official supporters’ clubs from 435 based in Catalan, 678 in Spain, and 134 in other countries (Official Website of FC Barcelona, 2021). With this ambition from Barça to use the Penyes as an ambassador and instrument, Barça could promote the Catalan identity worldwide (Ranachan, 2008).

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<sup>29</sup> The Catalan Struggle or well-known in the Catalan Independence Movement was start since 2010 after the judgement from the Spanish Supreme Court that the word ‘Nation’ that Catalan try to put in the Spanish preamble was illegal, this made Catalan citizens unsatisfied and begin marching.

During the 1990s, among the four Spanish football competitions, Barca won three of these four leagues, namely a Spanish Winners' Cup, a Champions League, and a UEFA Super cup. Accordingly, Barcelona became an even more famous destination with more visitors and sports reporters. In 1992, Barcelona city was chosen to host the Olympic Games, and it was an opportunity for the Catalan region to be represented by the world media. (Llompart, 2015).

Barca's media play has helped the Catalan Independence Movement to raise the Catalan struggle to become well-known worldwide. In this section, I highlight several events in 2017 during the period of the Catalan referendum in which Barca strongly affirmed their support through the Catalan local TV news and including the support from individual football players and former players of Barça (Gerard Piqué and Josep Pep Guardiola). The Catalan struggle was noticed by China, which shows that the movements through football can send their issue worldwide, which could relate that the tactical Innovation of the using football of the Catalan Independence Movement could expand their issue worldwide (Kuper, 2017). By using football as a tactical innovation, in my opinion, this tactic could garner public attention because FC Barcelona has become a famous football club worldwide, especially this decade (since 2008) which made the tactic expand the Catalan struggle issue to the public attention works. Another example is from Victor Bolea, a Catalan citizen and also one of the Barça supporters: *[The club] is one of the biggest platforms to tell the world what is happening in Catalonia and what people want to do in the region ... [it] helps the Catalan independence movement,* "Fans who come every week to the stadium are, in general, for Catalan independence ... [it] represents more than a club for us. (Child, 2018).

Another manifestation of how Barca has helped the Catalan Movement gain public attention is when George Mills, a reporter from *El País*<sup>30</sup> in Catalan, gave his opinion on the tension between Catalan and Spain. He reported a tremendous amount of support for independence in Catalan seen from the poll in Catalan. He also added

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<sup>30</sup> *El País* is a daily newspaper in Spain where based in the capital city of Madrid and owned by 'PRISA,' the Spanish media conglomerate.

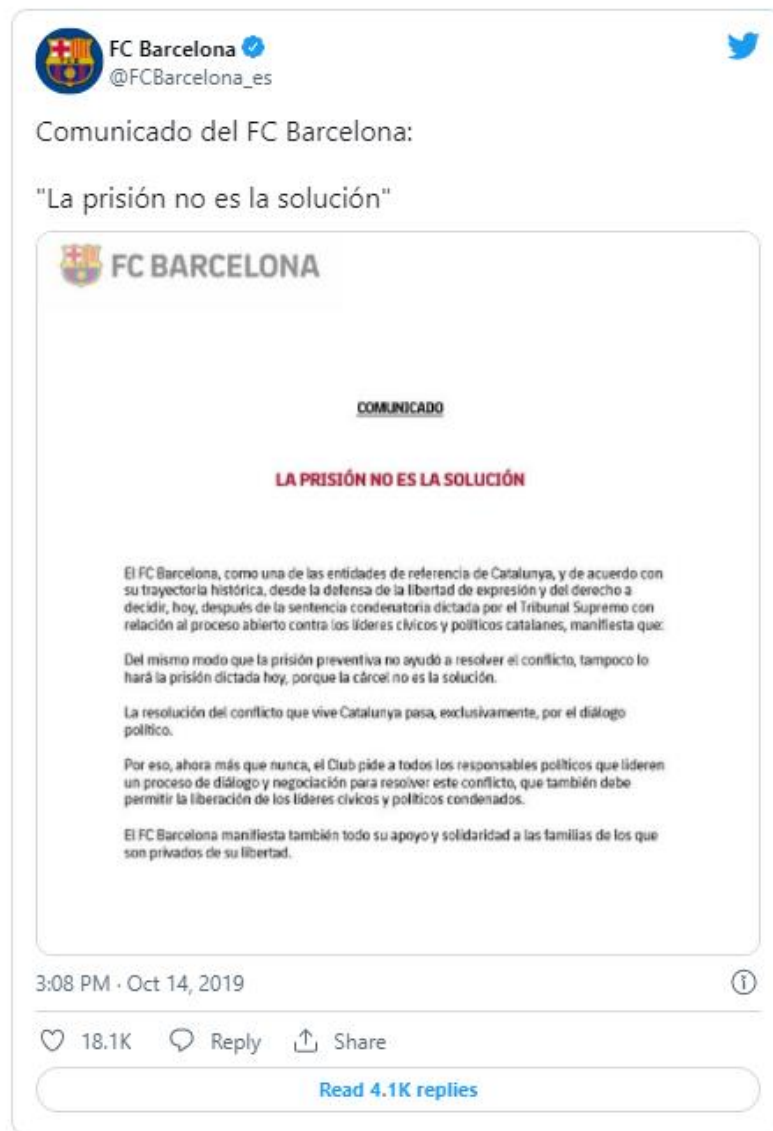
that FC Barcelona was a famous club outside of the Catalan region and their players are primarily high-profile such as Gerard Piqué. When he considered rejecting to play for the Spanish national football team, the issue became affect all aspects of FC Barcelona (O'Rourke, 2017) (See Chapter 3 for more details on the Catalan struggle to increase the sense of Catalan pride among the Catalan citizens).



Source: FC Barcelona/Twitter

*Figure 6 From the picture, there are around 12,600 people who tweet this post which ensures the impact of FC Barcelona on public attention. The picture from <https://www.the42.ie/barcelona-catalan-independence-3631111-Oct2017/>*

In another event in 2017, Barça released a statement regarding the judge from the Spanish Supreme Court's order to jail the Catalan Separatist leaders on their official website and social media platforms stating that putting people in prison was not the right solution. The club also urged the Supreme court to create a dialogue for better resolution on this issue. (Bartlett, 2019).



*Figure 7 From the picture, around 18,100 people see this post which is a statement of FC Barcelona which announced on the club's official Twitter that prison was not the solution against the judgment from the Sfromsh high court to jail the Catalan politicians who were involved with the Catalan referendum in 2017. The picture from <https://inews.co.uk/sport/football/fc-barcelona-news-catalan-independence-leaders-jailed-referendum-2017-350321>*



### **‘Dialogue, Respect and Sport’**

Barça showed the display with forty-five times forty-six meters (45x46 m.) banner at Camp Nou with the phrase ‘Dialogue, Respect and Sport’ before a match for the Champions League (European competition) to kick off to attract the public attention to interest the Catalan issue that happens on 1 October 2017 (Official



Website of FC Barcelona, 2017).

*Figure 8 The picture of the banner with the phrase ‘Dialogue, Respect, and Sport’ is to be unfurled opposite the main grandstand before the kickoff of the European competitions (Champions League match). The picture from <https://www.fcbarcelona.com/en/club/news/738101/barca-to-unfurl-giant-banner-reading-dialogue-respect-and-sport-before-olympiacos-match>*

From the phrase ‘Dialogue, Respect and Sport,’ the meaning is ‘Dialogue’ – FC Barcelona, as one of the institutions in Catalan, demands the process of dialogue and negotiations between the Catalan government and the Spanish government to find political solutions for the Catalan struggles; ‘Respect’ – follow the demand of process for dialogue, the Spanish government must respect the Catalan citizens who wait for a decision from political solution for their future of the Catalan; and ‘Sport’ – under the



pressure of the conflict situation, sport can be a public manifestation to building a bridge for dialogue (Official statement by FC Barcelona, 2017). Therefore, these three values which Barça tried to send to Spain through the media, this was worked in attract public attention to the fourth dimension of the external impact; however, although the procedural implications impacted the ‘Dialogue’ and ‘Respect,’ the actual dialogue between the Catalan and Spanish government did not happen; therefore, this three values which Barça use still move only in the fourth dimension of the external impact (the impact to the public attention).

Returning to a story of Camp Nou stadium, the football competitions in Spain between FC Barcelona and Real Madrid match which known as ‘El clásico’. It becomes a match for the Catalan independence Movement to attract public attention. As the Catalan separatist demonstrators or the Catalan independence Movement used as this match as a platform to express their voice because the match was broadcasted to more than 650 million people worldwide and nearly 100,000 fans were in attendance (DW Reuters, 2019).

The Catalan Independence Movement has taken benefits from the popularity of Barça to push the Catalan struggle to the public. It helps change the power dynamics of the Catalan independence Movement in protesting against Spain as they can pressure the Spanish government more than just through the civil movements in the process of policy making toward the Catalan Independence.

From the Catalan struggle, the involvement of the European Union during the referendum was a result of Barca mobilization. The European Parliament and the European Commission had criticized the police forces form Spain toward the Catalan situation because the EU concerned in the Human Rights issue. However, the EU still appreciated the rule of law and the unity of Spain (The Local, 2017) (Tzagkas, 2018). Accordingly, the EU tried to balance this conflict by approaching both Catalan and Spain with the discussion between Madrid and Barcelona and worked cautiously and did not rush in their process to be confident that they were on the right way. Furthermore, the EU followed this conflict to see both Catalan and Spain react without disruption from the EU because the EU deemed that this conflict is the internal conflict within the country. However, the EU still tried to find the solution to

help and balance this issue to avoid other regions to follow the Catalan such as Flanders region in Belgium (Tzagkas, 2018).

### **FC Barcelona in the Future of Catalan Independence**

On the other way around, there are also the impact of the Catalan Independence Movement to FC Barcelona in a scenario when Catalan region may proclaim independence in the future. In this section, I analyze a financial problem that Barca may experience if the Catalan Independence Movement succeed in becoming a new country.

If the Catalan is able to separate from Spain and establish a new country of the world, FC Barcelona and other teams in Catalan region such as Espanyol, Girona will have to split from the La liga, the Spanish football league. They speculate that it would be a big problem for seasonal/budget management because Barça earns income from the TV copyrights that dealt with the La liga organization, and the matchday revenues that Barça would earn from competitions during the football seasons<sup>31</sup> (both in football league and cup (La liga and Copa del Ray)). To illustrated, in 2016, Barça gain 631 million euros from the revenues. Therefore, if the Catalan secession was success, Barça will confront with this impact and if they fortunately, Barça may confront with the financial problem for short term (Somoggi, 2017).

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<sup>31</sup> In European football, football one season is usually August to May such as La Liga season 2020/21 means La Liga figure matches between August 2020 to May 2021.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, there are 4 dimensions of the External impact, although the Catalan Independence Movement using football as a tool for mobilization but with this tactics it's seem that the Catalan movement could use this tactics and impact only in the political structure in Catalan and impact on the public attention because of the limited of this research which could not do the interview or do not stay in Catalan in the real situation, therefore, this research can only notice that with this tactics, it can impact only the political structure in Catalan and the public attention but cannot impact to other dimensions of the External impacts.



## Chapter 5: Conclusion

### **The using of football as a tactical tool for the Catalan mobilization**

The Catalan Independence Movement has been using football for political mobilization as I explored political activities of FC Barcelona, a popular football club based in the Catalan region in this research. With millions of fans worldwide, FC Barcelona has taken advantage of the team branding and players' popularities in supporting the Catalan Independence Movement. "*More than a club*" campaign. Drawing from Catalan's historical and geographical contexts and their endless conflicts with Spain, it explains the reasons why Catalan people have no sense of belonging to Spain and always act against the central government of Spain. They have been long push for independence throughout a history of claiming the Catalan existence. In the modern history of Spain, Catalan has developed their new tactics which include the use of football especially through FC Barcelona in three dimensions; first, Barça as representation of the Catalan values. Second, Barça as a save space for Catalan mobilization; and third, Barça as an instrument to foster Catalan identity. As a result, the impact from the use of football as a tactical innovation are in two external impacts which are the impact on the political structure and in public attention.

My argument is to analyze tactics of the Catalan Independence Movement using football as a center of the focus. And theoretical implications for this research is the Tactical Innovation for the Social Movement which the Catalan Independence Movement uses football to develop tactical innovations which they used football in two ways. 1). football allows different parties in Catalan by bringing them together in an event to participate in the struggle; and 2). Football leads the movement to attract public attentions and supports from elsewhere. And also use the Social Movement impact theory according to Kreisi, Koopmans, Duyvendak, and Giugni (2015), the impact of the social movement can be measured in 2 dimensions, the internal impact and external impact which 'the internal impact' includes the impact to the social movement itself and the impact to the collective identity; 'the external impact' consists of the impact on political procedure; subsistence; the political structure, and the public attention.

In chapter 2, I trace a root of the conflict between Catalan and Spain to provide historical context to understand the current situation. The vital questions are Why does Catalan is not Spain? How Catalan has been wanting to become independent? Where did the idea of separatism come from? During the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries, Catalan was an autonomous political entity in the Southern part of Europe along the Mediterranean Sea. Catalan people have refused that they belong to Spain by protesting the central government of Spain and calling for the independence. To illustrate this, I demonstrate the history of Catalan since its emergence, the first conflict between Catalan and Spain, ‘the Catalan Revolt War,’ the War of the Spanish Succession, The Catalan Renaissance, the Spanish Civil war, The conflict in the 1978 Spanish Constitution and the rise of Catalan Separatism as a point of departure for this research.

While Spain succeeded in acquiring Catalan as part of the Spanish territory, Catalan has been struggling to separate from Spain for centuries. Catalan has yet accomplished their goal as they fail in every major confrontation with Spain. Catalan claims to have historical narrative on political struggles. It started before the nineteenth century in the Catalan Revolt War and the War of the Spanish Succession. Catalan preserve its Catalan identity and language even though being prohibited by Spain since 714. In 1936, the ‘Guerra Civil Española’ or the Spanish Civil War began to break out from political conflicts within Spain between the Spanish republican (left-wing) and the military led by the General Francisco Franco, the dictatorial leader of the Nationalist party (right-wing conservative) which opposite to the republican side that Catalan supported. As a result, Catalan has lost a chance to gain independence again at the end of the Civil war in 1939. The recurrence of heavy suppression by Franco dictatorship led to the rise of Catalan Nationalism within the Catalan society. After Franco died in 1975, Spain has transformed the country in becoming republic. Catalan has fought for their sovereignty claim through constitutional request in 2010 as they tried to employ the term “Nation” in the Spanish constitution for define Catalan. However, the Spanish Constitutional Court declared that the definition of the word ‘Nation’ means Catalan can only have their own parliament, but Catalan is still a part of Spain. It was illegal for such request to claim

autonomy against the constitutional rule of Spain. From the declaration, Catalan did not satisfy with the result. Subsequently, Catalan citizens are even more frustrated with the judge and political system of Spain. It thus gives the rise for the Catalan separatist movements among Catalan people.

Apart from constitutional movement, political parties and grassroots organizations have played important roles in the Catalan Independence Movements. For instance, the Catalan European Democratic Party worked on in the Catalan referendum; however, the party has other parties which help each other in the Catalan Independence Movement including the Popular Unity Party, the Ciutadans de Catalunya, the Solidaritat Cataloniana per la independència (the Catalan Solidarity for Independence – SI), the la Plataforma per Catalunya (the Platform for Catalonia – PxC), the Catalan European Democratic Party, the Catalan Republican Left, and the Popular Unity Candidacy. These parties have supported and directly involved with the movement for Catalan independence as part of their political goals. There are also two major grassroot groups that have been working closely with Catalan people namely the *Òmnium Cultural* and the *Assemblea Nacional Catalana* (ANC); both organizations have been actively promoting Catalan independence since their establishment with the ability to attract and gain the huge supporters of the independence idea in Catalan to join their activities such as marching, voting, etc. (Cereceda, 2017).

Nevertheless, the movements through the political parties and grassroot organizations not are not efficient for Catalan to achieve their goals to be independence. In Chapter 3, I highlight on FC Barcelona, a football club, which is considered a part of the separatist movements of Catalan. I argue that it is a tactical innovation of the movements. Tactical innovation can be demonstrated in two ways: first, it means that political tactics that newly emerged; and second, it means the existing tactics of novel recombination (Wang and Soule, 2016). Furthermore, there are two conditions that are important to the use of tactical innovation. These conditions are *‘Internal Movement Features’* or the movement characteristics generated by tactical innovation (ibid, 2016); and *‘External Movement Processes’* the attempts to develop new tactics to against the political authorities. These processes are

innovated through the mobilization and defeated by their movement's experiences (McAdam 1983, McCammon 2003).

While Catalan struggle with the fights for their self-determination through constitutional channel and mostly driven by the Catalan political parties. Football became a political tool to fight against Spain. The involvement of FC Barcelona in the Catalan Independence movement contains three dimensions including FC Barcelona as the representation of Catalan values, Football as an instrument to foster Catalan identity and Barça's Camp Nou as a safe space for Catalan mobilization. Drawing from their political moves within sport events, Barça can be considered as a highly political club (Hayward, 2017) because the club has supported the right of Catalan citizens to vote for self-referendum and the Catalan mobilization as seen from their fans through the expression of Catalan identity. Football and politics are related to one another as seen how Barça aspires to be a club that only focus on sports but play an important role in Catalan politics alongside with the Catalan citizens as well.

Continuing in Chapter 4, I provide the impacts of using football as part of social movements created crucial impacts for the tension between Catalan and Spain. According to Kreisi, Koopmans, Duyvendak, and Giugni (2015), the impacts of the social movement can be measured in forms of internal impacts and external impacts. The use of football as a tactical innovation can foster the Catalan identity and the sense of Catalan nationalism among the Catalan society which has internally impacted on the Catalan Independence Movement itself in positive ways. Moreover, the popularity of FC Barcelona has drawn the public attention to the Catalan struggle to become the agenda for discussion in the regional and global levels such as among the members of the European Union that had criticized the Spanish polices toward the violence during the referendum which the EU concerned about the Human Rights. In sum, the impacts to the political structure which refer to the acts of the movement can generate the changes in political structure. For example, the Catalan Independence Movement gave the rise of the pro-independence political parties in Catalan which could be seen from the high numbers of voters i.e., the CiU party.

On the flipped side, the impacts of the Catalan Independence Movement to FC Barcelona in a scenario when Catalan region may proclaim independence in the

future. If the Catalan succeed to become a new country of the world, FC Barcelona and other teams in the Catalan region i.e., Espanyol and Girona will have to split from the La Liga, the Spanish football league. They speculate that it would become a big problem for seasonal/budget management for football tournaments because Barça has earned income from the TV copyrights and contracts made with the La Liga organization along with matchday revenues that Barça could earn from the audience during the football seasons<sup>32</sup> (both in football league and cup (La Liga and Copa del Ray)). These are the speculated issues that Barça may confront if Catalan gains independence (Somoggi, 2017).

### **The Tsunami Democràtic: Another Catalan tactical innovation**

As discussed throughout this research, the Catalan Independence Movement does not limit its movement to a single strategy. They have kept creating new tactical innovations to help mobilize people against the central government of Spain. Recently, a new tactic emerged through new social conditions, such as the online community, which I found interesting to compare with football tactics. In 2019, Tsunami Democràtic (TD) emerged as a new tactic in digital platforms for the Catalan protesters. It was developed by Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan, political scientists. They got the idea because they researched and published the book *'Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict,'* which showed the method of non-violent movement and ensured the key to successful non-violent resistance movement (Ranalli, 2019). They created a virtual space for communicating in real-time and sharing locations for the protests by using QR Code technology to access and join the Tsunami Democràtic community that has attracted 3.5% or more of the population to engage in the Catalan protest (Losada & Bailey, 2019). With approximately 178,000 subscribers on 'Telegram' and 201,600 followers on Twitter (as of March 2022), TD has become the most recent channel for the Catalan protesters (Losada, Bailey, 2019). Los Comités de Defensa de la República (CDR)<sup>33</sup>

<sup>32</sup> In European football, football one season is usually August to May such as La Liga season 2020/21 means La Liga figure matches between August 2020 to May 2021.

<sup>33</sup> 'The *Comitès de Defensa de la República* (CDR) or 'The Committees for the Defense of the Republic' —or the old name 'the Committees for the Defense of the Referendum'— are



has around 50,000 subscribers (Clarke, 2019). Moreover, according to the El País, the news in Catalan and Spain, this tactic attracted Barcelona's El Prat airport, an estimated 10,000 protesters to protest against Spain to release their Catalan politicians which involved in the Catalan Independence Referendum on 1 October 2017, who was prisoned by the judgment from the Spanish high court (Clarke, 2019).



Figure 9 Picture of the Tsunami Democràtic (TD) with 178K followers on Telegram (Left photo) and 201.6K followers on Twitter (Right photo) (From the Telegram and Twitter webpage).

In other words, Tsunami Democràtic is a new creative form of political demonstration enhanced by technology that is fluid and has no specific structure (Losada, Bailey, 2019). The platform is the difference between the Tsunami Democràtic and the ANC, and the Òmnium is the platform. TD is working on a virtual network, which is easier for the younger generation to access and participate in the Catalan Independence Movement. The difference between TD and football tactics for Catalan mobilization is that Tsunami Democràtic works directly to gather the Catalan protesters to participate in the Catalan Independence Movement. Considering

activist— groups that emerge in Catalan in 2017 to support and facilitate the holding of the Catalan Referendum on 1 October 2017.

the number of subscribers, it is believed that this method could give more possibilities for success. At the same time, the tactical use of football will likely focus more on bridging people interested in sports to the Catalan political issue. In this way, the Tsunami Democràtic offered another tactical innovation that timely applied to the Catalan protest against Spain to achieve their goal of being independent of Spain.

As a result, of the use of football as a tactical innovation, the strength of this tactic is the ability to strengthen the Catalan identity within the Catalan society. Also, it attracted the mass media worldwide to focus on the Catalan struggle and helped bring the Catalan Independence Movement to become a public issue. One more highlight which could see the relation between the use of football tactics and the new tactics from the TD is when Josep 'Pep' Guardiola, the Catalan football manager, has a video in which he read the Tsunami's manifesto to help promote these tactics (Losada and Bailey, 2019).

The tactical innovation that the Catalan Independence Movement used football as a tool for them, this was work in the Catalan regions because FC Barcelona and the Catalan region had deep relations with each other, therefore, raising the sensation of Catalan nationalism and separatism through FC Barcelona to the Catalan region, the Catalan Independence Movement made the right decision to use this tactic which could compare an internal impact. However, this tactic limits FC Barcelona could not demonstrate 100% support for the Catalan Independence Movement because the club tries to avoid business and financial problems; for this reason, Barça only shows that the club supports the idea of democracy and the freedom of speech of the Catalan citizens which become that these tactics could use to expand the Catalan struggle issue to become the public attention which the world focused on this issue for a while. Still, it could not impact other external impacts, especially the impact on a political structure that the Catalan Independence Movement aims to become independent and has sovereignty.

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