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“Per la conservació de la raça catalana”: The Catalan Eugenics Society (1935-1937)

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Introduction

When the Caracas-based Catalan émigré demographer Josep Vandellós was invited to join the international membership of the Argentine Social Museum’s Commission for the Scientific Study of the Population in 1942 (Miranda 2011, 153-154), his previous experience on questions of population dynamics and immigration would no doubt have been held in high esteem. The incorporation of Vandellós, alongside other international figures such as the Mexican Alfredo M. Saavedra and the Brazilian Renato Kehl, provides evidence not only of the intellectual inclusiveness of the Argentine Commission but also of the transnational importance – in Latin America at least – of issues ranging from the “quality” and quantity of the population, through to questions relating to rural depopulation, processes of urbanisation and immigration flows.

Josep Antoni Vandellós i Solà (1899-1950) was a well-connected internationally renowned statistician who worked for the Catalan Generalitat’s Servei Central d’Estadística at the time of the democratic Second Republic and was the author of several important publications on population questions in the mid-1930s. Two books, both published in 1935, stand out as signal contributions to the debate on immigration and the future of Catalonia. The first of these, *La immigració a Catalunya*, was awarded the Patxot i Ferrer Foundation prize in 1934 for the best essay on the issue of immigration in Catalonia.¹ It was published in book form in 1935 (Vandellós i Solà 1935). *La immigració a Catalunya* was complemented by the author’s ideas developed in *Catalunya, poble decadent*, also published in 1935 (Vandellós 1985), for which Vandellós is better known.² *Catalunya, poble decadent* reinforced many of the findings in *La immigració a Catalunya* but gave explicit vent to the consequences of unbridled immigration into the region, especially in the form of unskilled, non-Catalan-speaking Spaniards from the southern provinces of Almería and Murcia with the resulting threat of the “de-naturalization” of Catalonia (Domingo 2012, 11-12; Nadal 1985).

These books are significant in their own right as examples of engagement with international thought on demography and as specific responses to the complex population dynamics experienced by Catalonia in the pre-Civil War years. The region was experiencing a decline in its birth rate but growing immigration; in the five years between 1911 and 1915 the latter grew five-fold (Domingo 2012, 14). The severity of the influenza pandemic of the late 1910s, and the resultant drop in population, meant that inward migratory flows were responsible for 99%

¹ The call for submissions in 1934 offered a 5,000 peseta prize and stated that immigration resulted from increased transport facilities and the search for a better life on the part of those migrating. It was also stated that immigration could cause problems (“congria perill, moral i material”) (Vandellós 1935: 11). Further, “Ara la immigració manifesta revolçors que torben la nostra vida nacional” (Vandellós 1935: 11). The first Patxot i Ferrer competition was in 1920.

² *Catalunya, poble decadent* was published before *La immigració a Catalunya* as textual references in the latter indicate (e.g. Vandellós 1935: 38). It would appear that *La immigració*, in the version submitted for the competition in 1934, however, was penned before *Catalunya, poble decadent*.

of total population growth in Catalonia during the period between 1916 and 1920 (Domingo 2012, 14). The economic potency of the region accrued from the traditional textile industry, the construction of the metropolitan railway in the 1920s under the Primo de Rivera dictatorship and the Universal Exposition of 1929 only consolidated this migratory trend (Domingo 2012, 14). The works by Vandellós gain even greater significance, however, when placed alongside a number of local and international developments in the field of demography and population research. Not least in this repertoire was the manifesto “Per la conservació de la raça catalana” (1934), signed in May 1934 by Vandellós and seventeen other prominent members of the Catalan intelligentsia including the philologist Pompeu Fabra, the ethnologist Josep Maria Batista i Roca and the medical doctor Hermenegild Puig i Sais (1860-1941), author of the alarmist 1915 *El problema de la natalitat a Catalunya. Un perill gravíssim per a la nostra pàtria* (Puig i Sais 1915). The manifesto, and Vandellós’ primary role within it, gains further significance as it was the vehicle by which Vandellós and its other signatories called for the establishment of a “Societat Catalana d’Eugenèsia” in order to address the demographic and cultural issues facing the “Catalan race”.

The Catalan Eugenics Society, established in 1935 in the wake of the manifesto, scarcely had the opportunity to consolidate its activities before the Civil War began in July 1936. It was, nevertheless, one of a very small number of “regional” eugenics societies set up within larger nation states. In the case of Spain, no country-wide eugenics organization in fact existed despite numerous initiatives to create one in the early twentieth century (Álvarez Peláez 1988). There was some Spanish input into the first eugenics congress held in London in 1912 with a paper by the medico-legal expert Professor Ignacio Valentí y Vivó on “The History of a Healthy, Sane Family Showing Longevity, in Catalonia” (Álvarez Peláez 1988: 184). But attempts to institutionalize eugenics consistently failed to bear fruit. The “Institut Mèdic-Social de Catalunya”, established the same year as Valentí y Vivó gave his paper, provided a framework for examinations of social hygiene and eugenics (Rodríguez Ocaña 1987, 33-36), but it failed to prosper. The ambitious set of conferences on eugenics at the Faculty of Medicine in Madrid in 1928 fell foul of the Church, the Catholic newspaper *El Debate* and the dictatorial regime of General Miguel Primo de Rivera, with the programme being “strangled” shortly after birth (Noguera 1934, 399-412; Sinclair 2007, 54-55). The later 1933 eugenics conferences, inaugurated under more liberal times, blossomed but future initiatives would be curtailed by the war in 1936. Being the only eugenics organization ever to operate formally in Spain, the Catalan Eugenics Society offers important vistas on the question of “race” and ethnicity in light of the Catalan nationalist thought that inspired it. How did eugenics fit with this particular expression of Iberian “peripheral nationalism” (Mar-Molinero and Smith 1996)? What contortions of eugenics were required to accommodate such a localised, but highly racialized, perspective? What light does the Catalan Eugenics Society shed on the differences between thought on eugenics at the time?

In other countries, regional eugenics societies were also established in response to different regional circumstances and particular interpretations of race. In Australia, for example, the very different realities created by the sheer vastness of space and different interpretations of the “aboriginal question” spawned a cluster of eugenics organizations with different views on race

(Wyndham 2003). In Argentina different formations corresponding to particular professional or medical specialisms emerged within the field of eugenics but these were generally successive rather than overlapping (Miranda and Vallejo 2012; Vallejo and Miranda 2014). In Brazil, initiatives were city- or regionally-based, such as the São Paulo Eugenics Society, in response either to organizational issues or to the presence of a critical mass of experts in one area rather than a reaction to any specific realities in one particular region (Stepan 1990; Souza 2007).

In addition to the peculiarities mentioned above, the Catalan organization was one of only two regional eugenics organizations to affiliate to the short-lived International Latin Eugenics Federation, at whose first formal congress in 1937 the manifesto signatories Puig i Sais and Vandellós were recorded as representatives of the Catalan Society (*Fédération Internationale Latine des Sociétés d'Eugénique* 1937; Turda and Gillette 2014, 186). The other was based in French-speaking Switzerland (*Fédération Internationale Latine des Sociétés d'Eugénique* 1937, 383; on Swiss eugenics, see Gerodetti 2006). In light of this association with “Latin” eugenics organizations, we may ask: what particular cultural or scientific proximity did the Catalans possess that drove them to affiliate to the Paris-based Latin Federation rather than to the rival International Federation of Eugenic Organizations, established in 1925 (Bashford 2010, 156)? What dynamics of internationalization does the route taken by Catalan eugenics reveal?

While Vandellós’ writing and ideas have been the focus of a small number of studies and the questions surrounding immigration and concepts of “race” have been analysed in these publications (Termes 1984, 147-154; Nadal 1985; Pascual 2011; Domingo 2012), their precise importance for the history of eugenics has been largely overlooked. In part, this has been no doubt due to the apparent inexistence of documentation pertaining to the Catalan Eugenics Society. Despite this, the 1934 manifesto and the writings of Vandellós and other supporters of the Catalan Eugenics Society provide numerous insights into the variety of eugenics that the Society advocated.

In light of the above discussion, three principal questions will be addressed in this article. First, questions of “race”, immigration and “national” identity as refracted through Vandellós’ and other contemporary work are treated in order to situate these ideas within contemporary eugenic, racial and nationalist discourse, both locally and internationally. Second, this article assesses one particular problematic within “race science”: the positive and negative readings of “racial mixing” or so-called “miscegenation” and their reception within the Catalan case. Once more, through a concentration on Vandellós’ work, these understandings are located within the international frameworks prevalent at the time and the set of intellectual influences, from Germany through to Italy, to which Catalan eugenicists, Vandellós especially, were exposed. Third, the article asks how Vandellós’ ideas fitted with other expressions of “Latin eugenics” as a specific form of eugenics with particular characteristics (Turda and Gillette 2014; Turda 2017). If Latin eugenics harboured “an insistent association” with “sanitation, social hygiene, mental hygiene [and] the hygiene of the reproductive cells” (Stepan 1991, 84), and placed emphasis on the individual and national community above class and race (Turda and Gillette 2014, 1), how may a study of Catalan eugenics contribute to or modify our

understandings of Latin eugenics? The response to questions such as these suggests that the Catalan Eugenics Society can be fruitfully examined as a largely un-researched aspect of an increasingly diverse and transnational history of eugenics while making, at the same time, a contribution to the history of ideas on nationalism and race within Catalonia.

“Un perill gravíssim per a la nostra pàtria”: Demographic and racial anxieties in the early twentieth century

Explorations of racial identity, some more biologically-based than others, emerged in Catalonia, as in other parts of Europe, in the mid-nineteenth century (Smith 2014, 108-110; 154-160). While some of these argued in favour of the existence of a separate Catalan racial type or people, many acknowledged Catalans to be a product of the mix of peoples in Iberia from early history. Many factors were involved in the make-up of the races of Iberia and while several commentators, such as Domènec Martí i Julià compared a “degenerate” Castilian race “infused with Moorish blood” with Catalans who had not been “biologically contaminated” (Smith 2014, 201), notions of race often boiled down to a somewhat mystical differentiating “spirit” rather than clearly identifiable racial differences. For the Catalan nationalist Enric Prat de la Riba (Prat de la Riba 1998 [1897], cited in Smith 2014, 201), although different peoples may have inhabited a territory in the past, they had each come together under a single spirit, which was the basis of their unique language (Smith 2014, 201). It was this more culturally-inflected interpretation that “became the dominant perspective in Catalanist circles from the 1900s” (Smith 2014, 201).

Historians have noted a steady proliferation of discourses across Europe based closely on supposed “racial” characteristics, whether biological or cultural, in the late nineteenth century in the face of perceived threats to the integrity or even survival of the racial group. This was in response to two sets of related concerns. The first was a new discursive register, that of European “degenerationism” (Pick 1989; Campos Marín 1999a; Campos Marín 1999b). Although countries felt the challenges of the fin de siècle in comparatively equal measure (Showalter 1992), in Spain, a catastrophist interpretation, stemming in part from the “Disaster” of 1898, the loss of the remains of the Spanish empire, meant that a movement of social and biological “regenerationism” became increasingly vociferous (Harrison and Hoyle 2000). Such was the perception about the state of the nation that the future advocate of eugenics, Dr. Enrique Madrazo, would ask in his 1903 essay whether “¿El pueblo español ha muerto?” (Madrazo 1998 [1903]; Suárez Cortina 1998; Campos Marín, Martínez Pérez and García-Alejo 2000; Cleminson 2006).

The second related factor influencing notions of race and nation was linked to the sudden slowing of population growth in the 1880s. For some observers, this was a symptom of a wide-ranging “degeneration” of the stock in itself. In Spain, late nineteenth-century authors assessed this phenomenon from a hygienic and population perspective, seeing low birth rates as a contributor to Spanish national decadence (Termes 1984, 138-139; see also Nadal 1992, 185-214). Birth control methods were rejected as harmful for population vitality and a generally

positive attitude towards immigration in subsequent years was embraced as a possible remedy for declining population totals.³ Moreover, a low birth rate meant that a degree of “rational planning” with respect to population levels was required as a key economic and social strategy (Klausen and Bashford 2010, 98).

The emphasis in Spain, nevertheless, was still placed primarily on the country as whole rather than on its regions. It was only once the new century was underway that this began to change and the low birth rate began to accrue other more locally racialized meanings (whether predominantly cultural or biological) (Termes 1984, 139). By the mid-1910s, this shift was consolidated within Catalonia (Termes 1984, 139). It was exemplified by the anti-neo-Malthusian work written by Hermenegild Puig i Sais, *El problema de la natalitat a Catalunya*, whose explicit subtitle – referring to a “perill gravíssim” for “la nostra pàtria” – sealed the association between the fear of degeneration, a low birth rate and the concomitant loss of Catalan identity (Puig i Sais 1915). As well as opposing birth control, possibly in part as a response to its vigorous dissemination by the Barcelona-based review *Salud y Fuerza* (1904-1914) (Abelló i Güell 1979; Masjuan 2000), Puig i Sais argued that the migratory influx of workers to the textile mills in the early twentieth century had sounded the alarm bell of “de-Catalanization”. Given such a risk, he urged that it was necessary to augment the births of “catalans de pura raça per a lluitar en tots els terrenys” (Puig i Sais 1915, cited in Termes 1984, 139). It was in works such as this that the need for an on-going “regeneració de la raça o nissaga catalana” was clearly articulated (Termes 1984, 139). Despite it not being necessarily articulated explicitly, it also meant the consolidation of a more biologically-based understanding of race, as Puig i Sais’ notion of “pura raça” tends to suggest.

Although many of those who voiced such ideas came from the medical profession and were not necessarily eugenicists as such, similar concerns but with different hues were reflected in the broader fields of politics and journalism. In contrast to the rather alarmist warnings coming from Puig i Sais, the political left in Catalonia tended to welcome immigrants as people who had come to “fecundar el nostre país, fer-lo progressar”, as the political figure Pere Coromines wrote in *El Poble Català* in 1914 (Termes 1984, 140). These new immigrants, primarily to Barcelona, the author wrote, should be treated as part of the same city instead of being rejected as off-comers. Barcelona, Coromines added, was “de tots els que treballen per ella i l’estimen” (Termes 1984: 140). Such concessions to inclusivity, however, did not remain uncontested in ensuing years. Francesc Tusquets, writing about the status of the Catalan language in 1925, remarked that workers who came from other parts of Spain not only caused “perjudicis a la nostra massa obrera amb l’abaratiment dels jornals”; they were made up by “elements indesitjables” (Termes 1984, 141). Part of this threat to language, social harmony and wages was the menace of political extremism: many outsiders contributed to the generation of pronounced “conflictes de caràcter social” (Termes 1984, 141). Tusquets went on to classify

³ Termes (1984, 138) refers to this opposition as “anti-Malthusian” whereby commentators were “preocupats pel problema general de la minva de la població i de la baixa natalitat”. Although “Malthusianism” in the nineteenth century could mean affiliation to Malthus’ ideas tout court or could mean the advocacy of birth control methods in opposition to Malthus’ remedy of “moral restraint”, in Catalonia at least by the early twentieth century the latter went by the name of “neo-Malthusianism”. On the shifting meanings of Malthusianism in the nineteenth century see Dolan (2000).

many of the anarcho-syndicalist action groups in Barcelona as originating from outside of Catalonia (Termes 1984, 141).⁴

The ethnologist Josep Maria Batista i Roca, one of the eventual signatories of the 1934 manifesto, would write in the intellectually influential *Revista de Catalunya*, founded by the linguist and Catalan nationalist Antoni Rovira i Virgili, a year after Tusquets in 1925 on the subject of “Raça, Poble i Nació”.⁵ From the perspective of an ethnologist, a profession across Europe that was more open to cultural notions of nation over and above biological concepts of race, Batista i Roca acknowledged that the latter was a slippery concept and that it was becoming a dangerous tool in the hands of politicians. In tune with his more cultural understanding of supposed racial differences, which he believed arose partly as a result of language and climate, Batista i Roca nevertheless conceded that inheritance played a major role in the configuration of national groups. Such an assertion necessarily involved some kind of positioning on the mechanics of inheritance among humans. Although the French biologist Jean-Baptiste Lamarck’s ideas on the inheritance of acquired characteristics through use were considered (Batista i Roca 1925, 376), as were even the controversial and later discredited findings of Paul Kammerer (Batista i Roca 1925, 377; Koestler 1971), the author set more store by Weismann’s ideas and Mendel’s laws of inheritance (Batista i Roca 1925, 377-381). Such theories were less accepting of environmental influences on inheritance and were, in fact, more closely aligned with northern European expressions of eugenics.

Batista’s article, placed as it was within the ferment of ideas on nation and race in the 1920s, contained many of the limitations and contradictions typical of his times. He rejected Count Gobineau’s work for its advocacy of racial superiority and condemned the “fantasies dels exaltats pangermanistes” (Batista i Roca 1925, 368) that were a contributory factor to the “cruent tragèdia que ha destrossat Europa aquests darrers anys” (Batista i Roca 1925, 368). He still believed that distinct races existed, however, and Batista was not immune from common stereotypes: “Els negres, tant si són a l’Àfrica com a Nova Guinea o l’Amèrica, són notats sempre per llur indolència i llur excitable emotivitat” (Batista i Roca 1925, 383). The Nordic peoples, in contrast, were renowned for the “major fredor de llur temperament” (Batista i Roca 1925, 383). Such assertions allowed Batista i Roca to affirm at the end of his article that either through racial mixing or because of a deleterious environment the “white race” was in danger of running out of reserves or being overwhelmed by others (Batista i Roca 1925, 389). In order to conserve the “white race” it was necessary to strengthen it through hygienic, educational and moral intervention. In a prelude to his later fulsome acceptance of eugenics as one of the signatories of the 1934 manifesto, he finished his article by affirming that this combination of techniques made up “la finalitat de l’Eugènica” (Batista i Roca 1925, 389). His article

⁴ An appreciation shared by the future Marxist leader Joaquim Maurín who attempted to affirm in *L’Opinió* in 1928 that “El proletariat català no és anarquista” but socialist (Termes 1984, 142). On the relations between anarchism and Catalan nationalism, see Gabriel (1986).

⁵ The *Revista de Catalunya*, as one of the principal intellectual forums of the period, is rich in discussions of the political dimensions of science with the occasional reference to eugenics. See, for example, J[oa]n C[rexells] (1925) for an analysis of the import of eugenics via the thought of J.B.S. Haldane and Chesterton. I am grateful to Sílvia Coll-Vinent for this reference.

illustrates how ethnology, anthropology and eugenics were emerging overlapping fields in the mid-1920s in Catalonia.

While Batista i Roca made scant reference to Catalonia itself, for those interested in the integrity of the Catalan nation, the kind of fears articulated by Puig i Sais and Tusquets began to gather strength as the numbers of migrants from regions such as Murcia and Almería increased in the 1930s. It was precisely during this period that the concept of race (again, both biological and more cultural) would become “un element central en la formulació de polítiques identitàries del catalanisme nacionalitzador” (Casassas Ymbert 2009, cited in Domingo 2012, 18). Racial and political motifs continued to reinforce one another and when placed together ignited fear and controversy. In a review of Vandellós’ work, one observer, the geographer Pau Vila i Dinarés, who had already declared in *La Publicitat* in 1931 in an article on “Sindicalisme i Revolució” that trade union leaders were busy recruiting within a “massa amorfa immigrant” (Termes 1984, 142), declared that within this mass many of the more southern elements were “menys afins racialment amb nosaltres que les [regions] valencianes i aragoneses” (Vila 2010 [1936], 259). Furthermore, Vila argued that it was the influx of immigrants from elsewhere in Spain that had resulted in an imbalance between Catalans and others. Vila pointed out that if the “invasió impetuosa” resulting from immigration had been controlled properly when it was at its most acute point, “ens hauríem estalviat manta jeremiada sobre la minva de la natalitat” as the relative equilibrium between Catalans and others would not have been upset (Vila 2010 [1936], 259). What was at stake for Vila was the differential birth rate between “natives” and populations from outside the region. Whereas in English eugenic circles, this differential took on primarily a class-inflected dimension (Mazumdar 1992, 146-195; Redvaldsen 2017), in Catalonia questions of race and class were blended together as part of an amorphous designation of “subversiveness”. As a result, Vila surmised, it was not that the question of the birth rate did not require attention; rather, it needed to be discussed coldly and objectively precisely as Vandellós had done in his book *La immigració a Catalunya* (Vila 2010 [1936], 259). The issue was not one, however, of simply increasing the birth rate among the “favoured” sectors. The pro-natalism of regimes such as those operating in Italy and Nazi Germany was questioned. In fact, Vila argued that the production of large families was doomed to result in a “proletarianization” of the population and the fomenting of “masses gregàries propenses a tots els despotismes” (Vila 2010 [1936], 260). A sensible balance between population size and ethnic provenance would result in an optimum and stable political, biological and social equilibrium.

It was necessary, Vila wrote, to avoid large families in order that “les mares conscients de llurs deures” did not become “víctimes de la família i de la societat” (Vila 2010 [1936], 260). By acknowledging that densely populated societies progressed little, and in contrast to Puig i Sais’ earlier words, careful birth control and family planning should not be opposed: “La civilització és més obra de qualitat que de quantitat; el progrés humà en les seves grans línies s’orienta vers una vida millor i més justa” (Vila 2010 [1936], 260). Through such remarks, Vila coincided, perhaps unwittingly, with neo-Malthusian voices present in the labour movement, particularly in anarchism, where advocates favoured reducing the birth rate, thus resulting in the increase

in “quality” over quantity. Such an emphasis would allow women to become “conscious” mothers who were aware of the maternal task ahead.

Despite the overlaps with the doctrine of “conscious maternity”, however, there were differences. Vila’s emphasis on women’s “duty as mothers” contrasted with anarchist neo-Malthusians’ advocacy of women’s right to choose. He did coincide with calls for greater “quality”, however. Returning to the pro-natalist dictatorships, without naming the countries implicated, Vila condemned those that participated in the “imperialisme brutal dels països d’excessos prolífics” (Vila 2010 [1936], 260). Rather, Vila favoured a somewhat reduced birth rate and a selective increase in population. It was important, on the one hand, to study the contribution made by immigration to society but, on the other hand, “És indispensable, així, mateix, intervenir tota nova penetració forastera vingui d’on vingui” (Vila 2010 [1936], 260). The very integrity of the people was at stake; it was “una qüestió de profilàxia ètnica i social” (Vila 2010 [1936], 260). Opposition to measures against birth control, opposition to large families, a pro-motherhood stance and a position favourable to existing migrants were all compatible with a stance that argued in favour of halting new immigration in order to maintain the integrity of the Catalan people.

Vila’s recipe for national survival was certainly more conservative than some others present in Catalan society in the mid-1930s. Two years before Vila’s assessment of Vandellós’ work, the Catholic humanist, pro-independence writer and translator Carles Cardó, for example, discussed Murcian arrivals in his article “El murcianisme” in *La Veu de Catalunya* in May 1934. Here, he argued that immigration could be of great benefit to Catalonia if it were compensated carefully by a prudent politics whereby immigration was properly absorbed. Such an approach reflected a withdrawal from understandings of nationhood based on biological race as a national signifier and more on the cultural dynamic as a form of glue that unified a people. Cardó wrote that the myth of “la nacionalitat com un fet d’ordre racial fundat en la unitat de la sang” had been destroyed, thus allowing for an interpretation that established that “la nacionalitat és un fenomen cultural que pot afaïçonar perfectament individus de les races més distintes” (Termes 1984, 145). What was at stake therefore above any notion of racial purity was the special capacity among Catalans when faced with mass immigration: in the words of Cardó, “la nostra potència assimilatòria” (Termes 1984, 146), a capacity that many commentators had posited as age-old (Conversi 1997, 189). Vandellós notes (Vandellós i Solà 1935: 205) that Cardó in his article on the arrival of Murcians, argued that immigration was beneficial if compensated prudently by assimilation. Countering notions of racial incompatibility and favouring “racial mixture” – an “advanced” position for the time – Cardó told his readers that “l’encrement de races i cultures diverses dona resultats magnífics” (Termes 1984, 146). It was essentially views such as these that would reappear in Vandellós’ discussion of the issue of immigration and other “races” in Catalonia. They would also form the backbone of his understanding of eugenics.

The division between a more restrictive approach to immigration and racial mixing such as that voiced by Vila and a more open, inclusive one as articulated by Cardó responded to differences of interpretation on understandings of race and inheritance within the national and international academic fields of ethnology, physical anthropology and genetics (Stocking 1988). On the one

hand, there were still those who presented races as integral and distinct biological unities, an approach that had echoes in the work of Pere Màrtir Rossell i Vilar, *La Raça*, a volume often referred to by Vandellós (Rossell i Vilar 1930; cited in Domingo 2012, 18). The work of Rossell infused the debate on immigration with “els [...] plantejaments més racistes i xenòfobs” and led to a position whereby “la raça constituïa l’única font de cultura, per tant, el mestissatge que propiciava la immigració podia suposar l’anorreament de la raça catalana” (Costa, Guirao and Izquierdo 1999, 250). Rossell’s work, although not popular in Catalonia (Conversi 1997, 194), was in tune with that of influential international figures in physical anthropology who argued that races were to be mixed at their peril (see, for example, Montandon 1933). On the other hand, a more flexible approach favoured certain “prudent” “racial crossings” as beneficial to both the indigenous race and the new arrivals (justified by drawing, for example, on Martial 1931). This last position, in addition to being present in the writing of Cardó, was reflected in the work by Rovira i Virgili, whose 1936 *Resum d’història del catalanisme* (Rovira i Virgili 1936; cited in Domingo 2012, 18) viewed the nation as a “producte de l’amalgama de diferents ètnies, tot defensant el seu aspecte històric de construcció cultural” (Domingo 2012, 18). By the mid-1930s, in light of the revulsion caused by exclusionary concepts of race in Germany in particular, the cultural current began to hold sway, even in some authoritarian circles of the Spanish (and Catalan) nationalist political right (Goode 2009; Cleminson 2017).⁶ Again, as we will see, it is more clearly within this tendency that Vandellós should be placed.

In addition to changing concepts of race and nation on a local and European level, there were other contingent political and social factors that need to be taken into account that made these kinds of discourses particularly pressing at the time. Following Domingo’s analysis, it is important to note the peculiar political situation that prevailed in Catalonia in the mid-1930s. The limited amount of autonomy granted to Catalonia in September 1932 was experienced as precarious once a coalition of right-wing forces won in the general elections of November 1933; in Catalonia itself, however, a leftist administration remained (Domingo 2012, 21). In less than a year, Spain would see insurrections against what many interpreted as the inexorable rise of a fascistic right as the conservative Catholic CEDA was awarded key ministries in October 1934. This set in motion a train of events that would see an uprising in Asturias, put down with merciless force, and a half-hearted attempt at Catalan independence that resulted in the suspension of Catalan autonomy. The question of immigration and the potential dilution of Catalan national and linguistic traits once more became urgent. Would the power of the assimilationist characteristics of the Catalan race, as envisaged by figures such as Cardó, be sufficient in light of changed political and population dynamics? As Domingo argues, this volatile political situation was reflected in a number of fears that were articulated in Vandellós’ twin works, *La Immigració a Catalunya* and *Catalunya, poble decadent*. Vandellós would

⁶ Even within this right-wing nationalist camp there were differences. As Goode (2009, 97-117) has shown, there were those who believed that Spain’s greatness in part stemmed from the mixture of races, but that it was the Castilian elements, the best among the amalgam, which had risen to the top through the galvanising process heralded by the unification of the nation under Fernando and Isabel and through the purifying work of the Catholic Church. On the other hand, the work of Misael Bañuelos (1936) lamented the mixtures that had displaced the best Castilian types, argued for military vigour as a means of saving the “race”, viewed liberal democracy as “unsuitable” for racial excellence but opposed National Socialism as an enemy of Christian civilization.

argue that immigration could effectively become a political tool whereby the Spanish government would encourage immigration from outside Catalonia as a means of achieving a process of de-Catalanization and the limitation of the region's power (Domingo 2012, 22). The solution for this and the means of resolving the threats against the Catalan race were envisaged as a double-barrelled strategy by Vandellós. Firstly, the need to control immigration under Catalonia's autonomous powers. Secondly, the need to put into action ideas like those voiced by Cardó on the assimilation of immigrants. Before discussing Vandellós' thought on these issues, we turn to the 1934 manifesto on the Catalan Eugenics Society. This newspaper piece was effectively the founding document of Catalan eugenics, bringing various commentators on "racial" issues, despite their differences, together in a single forum.

The "preservation of the Catalan race"

The kinds of issues outlined above provided the motivations behind the writing of the "Manifesto for the preservation of the Catalan race" in May 1934. This remarkable document, signed by eighteen prominent Catalan figures and probably drafted in the first instance by Vandellós (Pascual 2011, 23-24; Domingo 2012, 18), was published in the Barcelona periodical *La Publicitat*. *La Publicitat* began publication in 1922 after the nationalist "Acció Catalana" acquired *La Publicidad* and it subsequently became one of the leading organs of the Catalan intelligentsia. Articles were signed by prominent figures in Catalan nationalism and politics such as the progressive educationalist Antoni Rovira i Virgili, the linguist Pompeu Fabra and the right-wing nationalist Josep Viçenc Foix; it was, therefore, a mixed forum for ideas across the political spectrum. Vandellós played a significant role in the periodical, writing nearly four hundred pieces from May 1927 to February 1934 (Nadal 1985, 21).⁷ The articles specifically by Vandellós ranged over a variety of themes from the economic fortunes of Spain to the political issues of the day and were signed under the pseudonym "Metrios". This pseudonym, Nadal points out, was probably inspired by Vandellós' 1925 article published on the distribution of wealth in the Iberian Peninsula in the journal *Metron*, the publication established by the Italian demographer Corrado Gini in 1921 (Nadal 1985, 21; Pascual 2011, 17; Vandellós 1925).

The manifesto was written, as noted above, during a point of high tension during the early months of rightist rule. But at the time of writing, the manifesto's authors saw much occasion for rejoicing at the new legal and social situation afforded Catalonia by the Statute of Autonomy of 1932. Now that Catalonia had regained its political character, the first lines of the manifesto went, it was necessary to base all social and economic development on "una població creixent i sana, homogènia quant al sentiment patriòtic i amb una clara visió dels destins de la nostra pàtria" ("Per la conservació" 1934). But this new destiny could not be taken for granted as serious threats were on the horizon. Catalonia, the manifesto's authors averred, was passing through a worrying period of population decline (expressed as a "davallada", a slump) that threatened the integrity of its "capacitat genètica". This was made worse by the

⁷ The variety and extent of articles written by Vandellós in this and other important periodicals can be seen in Pascual (1991).

widespread practice of birth control that could entail grave social, political and moral consequences.

One counter-balance against this dire demographic situation, the manifesto writers acknowledged, had been the migratory flows into Catalonia. The problem with these, however, was that in addition to it being difficult to control the numbers arriving, it was impossible to “efectuar una tria qualitativa” of those who crossed into the region (“Per la conservació” 1934). Likewise, it was impossible to supervise the mixtures taking place between people of different origins (“la barreja de races”). As a result of these new mixes, it was feasible that “autochthonous” Catalans would become the minority. Bearing in mind such a potentially negative panorama, the manifesto impressed on its public the need for biologists, demographers, hygienists and jurists to assess the consequences of such mixing and to participate in an on-going “tasca humanitària i patriòtica”, the aim of which would be to “assentar les bases científiques d’una política catalana de població” (“Per la conservació” 1934). Such a set of objectives could be met with the assistance of the regional government, the Generalitat, and, principally, through the establishment of a Catalan Eugenics Society. All those interested in such an undertaking should address themselves to the Institute of Economic Research in Barcelona, an organism established in 1931 under the auspices of the Generalitat and directed by Vandellós himself (Domingo 2012, 20).

The manifesto is clearly positioned within the more conservative understandings of race that were available at the time. Rather than advocating a cultural process of assimilation in order to control the possible threat of racial dissolution, following, for example, the thought of Carles Cardó, the manifesto advocated a process of biological control that would seek to minimize the impact of non-Catalan elements in their qualitative and quantitative dimensions. Although this rather more negative stance would be modified in Vandellós’ own later writings, as we will see, the manifesto can be seen to respond to a more reactionary understanding of population dynamics – and indeed eugenics – within the Catalan region. It also placed the “task ahead” very much within a discourse that was patriotic and that was highly sceptical about any possible advantages of inter-racial encounters. This rather nationalist, conservative and racially differentiated expression of population intervention set the tone for the new Catalan Eugenics Society.

The international dimensions of Vandellós’ work

Although, as one participant in the manifesto on the conservation of the race, Vandellós was responding to the specific circumstances affecting the Catalan population, his thought at the time reflected a deep knowledge of international developments in population science and eugenics. By the time of the manifesto, he would no doubt have been working on the ideas which would become part of his *La immigració a Catalunya* and *Catalunya, poble decadent*. Jordi Nadal (1985) has illustrated how a number of thinkers from outside Catalonia influenced Vandellós’ thought. Among the demographers and racial scientists who featured in Vandellós’ thought, Nadal signals the ideas of Spengler on the cyclical decline of the West and the racial

and demographic thought of the Bavarian Richard Korherr on birth control. Both Spengler's and Korherr's ideas were taken up by prominent figures on the political right, including Mussolini (Nadal 1985). Nadal points out how Korherr's book on birth control, *Geburtenrückgang* (1927), highlighted the dangers facing the West in respect of its own annihilation as its populations hastened to employ neo-Malthusian techniques of birth control (Nadal 1985, 10). Integral to the Bavarian's concerns was the relative displacement of the "white race" and the "loss of its instinctive racial pride" (Nadal 1985, 11) as the "invasion" of the Occident by other races took place. The white race, as a consequence, would enter into terminal decline. As a remedy, Korherr advocated increasing the birth rate of the local white population along the lines adopted by fascist Italy and he argued in favour of the financial and legal sanctioning of single, non-reproductive persons.⁸ A similar tactic was advocated for Germany and, in a move that confirmed where Korherr's ideological predilections lay, he would go on to direct the statistical service of the Nazi state under Himmler (Nadal 1985, 12). Spengler, for his part, was pleased to receive a complimentary copy of Korherr's book sent by the author himself. Declining to write a prologue, however, this task fell to none other than Benito Mussolini (Nadal 1985, 13). The latter endorsed Korherr's concerns on single people and the decline in the birth rate. Himmler provided the preface to the 1936 edition of the book.

Nadal has illustrated how this collection of ideas made their appearance in the work by the Italian demographer, Corrado Gini, a figure much favoured in the late 1920s and early 1930s by Mussolini. Gini's volume on demography, *Nascita, evoluzione e morte delle nazioni: la teoria ciclica della popolazione e i vari sistemi di politica demografica* (1930), is indebted to Spengler's thought on the decline of the West (Nadal 1985, 15), cast through a racial perspective. Nadal traced the close professional and intellectual connections between Gini and Vandellós, to the extent that for Nadal, Vandellós should be understood as the "Catalan Gini" (Nadal 1985, 20). There are certainly numerous parallels between the thought and the activity of the two demographers. Gini's influence on Vandellós began in the 1920s when the young Catalan researcher was awarded a grant by Barcelona City Council to study at the University of Padua where Gini held a chair (Nadal 1985, 20; Pascual 2011, 17). Subsequently, as noted above, Gini invited Vandellós to write for his journal dedicated to the study of statistics, *Metron*, a publication whose editorial board comprised many demographers and population scientists. Numerous accolades followed from the association between Vandellós and Gini such as the former's election as a member of the International Institute of Statistics at The Hague in 1929 and as corresponding member in 1932 of the Italian Committee for the Study of Population, set up by Gini (Nadal 1985, 21). In 1934 Vandellós established the Catalan Central Service of Statistics under the Generalitat (Nadal 1985, 21), having been inspired by the Italian Central Institute for Statistics. Gini, like Korherr, drew on Spengler and the thought of others on racial degeneration. The Italian was one of the main advocates of eugenics in Italy and one of the forces behind the establishment of the International Latin Federation of Eugenics Societies in 1935 (Turda and Gillette 2014, 165-198; Berlivet 2016).

⁸ A similar measure was in fact considered in many countries in the 1920s and 1930s. For the Portuguese case, see Cleminson (2014, 107, n. 177). General Miguel Primo de Rivera also proposed a tax on single people, perhaps following the Italian fascist regime.

The connections, therefore, between Vandellós' ideas, the thought of Spengler, Korherr and the writings and institutional activity of Gini are quite apparent. But are they reducible to or completely represented by the thought of these figures as Nadal seems to suggest? Nadal describes Catalunya, poble decadent as the Catalan version of Gini's *Nascita, evoluzione e morte delle nazioni* and appears to only just fall short of enrolling him in the same political tradition as Gini, that is, fascism. While there were no doubt parallels between Gini's and Vandellós' thought, not least, of course, because of the uses the latter made of Gini's work, we will argue that there were also significant differences in respect of the racial ideas held by Vandellós and the uses of eugenics that this permitted. In what follows, the nature of Vandellós' thought is analysed firstly through the prism of the question of immigration and secondly through the lens of "miscegenation" in order to place his views both politically and within the range of ideas on eugenics at the time.

Immigration, population "quality" and the cyclical decline of nations

The two volumes by Vandellós are markedly different in tone but strikingly similar in content. The first, *La immigració a Catalunya* is, in many respects, a more restrained academic work, while *Catalunya, poble decadent* is emotive and politically charged. The former advances more "progressive" and explicit solutions to the question of the declining Catalan birth rate, while *Catalunya* rather laments the inevitability of immigration and tends to suggest more conservative and patriotic remedies. Despite these differences, the two books are considered together here in order to illustrate their connections and continuities. Although we may have expected that Vandellós, given the influence of Spengler, Korherr and Gini on his work, would be opposed outright to immigration in Catalonia, he admits that it is a necessity. Vandellós writes in *Catalunya, poble decadent*: "El dèficit de la nostra producció humana és cada vegada més gran i exigeix contingents d'immigrants cada vegada més grossos. La invasió pacífica que sofrim ens és, per tant, necessària si hem de mantenir el ritme del nostre progrés" (Vandellós 1985, 58). Immigration is, in fact, more than necessary; it is essential to Catalonia's survival: "La sort futura de la població catalana es troba en mans del corrent immigratori [...] Totes les poblacions estan condemnades a sofrir alts i baixos en llur creixement i en el passat s'han pogut descobrir races que han arribat a llur màxima expansió per anar decreixent després i àdhuc desaparèixer" (Vandellós 1985, 92). Both books, however, declared that immigration brought problems. While in the past the "transfusió de sang forastera" had not caused any alteration in "el nostre cos social" because of the relatively small quantities in which it arrived, rising numbers of immigrants in the last twenty years had meant that the mixing process and the rapid assimilation of newcomers had been jeopardized (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 17). The consequences of such an "influx" were the increased presence of beggars, more ambulant street selling, crime and lawlessness and competition in the labour market between those recently arrived and specialized Catalan workers (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 18).⁹ Left to its own devices, the Catalan race could not maintain itself, particularly as the "indigenous" birth rate continued

⁹ The ideological dimensions of this struggle as pointed out by Tusquets and others, discussed above, were reinforced by Vandellós (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 173-176; 179). It is on these pages that Vandellós refers to the anarcho-syndicalist CNT.

to decrease (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 28). Such a dire outlook resulted not only from the sheer volume of immigrants arriving but also from what Vandellós characterised as the “egotistical” voluntary limitation of family size by local Catalans (Vandellós 1985, 85; 114-126; Vandellós i Solà 1935, 38; 42). This in turn exacerbated a differential birth rate due to “l’arribada de matrimonis joves molt més prolífics que els nostres” (Vandellós 1985, 95). Also at work were deeper dynamics relating to cyclical processes of racial decadence as elaborated by Gini (Vandellós 1985, 95-98; Vandellós i Solà 1935, 38).

Relying on Gini’s account of cyclical decline and renovation, indebted in turn to Spengler, Vandellós sought to emphasise the danger of the “capes inferiors” that may take over any nation that was in ascendance. The increase in individuals “robustos i ardits amb facultats agudes, ràpides i adaptables” (Gini’s words),¹⁰ in the golden or second period of a nation’s history (“fortitud”) could be offset by an internal threat; the arrival of a people that was still progressing through the first period of “creixement” (Vandellós 1985, 100-101). The result, to cite Gini again, could be potentially catastrophic. The new arrivals, “els elements més prolífics i més pobres” (Vandellós 1985, 101), would inveigle their way into the youthful and prolific sectors of the receiving population (“s’inflitren, envaeixen”) (Gini cited in Vandellós 1985, 101), and, if artificial obstacles were not placed in their way, “s’apoderaran més o menys lentament però de manera inevitable [...] i després, poc a poc [...] acabant de tal forma per substituir la primitiva gent en tot l’organisme social” (Gini cited in Vandellós 1985, 101). The racial make-up of the people would thus be transformed and “Sense que ho sembli, l’antiga nació és morta i una altra li ha pres el lloc” (Gini cited in Vandellós 1985, 102). The consequences of such dynamics were potentially serious for a nation such as Catalonia:

Heus ací expressada, d’una manera immillorable, la fi que pot esperar a la nostra gent si continua la situació actual. Mentre els catalans, cada vegada més dividits i més individualistes, anirem perdent la noció de les nostres millors essències, s’anirà formant una altra Catalunya amb gent més forta, més primitiva, plena d’una major vitalitat, que poc a poc anirà creant una nova pàtria que no serà certament aquella de què hauran parlat els nostres darrers poetes i que hauran volgut conservar els darrers polítics de la nostra raça (Vandellós 1985, 102).

A number of remedies to staunch the “empobriment demogràfic” and the decline in the “capacitat reproductiva” of the Catalans (Vandellós 1985, 25) were posed. What was required was “joventut i força” as it was only those peoples that were “joves i forts” “que s’obriran camí entre els altres” (Vandellós 1985, 26). Some concrete steps were advocated by Vandellós in Catalunya, poble decadent in order to achieve this youthfulness and strength. Echoing the words of the 1934 manifesto, Vandellós pressed for a religious, moral and patriotic campaign to be undertaken to struggle against the birth control movement (Vandellós 1985, 139). It was impossible for Catalonia, in particular given the suspension of the Statute of Autonomy in light of the insurrectionary attempt to declare a Catalan state during the events of October 1934, to try to limit immigration (Vandellós 1985, 140). A family wage, higher taxes on single persons, the promotion of “famílies prolífics” were proposals located in the “terreny de la utopia”

¹⁰ Cited from *Nascita, evoluzione e morte delle nazioni* (Vandellós 1985, 100).

(Vandellós 1985, 142). A broader campaign in favour of “tots aquells sentiments que dignifiquen la vida humana” (Vandellós 1985, 142), whether religious or patriotic, would strengthen the “lligam familiar i el sentit de responsabilitat dels pares vers llurs fills” (Vandellós 1985, 143). For the Vandellós of Catalunya, poble decadent this would be sealed by a joint campaign against contraceptives and an exaltation of Catalan patriotism. It was only this that would save the “raça catalana” from the future that was “ple de negrors” (Vandellós 1985, 143). On advocating such mainly diffuse solutions to the problems of Catalonia, Vandellós in his Catalunya, poble decadent went no further than many other Catalan nationalists of the time and certainly less far than many contemporary European eugenicists. In the pages of *La Immigració*, however, we see some truly innovative proposals that place his work in a different sphere altogether: that of assimilationist, pro-miscegenation eugenics.

The power and dangers of racial miscegenation

The question of the mixture of races in the 1930s became a defining fault-line between more “progressive” and reactionary eugenics, between northern varieties and those that held more in common with southern European and Latin American forms. Precisely because these divisions were not absolute, however, a study of Vandellós’ ideas on this issue is illustrative of the tensions within the broad international anthropological and eugenics movement and Catalan eugenics. While the 1934 manifesto on the preservation of the Catalan race appears to reject the desirability of racial mixing and signalled it as an explicit danger (the fear of an uncontrollable “barreja de races”) (“Per la conservació” 1934), Vandellós, perhaps not in Catalunya, poble decadent but certainly in *La immigració*, was evidently much more in favour of this possibility. While his more inclusive stance may well have reflected a softening approach towards other “races” from the south of the country in response to their inevitable continual arrival, it also is redolent of the shifting contest of ideas in the international eugenic milieu on the question of “miscegenation”.¹¹

Running through Vandellós’ account in *La immigració a Catalunya* is the concern about the compatibility of Catalans with migratory strains coming from other parts of Spain (evidently, foreign immigration in the 1930s was barely an issue). Informing this question was Vandellós’ own understanding of “race”. Like Batista i Roca’s, this was placed some way between a biological notion of race and the idea of race as a people, more of a cultural and linguistic set of traits in a given population, but with a clear notion of self. Somewhat predictably, Vandellós had ascribed Catalans with various characteristics, including “l’amor al treball, l’honestat, la serietat i el seny” (Vandellós 1985, 99), all qualities that were embraced with “orgull” (Vandellós 1985, 143).

Vandellós acknowledged, again like Batista i Roca, that the term “race” had multiple meanings (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 101). In order to explain these, he drew on the work of the French

¹¹ That there are differences on this question between the two books may also be due to the fact that Vandellós in his *La immigració* tempered his account in response to the remit of the Patxot competition, which acknowledged that immigration had some positive benefits.

racial nationalist and anti-Semite G. Montandon, *La Race, les Races* (1933). Montandon's work allowed him to distinguish races by means of their characteristics (complexion, appearance, proportions, anatomy, blood type and physio-psychological traits). Such differences permitted the designation of numerous racial types (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 103), which, according to Montandon, were ranged in order of taxonomical superiority. In addition to Montandon's classification, Vandellós drew on the work of Joseph Deniker, *Les races et les peuples de la terre* (1926), in order to further specify the characteristics of the Languedoc-Catalan population. Deniker proposed a complex map of "ethnic groups" within Europe with much less emphasis on racial superiority (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 104).¹² Such work, Vandellós argued, allowed the observer to recognise a difference between the majority of the inhabitants of Catalan-speaking areas and the centre of Spain, whether this translated or not into "una raça diferent de la ibero-insular com d'un grup diferenciat d'aquesta raça" (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 105). Vandellós noted that Spanish anthropologists were not aware of the differences of opinion among foreign commentators on the subject of whether the Catalans represented a separate race or not. On the one hand, M. Vergara in his *La unidad de la raza hispana* (1925) had argued for one basic Spanish race. On the other hand, M. Rossell i Vilar in his *La Raça* (1930) argued in favour of the existence of both a Spanish race and a Catalan race (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 105). But rather than support the idea of a distinct Catalan "race" in biological terms, Vandellós argued that it was not possible to confirm Rossell's findings (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 106). In addition, Vandellós noted that any differences between types in Iberia would not suppose any kind of racial superiority or inferiority. Where differences did lie between Catalans and others within the peninsula was in the use of language and the existence of a distinct culture; taking his cue from Rossell, any differentiation would have developed from a different "mentality" or cultural practice (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 107). Vandellós thus placed himself within the emerging culturalist interpretations becoming common in anthropology and eugenics in the 1930s in contrast to the more exclusionary racial theories taking hold in many northern and eastern European countries.

Vandellós did argue, however, in line with the various "sub-racial" classifications within Spain, that certain mixes between different types were more desirable than others. The mixture between Catalans and Aragonese was not deemed to be problematic given the notion that "no sembla que la barreja de català i aragonès sigui gaire diversa del tipus mitjà del nostre poble" (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 97). The contact between Catalans and people from Murcia, however, was viewed as potentially providing more positive results. In light of the historic linguistic and territorial dynamics between the two ethnicities, the mix taking place in the 1930s may well, Vandellós believed, even give rise to "tipus més purs que els actuals a casa nostra" (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 131). The "real problem" was not the Aragonese or the Murcians but was provided by sub-Levantine arrivals, that is, primarily Almerians. Was it advisable that a mix between

¹² The apparently less hierarchical and racially-inflected term ethnicity became the consensus description of a population in the non-racist anthropology of the 1930s and subsequent years, as exemplified by Huxley and Haddon's *We Europeans* (1935). Kohn (1995, 24) describes this book as "a transitional work: in relegating race to history, it showed that it was still rooted in the race concept".

the two groups took place as soon as possible, or, should the results of such crossings be studied first in order to determine their value? This issue was expressed in the following terms:

És a dir, si ens convé que els sud-llevantins visquin agrupats en les barriades de cases barates dels voltants de Barcelona en completa independència amb els nostres costums, mantenint un nivell de vida poc diferent del que portaven en llurs contrades d'origen sense que hàgin fet tot el possible en l'ordre cultural, higiènic o de l'ordre públic per fer-los sentir un mínim de solidaritat amb els destins del nostre poble, o si hem d'afrontar valentament aquest problema i pensar que, al cap i a la fi, han d'ésser els continuadors de la nostra vida actual, conjuntament amb la nostra descendència i fer-los l'existència el més digna possible tenint-ne cura, com cal fer en les grans ciutats, àdhuc contra llur voluntat (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 97-98).

This rather paternalistic approach, with clear elements of authoritarianism, responded to the fear articulated by Vandellós that what was being created in these areas of the Catalan capital was akin to that described in H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine*, where a society divided into the superior Eloi and the degenerate Morlocks prevailed. Would the latter, understood as the Almerians in particular, eventually lose all "vernís de civilització" and become "una regressió als tipus primitius de la humanitat", occasionally emerging from below ground to enter the houses of their masters (the Catalans) to seize their women? (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 98). This kind of pronounced fear, with its racial, class and sexual dimensions, with references to Wells and other literary work, was common in the early twentieth-century eugenics movement (Childs 2001).

What route, therefore, did contemporary local and European anthropology mark out for Catalonia? The lack of vitality in the Catalan population, its low birth rate and the propensity for immigrant populations to grow more rapidly and for them to replace autochthonous Catalan types, could be countered, Vandellós argued, by the adoption of a set of remedies advanced in France, where similar trends affecting population reduction were felt. Referring explicitly to René Martial's work, *La Race française* (1934), Vandellós suggested that family subsidies should be provided from the third child on, that inheritance of land should be equally divided among the (male) offspring, that measures against land speculation and in favour of new horticultural techniques and policies affecting land use be introduced and access to water supplies and the country's forests guaranteed (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 43). But more than all these measures, the survival of the Catalan race depended on the judicious management of racial mixing. Eugenics provided the scientific framework for this process.

Drawing on the writings of prominent eugenicists such as Galton (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 73, 122-123, 133-134) Leonard Darwin (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 133) and A.M. Carr-Saunders (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 133), Vandellós set out his position with respect to eugenics as the key for the preservation of the Catalan race. Given that it was not possible to think of "una eliminació voluntària o mig imposadora dels grups ètnics que no ens semblin propicis a la barreja si realment poguéssim triar els elements que ens són necessaris per al creixement de la nostra població", it would be best to "facilitar la barreja perquè el que menys ens convé són inclusions forasteres que per llur ràpida creixença cada dia es facin més importants i vinguin a

representar una mena de minories nacionals” (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 132).¹³ While the Almerians were the least propitious for mixing (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 132), what was required was proper research on the advantages of mixing certain types based on eugenic and statistical science (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 133). Following the thought of Carr-Saunders, Vandellós declared that it was important not to confuse the study of such phenomena with their practical implementation and, least of all, one should not proceed towards “esterilitzacions i altres inhumanitats per l’estil” in the name of eugenics (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 133).

Three main remedies were therefore proposed within the context of the need of Catalan institutions, through the Estatut, to continue to defend the integrity of the population. First, it was necessary to at least halt the population decline or begin to increase vegetative growth. Second, it was necessary to review the mechanisms available to the region in respect of controlling the flow of immigrants into the area, “ajustant-lo a les nostres necessitats” (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 188). Third, “hauria de determinar un programa mínim per a assolir la catalanització dels nuclis forasters” (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 188). Together with the facilitation of racial mixtures, guided by the Catalan Eugenics Society, and drawing on the “innate” Catalan disposition towards and facility for the “assimilation” of immigrants (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 145-146, 186-209), the eugenic programme for the conservation of the Catalan race would be complete.

Epilogue: the significance of Vandellós’ work for Latin eugenics

The Catalan Eugenics Society, despite figuring in the list of affiliated organizations at the 1937 congress of the Latin Eugenics Federation in Paris, had a brief existence. Its founding meeting, as a response to Vandellós’ call for interest in 1935, took place in December of that year (“Sociedad Catalana de Eugénica” 1935) and, on approval of its statutes, it was claimed, “empezará inmediatamente sus tareas”. Already by that date, however, although Vandellós was referred to as the Society’s secretary, his address was given as the Dirección de Estadística, Ministerio de Fomento, Caracas, a circumstance that did not augur well for the organization. As Pascual has pointed out, in early 1936 the name of Vandellós was suggested to the Venezuelan government as a possible head of the state service of statistics and at the end of October 1936, Vandellós and family left Catalonia, arriving there in late November 1936 (Pascual i Escútia 1985, 177). The president of the Catalan Society, listed in the Latin Federation’s papers as Puig i Sais, gave no paper at the 1937 Paris congress of Latin eugenics and is unlikely to have attended given his advanced age and the difficulties posed by the Civil War.

Despite this, the Catalan Eugenics Society and Vandellós as its principal exponent leave their mark on the history of eugenics. The Society was, like many other eugenics societies, a broad church and its members’ views ranged from the most conservative, alarmist and pro-natalist

¹³ In this way, without naming the work, Vandellós coincided with René Martial’s understanding of “la greffe raciale”, the mechanism behind the “grafting” of races together. Martial’s argument on this question is contained in his *Traits de l’immigration et de la greffe inter-raciale* (1931).

positions (as in the work of Puig i Sais) through to the acceptance of some aspects of both Lamarckian and Mendelian theories of inheritance (as in the publications of Vandellós). Its affiliates' stance on immigration was not quite one that desired to keep "Catalonia free from large numbers of Spanish immigrants" (Turda and Gillete 2014, 56), but one that acknowledged that immigration was inevitable and could in fact be beneficial.¹⁴ The fundamental aspect of this question was the matter of "miscegenation". While many northern European eugenicists were opposed to anything but the most limited racial mixing, many Latin eugenicists adopted a more flexible stance and "praised inter-European racial mixing whenever it served their purposes" (Turda and Gillete 2014, 199-200; emphasis added). Many Italian political figures such as Mussolini and Italian eugenicists such as Pende and Giuffrida-Ruggeri favoured mixtures between "Latins" and some Europeans (Turda and Gillete 2014, 200), as did the French Charles Richet (Turda and Gillete 2014, 201-202) and René Martial,¹⁵ but, like Corrado Gini, abhorred contact between Europeans and Africans, Asians and Muslims. Vandellós accepted the fact of immigration, called for controls with respect to its "quality" and, by highlighting the supposed ability of the Catalans to assimilate others, came to a position like other Latin eugenicists whereby racial mixing could be a potentially positive resource for the enhancement of the "race". Within the range of possible mixes, Vandellós favoured those between Catalans and Aragonese and viewed contact between Almerians and Catalans as less propitious. By relying on the historic association, rooted in mid-nineteenth-century debates on race in Spain, between southern Spaniards and Moorish or African civilizations, the Almerians effectively became the Africans, Asians and Muslims of Spain and Catalonia in the 1930s. Despite this, the probability of racial mixing between all these types was taken by Vandellós as an inevitability; the task was to try to control immigratory flows but also to assimilate immigrants into a new hybrid racial-cultural community, effectively "Catalanizing" the new arrivals. An approach that rejected birth control and favoured pronatalism fitted comfortably under this patriotic umbrella. Although Vandellós tended to argue in favour of a strong hereditarian explanation for the existence of "poor stock", adapting principally Gregor Mendel's theory of inheritance (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 113-123), he also acknowledged how a poor environment could cause a propensity towards disease. Ultimately, the acculturation of new-comers and their incorporation into a revitalised Catalan "race" reflected the acceptance of the importance of the environment for a successful eugenic project.

When taken in the context of a region with high rates of immigration, the facilities provided by a degree of autonomy under Catalonia's Estatut and the need to preserve Catalan "national identity" in the face of attempts by Spain to dissolve it,¹⁶ the various alignments of eugenics in

¹⁴ Conversi also suggests that Vandellós, "influenced by Italian Fascism and German pessimism" (Conversi 1997, 194), was opposed to immigration and miscegenation as resulting in the decadence of Catalonia.

¹⁵ Carol notes that immigration was always a minority issue for French eugenicists as was the question of racial mixing. Martial's views grew more racist into the 1930s. Although he believed that certain racial mixes were acceptable, by the time of his address to the Latin Federation in 1937, his "considérations douteuses sur l'indice bio-chimique, les races pures, et quelques relents anti-sémites" were seriously contested by the congress attendees (Carol 1995, 186; Martial 1937).

¹⁶ Vandellós reflected on the difficulties when he wrote that Catalonia's hands were effectively tied by the central government in respect of immigration policy, a situation seized upon by the national powers precisely in order to quell any greater autonomy with the area: "Es difícil a Catalunya efectuar una acció de gran envergadura en allò que es refereix a l'aspecte material, perquè, tal com estan les coses, hauria d'ésser duta a

the region demonstrate the supreme flexibility of this branch of Latin eugenics, and Latin eugenics as a whole, with respect to race, inheritance and miscegenation. While not all within the Latin Eugenics Federation would have agreed with Vandellós' stance on either Mendel or on miscegenation, the Catalan Eugenics Society would clearly, by 1935, have had more in common with this international body than the more racially-charged International Federation of Eugenic Organizations, which accepted negative eugenic measures such as sterilization and which was generally opposed to racial mixing. A study of the Catalan Society attests further to the diversity within the Latin Eugenics Federation and while it is difficult to talk of unity (Turda 2017), the stance taken by some Latin eugenicists on racial mixing, for example those in Portugal,¹⁷ meant that the Societat Catalana d'Eugenèsia could find a home, however fleeting, under its wing.

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terme pel Govern central, que només es troba amb aquest problema de la natalitat a Catalunya i pot creure que la immigració en grans masses és la millor manera d'acabar amb el catalanisme i, per tant, no sentir el més petit interès a favor del possible augment de la natalitat catalana" (Vandellós i Solà 1935, 43).

¹⁷The example of Almerindo Lessa, the haematologist, who attended the Latin Federation's Paris conference, is a case in point (Cleminson 2017).

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