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The region as cognition: an alternative analysis of regionalism

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ABSTRACT

The paper defines a cognitive approach of regionalism and outlines a research agenda, proceeding from the assumption that the region is not a thing in the world, but a perspective on the world. Regionalism is a way of being in the world to which we are all subject. Therefore, instead of defining and describing a region and its identity, I suggest we should wonder how, when and why regionalist social actors interpret their social experience in regional terms. To do this, three cognitive levels are highlighted. Each region, first of all, is characterized by an ideological opportunities structure, which is a cognitive system with both constraints and leeway, defined by a more or less hegemonic ideology and more or less legitimate heterodox ideologies. The regionalist ideology then is characterized by the use of the region as a cognitive tool, notably in order to understand social problems on a regional territorial basis. Finally, the regionalist discourse in interaction during a social movement can take the form of a master frame of regional injustice.

In recent years, the issues of regionalism and regional nationalism have increasingly attracted the attention of researchers. Academics, as is public opinion, are interested in the electoral successes of autonomist or ethno-regionalist parties as well as the trends of ‘stateless nations’ in favour of independence, whether in Scotland or Catalonia. The literature is huge on these well-known cases, such as the Basque Country, Quebec, Flanders or Corsica. These fascinating and ‘hot’ cases, however, hide the fact that regionalism is a widespread and generally unnoticed phenomenon, which concerns many territories in the world, and which participate in the very texture of our world. Regionalism, as I aim to explain in this paper, is also found not only in less studied territories, such as Brittany, Sicily or Bavaria, but also in even more discrete territories, not necessarily consensual or institutionally organized as regions, such as Vendée, Silesia, or Yorkshire. Regionalism, indeed, is also the correct concept to characterize the influence of a regional political leader when he or she frames a discourses at the level of ‘their’ region, the daily imaginary conveyed by the regional daily press in its ‘regional’ pages, or even the activity of a union activist who works to create regional solidarity with the strikers of a factory in difficulty. Regionalism is a way of being in the world to which we are all subject, to paraphrase Benedict Anderson.¹

The literature on regionalisms is rich and diverse, but it suffers from theoretical scattering and semantic proliferation. Let us mention the great diversity of terms used

in the literature to describe national infra-state aspirations: minority nationalism,² ethnonationalism,³ ethnic nationalism,⁴ ethnoregionalism,⁵ regional nationalism,⁶ peripheral nationalism,⁷ autonomism,⁸ etc. If 'regionalism' is probably the weakest of these terms, it is also the most generalist, and therefore useful to cover a universe of cases both broad and limited. I will use it here to cover the whole space of socio-political demands for meso-level substate territories going from the most assertive separatisms to the most moderate and legitimist provincialisms.⁹ In this perspective, regionalism is understood in this article as a form of nationalism, on a scale that is not that of an actual state. Unlike classes, nationalisms and regionalisms are characterized by a horizontal division of the world, of social reality, that is to say a division based on territorial and/or cultural criteria, rather than on socio-economic or sectorial criteria.

More precisely, drawing inspiration from Richard Balme, I define regionalism as a collective action and an ideology that aims to 'constitute or reinforce the regional dimension of socio-political interactions'.¹⁰ It is therefore an ideological force of aggregation and translation of sectorial problems on territorial bases at a regional level. Its product is the region, a meso-sociological level – between the local and the state – of organization and collective action, globally compact in space and stable over time.

My purpose here is to outline a theoretical perspective and set off a new research agenda. I will proceed as follows. In the first section, I analyse the limits of the classical literature on regionalism, which is to a large extent a dimension of the literature on nationalism.¹¹ Then, I explain how it can benefit from a cognitive approach and specify the main lines of such an approach. Third, I focus on the cognitive space of the regionalist discourse, suggesting that it is defined both by an ideological opportunities structure and by windows of ideological opportunity. Finally, I analyse the regionalist discourse in action, and show that the region can be used as a cognitive tool to analyse reality but also take the form of a master frame of regional injustice within social movements.

The limits of the classical literature on regionalism

Until the 1960s-1970s the understanding of the national phenomenon was largely dominated by the diffusionist model, elaborated particularly by Karl Deutsch.¹² This theory, which explained the construction of nation-states through 'social communication', postulated that political integration was a unidirectional and irreversible phenomenon, from the centre to the periphery. It stressed that Western democracies were at the last stage of their integration process, and thus globally sheltered from the centrifugal forces of regionalisms described as a mere 'revolt against modernity'.¹³

The awakening of regionalisms in the 1970s, however, largely contradicted this model, provoking in return a new academic investment by political scientists and sociologists. Two approaches were influential in the 1970s, the theses of 'internal colonialism'¹⁴ and of the 'unequal development of capitalism'.¹⁵ Both intended to explain the existence of regionalisms in Western Europe by the inequalities between the centre and the peripheral regions. They also shared a similar criticism of the diffusionist theory and a Marxist language. Rejecting the view that modernization is a powerful force for homogenization, they argued that modernization processes are contentious and creators of heterogeneity.

Many criticisms have been made against these two theories. First, they tend to reduce theory to an equation where regionalism is seen as a direct response to an objective

situation of economic and spatial dependence.¹⁶ In addition, they are too often contradicted by facts. These theories do not explain why no organized regional nationalist movement developed in many clearly underdeveloped regions like Northern England or Southern Italy.¹⁷ In fact, it is often in the most developed regions that the most powerful regional nationalisms flourish, like Catalonia or Flanders.¹⁸

The 1980s have been characterized by the emergence of more elaborate theories of nationalism, emphasizing its structural sources and its modernity, but also improving our understanding of regionalism. Taking a resolutely modernist approach, Ernest Gellner¹⁹ sees nationalism as a specific phenomenon corresponding to the transition from an agrarian society to an industrial society. The latter requires a work force that is spatially malleable, socially mobile and therefore culturally homogeneous for undifferentiated communication at the state level. The inevitable uneven development of industrialization creates a new system of stratification, based on territory, considered illegitimate if it is added to cultural differences. Regional nationalism would emerge, therefore, when a small regional bourgeoisie, impeded in its aspirations for social ascension at the level of the state – notably because it has not been educated in the ‘high culture’ of the nation-state, which is therefore not ‘natural’ to it –, would transform the regional ‘low culture’ into an alternative ‘high culture’, thus legitimating the claim to a state of its own, all the more so if the region is disadvantaged by the unequal development of industrialization.

Gellner’s theory is unsatisfactory for understanding regionalism. First of all, it is too functionalistic, explaining in a very mechanical way the emergence of nationalism by its function in industrial society.²⁰ Indeed, many nationalisms emerged before the industrialization of the territory to which they relate – such as in Latin America, Ireland or Greece – and others developed long after industrialization – for example Scottish nationalism or many nationalisms within the former Soviet bloc.²¹ Gellner’s approach is, moreover, globally apolitical in the sense that its nationalism is without actors and without discourses: he expresses a total disinterest in nationalist ideology and its theoreticians, which he considers epiphenomenal.²²

The structuralist and modernist approaches, the Marxist works of the 1970s as well as the writings of Ernest Gellner and Miroslav Hroch,²³ have generally failed to establish irrefutable causal links between socio-economic phenomena and the advent of regionalism. At most they have demonstrated the coexistence of these phenomena, coexistence which does not even always exist.²⁴ They give little explanation as to why a nationalist or regionalist phenomenon emerges in one place and not another experiencing similar conditions and socio-economic development.²⁵ These aspirations do not appear randomly, though. In response to these theses, a whole group of researchers focused on better understanding the geography of national and regional demands, particularly by looking at the materials of nationalism and regionalism, more particularly through a new valuation of ‘*longue durée*’. They therefore wondered about the differentiated constitution, through time, of identities, languages and diverse territorialized traditions.

The contribution of Anthony D. Smith, main author of the ‘ethno-symbolist’ approach, is crucial in this perspective.²⁶ He explains that nations derive their origins from ethnic groups, ‘premodern antecedents’ which, through a set of myths, collective memories, symbols and cultural practices, provide nations with a specific but not immutable identity. Nationalist and regionalist intellectuals, ‘archaeologists’ of the

past,²⁷ thus have a repertoire²⁸ in which they can select, reconstruct and reinterpret.²⁹ Without these ethnic or historical components, the emergence of a national or regional claim is unlikely. Therefore, to understand the formation of nations and regions we must look at social and cultural structures over the long term,³⁰ and thus the legacy of a whole territorial history.

The interest of these approaches is to remind that regionalisms are not constituted anywhere, at random, by a simple force or external will, whether it be economic, social or political. This insistence on the '*longue durée*' is fundamental to understanding the tool kit, which can be tangible – languages, institutions, traditions, etc. – as well as cognitive – mental representations, doxa – of which the regionalist actors dispose, but which also conditions them to some extent. However, the proponents of this approach may be criticized for underestimating the differences between pre-modern ethnic communities and modern nations.³¹ Moreover, they do not really elaborate strong hypotheses as to why one element of the ethnic past turns into myth while other potentially usable elements disappear completely.³² Finally, they do not offer any explanation of the maintenance, the reproduction, of national identifications in the modern era, neglecting in particular the institutional and political elements.³³ The ethno-symbolist approach also suffers from considering identity phenomena too much as data. It is therefore not enough to understand how nations and regions are formed, transformed and crystallized. Since it assumes that these identities are political by definition, it does not offer a way to study the phenomena of politicization.³⁴

Other scholars are also interested in the materials of regionalism, but starting from the actors who use them and thus emphasizing the political work that they do with these materials. These authors adopt a constructivist approach: while many of them admit that there are materials of regionalism, these materials are neutral in themselves. They only make sense, or in any case obtain a political dimension, when mobilized, re-read, or translated by a regionalist rhetoric. Regionalisms cannot be understood outside this political work.³⁵ Eric Hobsbawm explains that nations, including substate nations, are the products of 'social engineering', especially through 'invented traditions'.³⁶ If we can accept with Hobsbawm that it is not nations that produce states and nationalisms but exactly the opposite,³⁷ the normative aspect of too many constructivist publications, for which 'invention' more often means 'counterfeiting' than 'recombination', can nevertheless be regretted.³⁸

Nationalism and regionalism are therefore scientific objects rich in their angles of analysis. Each theory proposes a lever to partially understand both nationalism and regionalism (albeit usually without sufficiently distinguishing regionalism from nationalism). Of structuralist theories, we will keep the idea that perceived domination and underdevelopment are potentially strong elements in the emergence of militant regionalist rhetoric. Moreover, we can also admit that the dynamism of regionalist claims often corresponds to periods of profound structural change. Of ethno-symbolist approaches, we will retain the emphasis on '*longue durée*', and especially on the valorization of the materials of regionalism, to understand the geography of regional claims. But the major socio-economic trends, the materials of regionalism, take on a political meaning only through the prism of the actors' discourse. Regions, just as nations, are social constructs, produced by a political work of selection, interpretation, combination, by actors that can

be described as regionalists. Regions (just as nations) are therefore not data but products of human imagination in constant development and evolution.

Defining a cognitive approach to regionalism

Curiously, whereas regionalism is above all an ideology,³⁹ it seems, after this review of the dominant literature, that we still lack an in-depth theoretical reflection on this ideological dimension. As constructivist approaches have shown, more than economic, social conditions and cultural and historical legacies, it is ideology that gives meaning to the region. In addition, the existing literature too often conveys a superficial and normative view – usually hostile or condescending – of regionalism. On the contrary, we should take the regionalist ideology ‘seriously’, without normative preconceptions.

A second dimension that the literature has mostly skipped over, despite Michael Billig’s essential contribution,⁴⁰ is the weakness of knowledge about the production and reproduction of nations and regions in everyday life. Classical literature has largely focused on the emergence of nations and nationalism but until recently has paid little attention to the mechanisms that have allowed them to continue to this day. For this, Billig coined the term ‘banal nationalism’ to refer to all the unconscious ideological habits by which ‘our’ nations are reproduced daily as nations.⁴¹

Hence, the theoretical point of view developed here is that **regionalism is an ideological process that deploys the region as a cognitive tool to apprehend reality through a territorial prism**. It is even what makes it last, exist on a daily basis, including in a non-confrontational situation – and we could then speak of ‘banal regionalism’. To understand regionalism in this way is what I call a cognitive approach to regionalism.

This approach is not completely new, as many authors have already explicitly or implicitly incorporated a cognitive dimension into their analysis of nationalism or even regionalism. What I wish to do, and which has not been done so far, is to explain, systematize and put such an approach on solid theoretical and methodological foundations.

As early as 1980, Pierre Bourdieu explained that the ‘regionalist discourse is a *performative discourse* which aims to impose as legitimate a new definition of the frontiers.’⁴² The regionalist discourse, by an ‘act of categorization’, of ‘social magic’, by putting forward new ‘principles of vision and division’, can thus contribute to produce what apparently it describes.⁴³ Stuart Hall, for his part, proposed that ‘a nation is not only a political entity but something which produces meanings – a system of cultural representations’.⁴⁴ Similarly, for David McCrone, “‘Scotland’ is above all a set of meanings, as is England, France, Germany and so on. Much depends on whose meaning wins out.”⁴⁵ Finally, for Michael Keating, ‘National culture provides symbols of identity for the community. It sustains a set of social values which may promote consensus and set the limits of debate and political division. It provides a means of communication as well as means of interpreting social reality.’⁴⁶ Keating therefore suggests analysing nationalism, and more broadly territorial identity, not as a problem but as a tool.⁴⁷ Indeed, regional territory can be understood as a ‘frame of perception’, a ‘mediating factor’ through which other factors, such as social issues, are perceived and take on meaning.⁴⁸

Rogers Brubaker, however, is the first researcher to develop an explicitly cognitivist approach of nationalism.⁴⁹ Asserting that there is a nascent but largely implicit cognitive

shift in the study of ethnicity and nationalism,⁵⁰ particularly through work on categorization and classification, he proposed to systematize it and suggested, with Loveman and Stamatov, to anchor it in the literature on social cognition, drawing ways to develop this cognitive shift.

For Brubaker and his colleagues, ethnicity is not a thing in the world, but a perspective on the world.⁵¹ It exists only through our perceptions, interpretations, classifications, categorizations and identifications: it is not an ontological but an epistemological reality.⁵² Ethnicity is therefore a way to look at the world, to understand and identify oneself, to make sense of one's problems, to recognize one's interests and to direct one's action. 'They are templates for representing and organizing social knowledge, frames for articulating social comparisons and explanations, and filters that shape what is noticed or unnoticed, relevant or irrelevant, remembered or forgotten.'⁵³

However, the cognitivist approach, inscribed in the constructivist perspective, avoids the instrumentalist drifts of constructivism. Indeed, research on cognition demonstrates that it is largely non-conscious and almost automatic, rather than deliberate and controlled.⁵⁴ It also helps to qualify the elitist drifts by focusing on 'ordinary people'. But the cognitivist approach remains sociological: cognition is a social process and not an individual one. It also retains a strong political dimension, in that it doesn't neglect the role of the state to impose 'principles of vision and division' of the world.⁵⁵

This cognitivist approach developed by Brubaker is part of a cognitivist literature that has infused the social sciences since the 1970s.⁵⁶ Cognition is part of the social history of the individual, which gives the bases and tools for the individual's cognitive work – language is not the least of these tools – but which also frames and creates limits to cognition. It is shaped in particular by the acceptable – legitimate – forms of argumentation and reasoning in a given culture.⁵⁷ Pierre Bourdieu's cognitive approach⁵⁸ is particularly enlightening and operative. He suggests that 'social agents construct the social world through cognitive structures that may be applied to all things of the world and in particular to social structures.'⁵⁹

In political science, it is in the field of public policy analysis that a cognitive approach has been most successful. For almost thirty years, a current of cognitive analysis of public policies has developed, which strives to apprehend public policies as cognitive and normative matrices constituting systems of interpretation of the real world, in which the different public and private actors can register their action. The common element of this field of research, led in particular by Peter A. Hall, Paul A. Sabatier and Pierre Muller, has been to establish the importance of the dynamics of social construction of reality in the determination of socially legitimate frameworks and practices at a precise moment.⁶⁰

These cognitive approaches are fundamentally based on the essential role played by cognitive matrices – a generic expression that groups paradigms, belief systems and frameworks – and on the belief that there are general values and principles that define a specific 'world view', itself defining the field of possibilities and of the utterable.

The cognitive approach therefore aims to analyse politics as a vast process of interpretation of the world, in which, little by little, a vision of the world will prevail, be accepted and then recognized as 'true' by the majority of social actors in a sector. They do this because it allows them to understand the transformations of their environment, by offering them a set of relationships and causal interpretations that allows them to decode, to decipher the events they are confronted with.

My cognitive approach to regionalism is therefore part of a cognitive social science literature already rich in conceptual tools, but which hasn't focused up to now on the region. A comprehensive cognitive approach can help us to thoroughly redefine research questions on regions and regionalism, and therefore understand the phenomenon better thanks to a new point of view. Indeed, with the cognitivist perspective, instead of asking 'what is a region?', we have to ask how, when and why do people interpret their social experience in regional terms.

On these bases, several trails or research steps can be proposed. A first angle, top-down, aims at defining the cognitive space within a state or a region in national and regional matter, by analysing the structure of the dominant discourse – which I will define as doxa, if it is hegemonic and disregarded as such – and the strength and spread of heterodoxies – i.e. alternative and minority discourses, even illegitimate ones. The aim is to define the horizon of the cognitive possibilities, which I will describe as the structure of the ideological opportunities in a given society at a given moment. A second angle, bottom-up, focuses on social actors with the aim of studying what they do with the region. I will develop the idea that they use the region as a cognitive tool, allowing the apprehension of the real world through a regional territorial prism. This cognitive tool can characterize a regionalist ideology or take the form of a collective action frame during a social movement.

The cognitive space of the regionalist discourse

Defining the ideological opportunities structure

In exploring the ways in which nation-states are perpetuated, reproduced as nations, Billig coined the concept of 'banal nationalism'. As he points out, the ideological habits by which nation-states are reproduced as nations are not named and thus go unnoticed.⁶¹ Yet the construction of current nation-states has been an ideological battle for hegemony in which one party claimed to speak for the whole. And even if this battle – which has historically built the nations – is largely behind us, the established hegemony continues in everyday life and structures our way of seeing the world. Thus, Billig expands the concept of nationalism to cover the ideological, cognitive means by which nation-states are reproduced. This understanding of nationalism, eminently cognitive, draws attention to the power of a hegemonic ideology all the more familiar in that it is not noticed. Since ideology, according to Billig's definition, is a pattern of beliefs and practices that make existing social arrangements appear natural or inevitable, the concept of banal nationalism helps to decipher and read ideas and feelings that claim to be natural even though they are constructed hegemonies.

Like Billig, several authors analyse nations and regions as hegemonic discursive constructs. For Patrik Hall, nationalism is the expression of a discursive hegemony that constrains political action by a set of subtle and normative institutional methods.⁶² He thus emphasizes the idea that the true nationalism of Western nation-states resides in their institutions, and that it can be studied by analysing the institutional formation of modern states. For Julio Cabrera-Varela, who focuses notably on Galician regionalism, 'the construction of the nation is a process of construction of a collective identity

sustained by a new definition of reality which struggles to impose itself as “the preponderant social evidence”.⁶³

Accepting that nations are discursive hegemonies (however fragile and contested this hegemony might be – as James C. Scott demonstrated, the dominated are not necessarily passive, and they may critique the ‘hegemony’ offstage⁶⁴) has two consequences for the study of regions and regionalism. First, regions are embedded in a national ideological reality bigger than themselves, which has a consequence on the cognitive possibilities at the regional level. Second, regionalists and regional institutions may try to reproduce (consciously or unconsciously) at the regional level a regionalist hegemony.

To be able to apprehend this multifaceted, complex and dynamic cognitive reality, without reifying it, we need a clear concept. I suggest that of ‘Ideological Opportunity Structure’ (IOS) and will explain now why and how an important element of a cognitive approach on the regional issue is to analyse the IOS in a given territory and at a given moment (or over time). I am adapting the concept of IOS from that of Political Opportunity Structure (POS), initiated by Peter Eisinger, developed by Doug McAdam and systematized by Sidney Tarrow.⁶⁵ This concept aims to measure the degree of openness and vulnerability of a political system to mobilizations, suggesting that the political context increases or diminishes the chances of success of similar social movements in different contexts. It aims to highlight what the protest activity owes to its political environment, and in particular that groups with the necessary resources to engage in protest action can do so only when the political context becomes favourable. This concept therefore focuses both on the permanence of the structures – political, institutional, etc. – of a country and on the existence of changes in this structure, windows of opportunity.

Therefore, I use the concept of Ideological Opportunity Structure to define the doxic elements anchored in institutions, which ensure their permanence and reproduction, which encourage or constrain speeches, the mobilization or not of certain ideological elements or certain frameworks of experience. Largely determined by the legitimate dominant ideology, the structure of ideological opportunities also integrates the heterodox ideologies and the known legitimate cognitive material.

Drawing on the factors of the POS defined by Sidney Tarrow,⁶⁶ I suggest that the IOS is first characterized by (1) its degree of openness to other ideological elements, for example, its degree of openness to regionalist claims. If centralization, territorial political unity or cultural and linguistic standardization are values at the core of the national doxa – as in France – it is expected that it will be more difficult to develop a regionalist discourse. On the contrary, if it is accepted that the state is a union of nations, as in the United Kingdom, a regionalist discourse (at least at the level of the constituent ‘nations’) will be more easily acceptable. And this dominant ideology can change over time, sometimes relatively quickly, as in Spain at the end of the 1970s. Indeed, it is also based on (2) the – general – stability of the doxa and its social diffusion. The role and effectiveness of the mediating state institutions – school, army, administration, etc. – are important here. The more the doxa is stable and diffused, inscribed in an already old path of dependence, with forgotten or mythicized sources, the more difficult it will be to modify it. The literature on nation-building has amply demonstrated the partial failure of nation-building in Spain, notably in comparison to France, which has a direct impact on the possibility and strength of a regionalist discourse in each country. Thirdly, it depends

on (3) the legitimacy and representativeness of the proponents of heterodoxas – the unity or otherwise of elites, the territorial or ideological location of heterodox cause entrepreneurs, etc. Finally, it is determined by (4) the opening of the channels of discursive diffusion – the freedom of the press, and more generally of opinion, being the most important element.

The IOS is the result of a historical sedimentation, which takes the form of a path of dependence.⁶⁷ It can therefore be studied through a socio-history of the ideological institutions – doxas as well as heterodoxas. Following Pierre Bourdieu, doxa refers to what is accepted as self-evident, as taken-for-granted.⁶⁸ It has a dominant cognitive structure, misrecognized as such, with a hegemonic vocation. Converting social structures into cognitive organizational principles, its function is to progressively register the social order into the individual. Inspired by Max Weber, Pierre Bourdieu asserts that the state ‘successfully claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical *and symbolic* violence over a definite territory and over the totality of the corresponding population’.⁶⁹ If the state, in its national dimension, is able to exert symbolic violence according to Bourdieu, it is because it is embodied both in objectivity in the form of specific institutional and legislative structures and mechanisms, and in ‘subjectivity’ in the form of mental structures, categories of perception and thought.⁷⁰

The state therefore shapes mental structures and imposes common principles of vision and division, which it inculcates universally – within the limits of its jurisdiction –, notably through the school system. ‘It thereby creates the conditions for a kind of immediate orchestration of habituses which is itself the foundation of a consensus over this set of shared evidences constitutive of (national) common sense’.⁷¹ This leads, according to Bourdieu, to a ‘doxic submission of the dominated to the structures of a social order of which their mental structures are the product’.⁷² Therefore, ‘recognition of legitimacy is not [...] a free act of clear conscience. It is rooted in the immediate, pre-reflexive, agreement between objective structures and embodied structures, now turned unconscious’.⁷³ The habitus is thus partly the form that the doxa takes at the individual level. It is not only about belonging to a class, a social group, but also belonging to a nation-state and/or region. Moreover, many authors have linked this concept of doxa to that of habitus to evoke a ‘national habitus’.⁷⁴ For Norbert Elias, who forges this concept, the national habitus is a social knowledge embedded within each member of the nation, and forged during and within the nation-state building process.

According to Bourdieu, every doxa is a historical construct whose social genesis can be traced. Indeed, it ‘is an orthodoxy, a right, correct, dominant vision which has more often than not been imposed through struggles against competing visions. [...] What appears to us today as self-evident, as beneath consciousness and choice, has quite often been the stake of struggles and instituted only as the result of dogged confrontations between dominant and dominated groups’.⁷⁵ He deduces that a real research project needs to be carried out, suggesting that ‘there is no more potent tool for rupture than the reconstruction of genesis: by bringing back into view the conflicts and confrontations of the early beginnings and therefore all the discarded possibles, it retrieves the possibility that things could have been (and still could be) otherwise. And, through such a practical utopia, it questions the “possible” which, among all others, was actualized’.⁷⁶ Studying the social genesis of the doxa and heterodoxas – the ‘discarded possibles’ – notably through state institutions such as constitutions, doxic discourses on the nation, etc., and the means of

imposition of this doxa – school, media, etc. – is therefore a particularly important step or track in any cognitive analysis of nationalism and regionalism. The comparative method is particularly adapted to highlight the arbitrary and artificial nature of this construction.

As part of a study on regionalism, this work of defining the structure of ideological opportunities must be done not only at the level of the state but also of the region. Any region is indeed a social construction whose process of elaboration can be analysed over the *longue durée*. The challenge here is to understand the institutionalization of a regional differentiated fact,⁷⁷ the ability to name and characterize this differentiated fact, its solidity and the perception of its political legitimacy. Like nation-states, regions are areas of discursive conflict. They are the product of ideologies that aim to reach a doxic level. And like the national-state project, the regional project is part of a path of dependence, one strongly influenced, even framed, by the state or states of which the region is a part.

It is therefore relevant to study both the materials of a differential fact and the socio-history of the expression of a differential fact, which is not limited to ethno-regional movements strictly defined, but extends to all actors who regionally territorialize their activity and political discourse. It may be useful to study the institutional history of the region – and the ‘memory’ of this history: the territorial organization of the media in the region, the territorial impact of the media, as well as the structure of social networks – in politics, sports, trade unions, culture, etc. – of the region to understand its cognitive institutionalization.

A comparison between Scotland and Brittany could serve here as an illuminating example of different IOS. Despite having been a very stable kingdom, then dukedom, then self-governing province for some 800 years, Brittany completely disappeared in 1790 as a political and administrative reality, being replaced by five départements. It was only in 1956–1972 that it was recreated as an administrative level, and in the 1980s at a political level, excluding one of its five départements, that of Loire-Atlantique, which houses the historical capital (Nantes) and that constitutes the economic heartland of Brittany. Education has not been regionalized, so (notably) regional history is not taught in schools. Likewise, the media system territorialization is not tailored to Brittany: there is no specific regional television, and the two main local newspapers are not at the ‘level’ of the region: *Ouest-France* covers all the north-west of France and *Le Télégramme* only the western part of Brittany. Finally, at least until recently, social and political networks were organized mostly at the departmental, not regional, level. Scotland, with the Act of Union of 1707, also lost its main political institution, the Parliament. However, three important institutional pillars were maintained: the Church of Scotland and specific and separate legal and education systems. As early as 1885, a Scottish Office was created, guarantee of a political and administrative action at the level of Scotland. The media system, sports, and civil society are ‘naturally’ regionalized: a majority of Scottish people read Scottish newspapers, there are Scottish teams participating in international competitions. Therefore, it appears there is a multiplicity of important obstacles to the cognitive regionalization of Brittany in comparison to Scotland, which if added to the already mentioned national French doxa explain why it is much more difficult to develop a regionalist heterodox discourse in Brittany than in Scotland. Devolution has only reinforced this difference.

Windows of ideological opportunity and cognitive shocks

If the national doxa is built on a long-time scale, in the form of path dependence, it is nevertheless never fully acquired, never completely hegemonic. Bourdieu even considers that ‘politics begins, strictly speaking, with the denunciation of this tacit contract of adherence to the established order which defines the original doxa’.⁷⁸ Periodically, windows of ideological opportunities open in the IOS, which are crucial moments where the ‘heretical discourse’ – i.e. heterodox discourse – can ‘sever the adherence to the world of common sense and integrate within it the previously tacit or repressed practices and experiences of an entire group, investing them with the legitimacy conferred by public expression and collective recognition’.⁷⁹ A few examples can make this idea clearer.

Analysing the crisis provoked in Austria by the controversy surrounding the revelations on the Nazi past of President Kurt Waldheim (1986–1992), Christian Karner explained how the doxa of the Austrian nation, previously largely non-reflexive and undisputed, was transformed into an object of debate, controversy and disagreement, especially regarding the country’s past during the German occupation.⁸⁰ He explained the transformation of symbolic pillars, hitherto widely considered self-evident, into objects of reflection, discussion and dispute, and demonstrated that one of the major consequences of this crisis was to break the internal hegemonic discourse – i.e. doxa – which made Austria a victim of Nazism. This allowed for the emergence of divergent national counter-discourses, which gained legitimacy during this crisis, and forced the doxa proponents to make their ideology explicit – thereby forfeiting hegemony. By posing the diagram ‘doxa⇒crisis⇒discourse’, Karner identified the necessity for a deep and wide crisis for the interrogation of a previously hegemonic discourse, a doxa.

Similarly, May 1968 in France was one of those crises where national doxas could be strongly contested. Boris Gobille discoursed on a ‘laugh of May’ which ‘by denaturalizing the symbolic order and giving the vocations of heterodoxy the right to intervene in the city, [...] contributed to politicization, that is to say to remove from fatality, what was previously taken for granted, and thus stayed out of the space of public deliberation’.⁸¹ For him, therefore, the specificity of May 68 lies in the fact that the revolt unmasked ‘the arbitrariness of daily conventions’, that not only proposed an alternative to the existing order but ‘attacked the very normative foundations thanks to which, on multiple social scenes, [...] a hierarchy of the social world was imposed between [...] dominant and dominated, professionals and laymen, between the “normal” and the “deviant”, the legitimate and the illegitimate’.⁸² Thus, by revealing, or claiming to reveal, the arbitrariness of the norms that govern and regulate the social order – all the more pregnant that they are naturalized as self-evident – the critical movement of May 68 worked to delegitimize what was presented and was perceived previously as legitimate. ‘Shattering intelligibility’, defying the strongest beliefs, the event forced its actors to discover the otherness and the inoperability in real life of their usual reading grids.⁸³ As such, the 1968 decade was a window of ideological opportunity to shake up the national doxa and relegitimize heterodoxies, catalysing for example a regionalist wave on a global scale, from Quebec to Brittany, from Scotland to Catalonia.⁸⁴ Another important ideological – and political – window of opportunity for nationalism was Glasnost and Perestroika, which sparked processes of independence throughout the former Soviet bloc.⁸⁵

If these windows of ideological opportunities can have an international or national dimension – such as the Algerian war in France, the loss of Cuba by Spain in 1898, etc. – they can also have a specifically regional dimension. Thus, Brittany was affected by a very strong social movement in 1972, a strike at the Joint français factory in the small town of Saint-Brieuc. Initially a classical strike, the workers demanded a pay rise and the improvement of their working conditions. However, the networks of solidarities and the frameworks of analysis of the strike quickly took on a regional dimension, the main actors of the strike using the social movement that it triggered to diffuse and implement their heterodox theses on the Breton regional issue. As cognitive shock this strike legitimated Breton heterodox regionalism for the rest of the decade, especially on the left.⁸⁶

The regionalist discourse in action

Regions constitute therefore a cognitive space which meaning evolves through time. However, they exist because they mean something to social actors. Regions can be cognitive tools and used to analyse political realities or social problems.

The region as a cognitive tool

An Austrian team around Ruth Wodak produced a particularly successful approach to the discursive construction of national identities.⁸⁷ Focusing on different levels of discourse, they conceptualized and identified the various macro-strategies used in constructing national identities, which take different forms according to the public. They testified to the malleability of the national identity: essentialist remarks, for example, are more present in semi-public or quasi-private contexts. The nation would thus be a ‘system of cultural representations’ and national identity a ‘habitus’ whose linguistic components they dissect, stressing, like Billig, that national identity and national imagination can be observed in the very structure of speech. For these authors, ‘the nation is a symbolic community built discursively’ that people use to make sense of their social world.⁸⁸ The same is true of the region, but it needs to be proved by focusing on the regionalist discourse.

As Brubaker advocated, the question that must be raised here is how, when, and why people interpret their social experience in regional terms. This analysis can be done on several levels. At the most micro level of the discourse of regional actors, it is the ordinary or everyday regionalism that the researcher can reveal and analyse. And by regional actors we mean not only ethno-regional political parties and cultural associations, the actors of ‘hot’ regionalism, but also, and above all, any regional social actor – trade unions, state-wide political parties organized regionally, environmental or sports organizations, the communication of regional institutions or the media present in the region.

Billig explained that ‘banal nationalism operates with prosaic, routine words, which take nations for granted, and which, in so doing, inhabit them.’⁸⁹ It is expressed through what Billig calls the ‘deixis of homeland’. He emphasizes that the crucial words of banal nationalism are often the smallest: ‘we’, ‘this’ and ‘here’. Words like ‘this’ and ‘the’ may have unconsciously crucial weight: ‘the’ economy, ‘the’ country, ‘the’ Prime Minister, etc. actually mean ‘our’ economy, ‘our’ country, ‘our’ Prime Minister. Deixis are very discreet

signals. Nevertheless, their effect is important when they transform the house – the State – into the home – the Nation. These ‘the’ and ‘this’ create the concrete, everyday, reassuring world of the well-known nation-state.

The same logic exists at the regional level, in the form of a banal regionalism. All the trade unions I have studied⁹⁰ make abundant use of these deixis in the region to talk about ‘our’ region or even ‘the’ region or simply ‘here’. The ‘we’ to evoke the regional people are recurrent. Trade unions, like other regional social actors, are therefore involved in creating a regional home called Flanders, Scotland, or Galicia. These unconscious deixis create a familiarity with the region, a sort of appropriation, make it welcoming, constantly reminding the members of the union that the place where they live has a name, that it is theirs and must be defended. This banal regionalism is the first step of regional cognition. It is unconscious and *a priori* benign, yet it participates in creating awareness of the legitimacy and even the automaticity of a regional apprehension of the world. Comparing systematically banal regionalisms would be a fruitful research project to assess regional cognition: how does banal regionalism coexist with banal nationalism in the same territory?⁹¹ What are the differences between, for example, Sardinian and Tuscan banal regionalism when their geographical reality and their relationship to the Italian state are so different?

The second cognitive level aims to focus on the use of the concept of region, that is to say the concept of Catalonia, Brittany, Quebec, Wales, etc. Why? In which circumstances? What are the discursive effects of such use? My thesis is that the region can be apprehended as a cognitive tool. It is a cognitive means of giving a horizontal dimension – i.e. territorial, centre-periphery – to the traditional vertical analysis of social analysis – such as the Marxist analysis in terms of classes. In other words, regionalism can be analysed as a horizontal, territorial politicization of the social world. Regionalist organizations produce a regionalist ideology to aggregate the interests and problems of the territory in which they invest.

This operation begins usually discursively with the ‘highlighting’ of a particular social composition of the region and of specific socio-economic problems. This is what I would call the alterization of the region. Studying the specificities of a region is a cognitive necessity for regional action. But in the very process of studying a regional ‘reality’, regional actors create this regional reality, transforming a space into a territory – that is to say, a space with a human and social dimension – and a territory into a region, with borders and features. Characterizing, describing the region in detail, creates a discursive reality of the region as different from the surrounding regions. The introduction of comparisons, especially with the capital city, gives a first political dimension to these descriptions, for example asserting that wages are lower in the region, and so on. A second step in the politicization of the region is to ‘find’ those responsible for the situation analysed, to frame problems so as to assign responsibilities, ‘ideally’ to an external cause – the state, capitalism, Europe, etc. – or, sometimes, to ‘regrettable’ internal disunion.

The region is also used as a discursive tool to link problems between them and to make an increase in generalization. For example, in 1978, the Breton branch of the *Confédération française démocratique du travail* (CFDT – French Democratic Confederation of Labour), a French national trade-union, concluded an analysis on Breton metallurgy explaining:

In total from 1975 to 1977, 7373 jobs were lost in Breton metallurgy, that is, 14.6% of the total workforce. Brittany lost more jobs in two years than Lorraine. There has been a lot of talk about the difficulties of the steel industry, but the highest percentage of job losses in all regions has gone unnoticed ... because it is due to the addition of failing SMBs.⁹²

Starting from a micro-local analysis, the CFDT adds local figures on a regional basis – invisible as a social problem at this level – to show the extent of a seemingly unimportant social problem, but which becomes important through this cognitive process. The region is here a lever of visibility of a social problem. The central element of this use of the regional concept is the highlighting of strong links between problems, the notion of unity of issues on a regional basis. The region serves to gather factual elements and to give them meaning on a territorial basis. It is this process that makes it an analytical filter, a cognitive tool.

Finally, the third, more classical, cognitive level is the analysis of the discourse carried by an organization on the region. It is therefore the regionalist ideology as a whole. For Michael Freeden, 'ideologies are groupings of decontested political concepts',⁹³ 'systems of political thinking, loose or rigid, deliberate or unintended, through which individuals and groups construct an understanding of the political world they, or those who preoccupy their thoughts, inhabit, and then act on that understanding.'⁹⁴ He thus bears this vision of the essentially cognitive dimension of ideology. In this perspective, an ideology is the product of the organization of information, perceptions, beliefs, pre-conceptions and misconceptions about the political world.⁹⁵ He also urges to focus on political concepts and to examine how they can illuminate our understanding of ideology.⁹⁶ In the same vein, for John Gerring, 'by organizing and interpreting the world, an ideology helps the subject to act within that world. [...] Ideology, it is argued, forms the nexus between ideas and actions.'⁹⁷

The objective of this third level is to apprehend the lexical field of the region, to show what the regional demands of an organization are – by the classical analysis of an ideology, a political discourse. It is also a question of studying how, through logical and cultural adjacency, an organization integrating a regionalist approach experiences an ideological reconfiguration, for example on the issues of democratic legitimacy or social responsibility. The study of the context of the discourse must not be neglected, since it is important to understand when and why a regional discourse is put forward.

The regionalization of interest representation has been researched in a solid way, notably among scholars studying 'neo-regionalism', proving in the process how regions are 'spaces for politics', but with little focus on discourse and regionalism.⁹⁸ Therefore, adding an explicit, systematic and comparative cognitive framework will open fruitful new research paths. Strong regional identity doesn't always go with strong ethnoregionalist parties, as is the case in Brittany or Alsace.⁹⁹ More research could be done to compare the discursive field of the region in such territories to regions dominated by strong regionalist parties, but also to regions without visible regionalism in the public space: when, how and by whom is social and political experience interpreted in regional terms? And when it isn't, what takes its place? Much more research on regionalism is needed focusing on trade-unions, specific families of political parties (Socialists, Greens, Liberals, Conservatives ...), and local media to really understand the cognitive density of regions.

Regional injustice as collective action frame

Finally, one last way of applying a cognitive research grid to regionalism is to study the regionalist discourse in interaction, notably in the context of social movements. Social movements are a well-marked research object, where a cognitive approach has had a profound impact, that of 'collective action frames'. This axis of analysis of social movements was developed particularly by David Snow and Robert Benford.¹⁰⁰ It focuses on the political work of giving meaning to reality through ideological framing, that is, a conscious strategic effort by groups of people to mobilize, select, and present in a certain way ideas and meanings to form a shared understanding of the world and of themselves that legitimizes and motivates collective action. The objective is to mobilize the support as much as possible and to demobilize, delegitimize, as much as possible the antagonists, the adversaries.

This approach asserts that one of the functions of social movements is to provide alternative frameworks to what previously appeared to be the result of bad luck or fatality, turning those issues into injustice, social or moral transgression that calls for action. Social movements are not only neutral carriers of pre-existing ideologies, but produce meaning, extending or even transforming old visions of the world, and thus proposing new ways of cognitively understanding the world.¹⁰¹ In this perspective, social movements are cognitive actors.

Hank Johnston used this approach to understand the Catalan dynamics of the 1960s and 1970s.¹⁰² Through a microsociological approach, he analysed the production, dissemination and interpretation of a common culture of resistance to Franco's rule in Catalonia on a progressive Catalanist basis, which he described as a 'master frame'. He showed that this master frame resulted from the fusion between 1955 and 1965 of three different dynamics (neo-Marxism, post-Vatican II Catholicism and civic traditional nationalism). This master frame was a general formula for resolving the problems of the opposition movement to the Franco regime, and succeeded in uniting the liberal bourgeoisie, the emigration workers and the middle classes of Catholic obedience creating a language common to all the opposition – unlike what happened in the Basque Country. The framing theory allowed him to analyse the sources of Catalan success, the work of framing here preparing the success of the mobilization, and also helped to understand the Catalan success during the transition, especially on the left, in the context of a proletariat largely of non-Catalan origin.

Ramón Máiz also successfully integrated this tool to study the genesis of regional identities in a constructivist perspective, analysing how the region is the result of a process of frame alignment. For this purpose, the nationalist framing strategy uses three main processes: (1) a call for objective facts – selected and accentuated – to prove that the regional issue is the expression of a real grievance; (2) a call for moral responsibility that rallies an audience around values and principles deploring the current gloomy situation in the region; (3) the propagation of a style of thought that postulates the region as the sole frame of a genuine individual existence.¹⁰³ These frames, however, are not static, but re-elaborated and adapted by each generation, each of which would produce its cognitive map of the region.¹⁰⁴

I have myself demonstrated¹⁰⁵ the existence of a master frame of regional injustice in Western Europe in the 1970s, which has been used both in the context of labour

movements – for example, the strike of the *Joint français* in Brittany, in 1972, or the work-in of Upper Clyde Shipbuilders in Scotland in 1971–1972 – and environmental movements – for example the antinuclear movement of Plogoff in Brittany in 1978–1981 or of Xove in Galicia in 1977–1981. This master frame of regional injustice, the result each time of a cognitive regionalization of a localized case, is characterized notably by criticizing the externality of the centres of decision and the unequal treatment between the region and the rest of the national territory – which would be visible by higher unemployment, lower wages, less control, etc. Aimed at fostering regional solidarity, this framework has proved particularly effective in Brittany and Scotland, being taken up even by the mainstream media. This framework is not developed by the workers themselves but by their closest allies, unions and political parties. The cultural centrality of these allies – and their social capital – ensures the diffusion of the action frames that they elaborate pragmatically.

Conclusion

The purpose of this article was to define some theoretical tracks for a cognitive analysis of regionalism. The aim was essentially to consider the region as a perspective on the world before being a thing in the world, that is to say, a means of making sense of one's problems, of identifying one's interests and of directing one's action. I have identified three cognitive levels whose study makes it possible to understand the cognitive dimension of regionalism: the *doxas*, as ideological institutions; the ideology proper, in which the region can take the form of a cognitive tool; and cognitive interactions, as action frames and master frames.

I first suggested to focus on the ideological opportunities structure in a given region, which is a cognitive system both of constraints and leeway characterized by a more or less hegemonic *doxa* and more or less legitimate heterodoxas. Each region has a specific ideological opportunities structure, where the words themselves do not have the same meaning. This, however, is in no way immutable. If in normal times it evolves incrementally in the form of path dependence, windows of ideological opportunities may appear, allowing the contestation of the *doxa* and the reinvestment of heterodoxies.

Studying the regionalist discourse with a cognitive perspective is to study the use of the region as a cognitive tool. It consists in the introduction of a horizontal dimension to a traditionally vertical analysis. By creating links between problems in different socio-economic domains, but on a territory defined as politically relevant, the cognitive approach helps to identify new socio-political problems. Using the region as a cognitive tool is not without ideological consequences, though.

Finally, one last entry is the study of the regionalist discourse in interaction, notably in the framework of a social movement, by analysing the collective action frames, which can take the form of a master frame of regional injustice. This master frame, which is usually the product of the generalization of a particular struggle, serves to rouse solidarity or regional commitment and thus establish a balance of power with the centre.

Thus, this cognitive approach opens up potentially fruitful lines of research to better study the regionalist phenomenon and to understand the social density of a region, by displacing the researcher's focus. It allows to see regionalism not as a problem, an irrational phenomenon, but a way of apprehending the world, which is not exclusive

but can be added to other ideological prisms. This cognitive approach does not claim to be a new general theory of regionalism or nationalism. It does not invalidate pre-existing research nor deny the emotional dimension of regionalism. I hope more modestly to have brought the reader to see the question differently, to ask new questions, through a new theoretical prism.

Notes

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2. M. Keating, *Nations against the State. The New Politics of Nationalism in Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland* (London: MacMillan Press Ltd, 1996).
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8. D.-L. Seiler, *Les partis autonomistes* (Paris: PUF, 1982); P. Lynch, M. Gomez-Reino Cachafeiro and L. De Winter (Eds), *Autonomist Parties in Europe* (Barcelona: ICPS, 2006).
9. The concept of 'regionalism' is also used for other purposes in academic research, notably in international relations to characterize organizations or collaborations between geographically close states. I exclude such definitions here.
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11. For the sake of clarity and consistency, I will use throughout the paper the concepts of 'region' and 'regionalism' when referring to substate territories and the aspirations or claims of their agents, even when referring to publications that used other concepts.
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13. S. M. Lipset, 'The revolt against modernity', in P. Torsvik (Ed.), *Mobilization, Center-periphery Structures and Nation-building* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1981).
14. M. Hechter, *Internal colonialism, the Celtic fringe in British national development, 1536–1966* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1975); J. E. Reece, 'Internal colonialism: the case of Brittany', *Ethnic and racial studies*, 2(3) (1979).
15. T. Nairn, *The Break-Up of Britain. Crisis and Neo-Nationalism* (London: New Left Books, 1977); C. Hadjimichalis, *Uneven development and regionalism. State, territory and class in Southern Europe* (Beckenham: Croom Helm, 1987).
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19. E. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983); E. Gellner, *Nationalism* (New York: New York University Press, 1997).
20. J. Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, *op. cit.*, Ref. 18.
21. J. Hutchinson, 'Ethnicity and modern nations', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 23(4) (2000), pp. 651–669.
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24. Lecours, 'Ethnonationalism in the West', *op. cit.*, Ref. 3.
25. A. D. Smith, *The ethnic origins of nations* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986); Connor, *Ethnonationalism*, *op. cit.*, Ref. 3.
26. Smith, *ibid.*; A. D. Smith, *The Nation in History. Historiographical Debates about Ethnicity and Nationalism* (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 2000).
27. A. D. Smith, 'Gastronomy or geology? The role of nationalism in the reconstruction of nations', *Nations and Nationalism*, 1(1) (1995), pp. 3–23.
28. Hutchinson, 'Ethnicity', *op. cit.*, Ref. 21.
29. A. D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism* (London: Routledge, 1998).
30. J. Armstrong, *Nations before Nationalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982); A. D. Smith, 'The origins of nations', in V. P. Pecora (Ed.), *Nations and identities* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), p. 333–353; J. R. Llobera, *Recent theories of nationalism* (Barcelona, Working Paper no. 164, Institut de Ciències Polítiques i Socials, 1999).
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32. J. Breuilly, 'Approaches to Nationalism', in G. Balakrishnan (Ed.), *Mapping the Nation* (London and New York: Verso, 1996).
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34. Lecours, 'Ethnonationalism in the West', *op. cit.*, Ref. 3.
35. Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, *op. cit.*, Ref. 18.
36. E. Hobsbawm, 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions', in E. Hobsbawm, T. Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
37. E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
38. Smith, *The Nation in History*, *op. cit.*, Ref. 26.
39. Or rather an ideological component. Like Michael Freeden, I assert that regionalism, as nationalism, isn't a full ideology that can exist on its own, except possibly in the form of a 'thin-centred ideology'. Regionalism can not in itself offer a global vision of society and the means to solve problems. It is therefore a cognitive framework that can be integrated into broader ideologies – socialism, liberalism, conservatism, etc. See M. Freeden, 'Is nationalism a distinct ideology?', *Political Studies*, 46 (1998), pp. 748–765.
40. M. Billig, *Banal nationalism* (London: Sage, 1995).
41. Billig, *ibid.*, p. 6.
42. P. Bourdieu, 'Identity and representation: elements for a critical reflection on the idea of region', in *Language & Symbolic Power* (Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 223. This chapter is an adapted translation from an article first published in French in *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* in 1980.
43. Bourdieu, *ibid.*, pp. 223–224.
44. S. Hall, 'The question of cultural identity', in S. Hall, D. Held, T. McGrew (Eds), *Modernity and its futures* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), p. 292.

45. D. McCrone, *Understanding, Scotland: the sociology of a stateless nation* (London and New-York: Routledge, 1992), p. 32.
46. Keating, *Nations against the State*, *op. cit.*, Ref. 2, p. 9.
47. Keating, *ibid.*, p. 220.
48. M. Keating, *The new Regionalism in Western Europe: Territorial Restructuring and Political Change* (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd, 1998).
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50. It is to be noted, however, that Brubaker does not refer to regionalism or minority nationalism, nor to the literature that deals with this specific form of nationalism. It is therefore one of the challenges of this article to introduce Brubaker's theoretical propositions into this literature.
51. Brubaker *et al.*, 'Ethnicity as Cognition', *op. cit.*, Ref. 49, p. 32.
52. Brubaker, *ibid.*, p. 45.
53. Brubaker, *ibid.*, p. 47.
54. Brubaker, *ibid.*, p. 51.
55. Brubaker, 'Ethnicity, Race, and Nationalism', *op. cit.*, Ref. 49, paraphrasing P. Bourdieu.
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57. L. B. Resnick, 'Shared cognition: thinking as social practice', in L. B. Resnick, J. M. Levine, S. D. Teasley, *Perspectives on socially shared cognition* (Washington: American Psychological Association, 1991); B. Lahire, C. Rosental (Eds), *La cognition au prisme des sciences sociales* (Paris: Éditions des Archives Contemporaines, 2008); E. Zerubavel, *Social Mindscales: An Invitation to Cognitive Sociology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997); P. DiMaggio, 'Culture and Cognition', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 2 (1997), pp. 263–287; P. Strydom, 'Contemporary European cognitive social theory', in G. Delanty (Ed.), *Handbook of Contemporary European Social Theory* (London/New York: Routledge, 2006).
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61. Billig, *op. cit.*, Ref. 40, p. 6.
62. P. Hall, 'Nationalism and historicity', *Nations and nationalism*, 3(1) (1997), pp. 3–23.
63. J. Cabrera Varela, 'The analysis of the nationalist ideological system', in J. G. Beramendi, R. Maíz, X. Nuñez (Eds), *Nationalism in Europe Past and Present* (Santiago de Compostela: Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, 1994), p. 135.
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65. P. K. Eisinger, 'The conditions of protest behaviour in American cities', *American Political Science Review*, 67 (1973), pp. 11–28; D. McAdam, *Political process and the development of Black insurgency (1930–1970)* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982); S. Tarrow, *Democracy and disorder: Protest and politics in Italy (1965–1975)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press,

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