

COMPETING CLAIMS AND NATIONALIST NARRATIVES: A CITY/STATE DEBATE IN A GLOBALISING WORLD

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ABSTRACT

This paper contributes to ongoing discussions about international urban entrepreneurialism, place marketing efforts, and city/state relations through an empirical analysis of a controversial state-sponsored prestige project, Galicia's 'City of Culture' museum. The protracted intra-regional debate surrounding the construction of the museum is informative in that it offers a scenario in which two rival cities are competing with each other within the same state. The story of their conflict adds a new and complicating dimension to the discussion by highlighting how city identity may intersect with national identity in relation to the politics of the state. The results show how the actual politics of city/state relations can be one of contestation between a range of political interests that extend beyond a simple, bipolar city/state relationship.

Key words: City/state relations, nationalism, region, media, intra-regional city rivalry

INTRODUCTION

Growing competition due to European integration and globalisation has made European cities increasingly eager to distinguish themselves by raising their attractiveness or prestige. While city rivalry is not new, the inclusion of prestige projects, especially since the 1970s, has increasingly become part of many cities' promotional strategies as they compete for investment and tourism (Bianchini *et al.* 1992). One of the most successful examples is Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao in Spain, which has received over ten million visitors since it opened in 1997 (SRGF 2014). This museum inspired a similar project in Galicia, a nearby region in Spain, but one that intended to outdo its architectural predecessor both in size and scope. In 1999, the president of Galicia commissioned the construction of the Ciudad de la Cultura (City of Culture); a six-building museum campus aimed at fostering new cul-

tural and economic networks while promoting Galicia as a key part of supranational Europe. This museum 'city' was designed to be the same size as its capital's medieval urban core and finished by 2004. The outcome was far from ideal. Not only did this project greatly exceed its initial projected completion date and triple in cost during its first years of construction; but the project, which remains unfinished today, sparked a region-wide controversy – one that the local media, driven by intra-regional city rivalry, helped to fuel.

Part of this Spanish regional and city competition results from the devolution of certain central government administrative powers to regional governments created as a result of the 1978 Spanish Constitution. Today, Spain has 17 autonomous regions, each enjoying a limited degree of self-rule through their regional statute or 'constitution'. Three of these, known as 'historic nationalities' (Basque Country, Catalonia and Galicia), were able, based on their unique

culture, language and struggles to gain autonomy before the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, to assume powers earlier than the others (Magone 2009). While there is some variability regarding the extent to which each region can legislate, all autonomous regions are now able to forge their own global connections across national and international boundaries, at the same time that a major transformation in the perception and role of subnational and supranational actors took place within Europe. This general development is simultaneously perceived as part of a growing shift of power upwards to the European Union as well as downwards to the region or municipality. Cities and regions have become increasingly engaged in the global, multi-scalar economy primarily by pursuing various promotional avenues, including architectural prestige projects.

Instead of gaining support throughout the entire Galician region, the City of Culture (hereafter CdC) became the focus of a fierce city rivalry between the capital city, Santiago de Compostela (hereafter Santiago), and Galicia's largest city, A Coruña (hereafter Coruña), sparked by a contentious media debate between these two cities' newspapers. A great wealth has been written about urban competition and city/state relations, but this close empirical analysis of the CdC and its subsequent media debate offers a multi-scalar scenario that includes an element of nationalism. While many contend that city-based entrepreneurial efforts for international investment and tourism diminish the power of the state, the actual politics surrounding the CdC debate suggest a more complicated city-state dynamic. The CdC, which began as a state project, rapidly became the centre of an intra-regional conflict when some Coruñans rejected the nationalist claim of the CdC project and interpreted it as a project for the capital at the region's expense. Subsequent efforts to market the CdC as a national and later as a supranational project only complicated matters and fuelled the media debate.

LITERATURE REVIEW

An investigation of the CdC media debate and intra-regional city rivalry contributes to current

geographic understandings of economic globalisation and urban competition for global markets as well as city/state relations. While there are a number of investigations of international urban entrepreneurialism such as London and New York's competing Olympic bids (Shoval 2002), this discussion emphasises regional elements in the discussion of cities' competing efforts for global markets. In Europe, the general shift of power to the supranational level and regional or municipality reflects a revival of local and regionalist sentiments fostered by supranational organisations (Brenner 2004) and increased integration due to the European single market in which regions and cities have also become increasingly prominent in the international global market (Keating & Wilson 2009). McNeill (2004) outlines additional motivating factors for the regional renaissance in Europe including a desire to preserve cultural identity and traditions within increasing EU standardisations, which contribute to a new reterritorialisation of Europe. At the same time, European cities, through technology and infrastructure are increasingly becoming the nodes of the global economy and shifts in urban governance allow cities to strive to become more attractive for investment, tourism or funding (Swyngedouw *et al.* 2002). As a consequence, European cities are motivated to compete internationally for investment capital, markets and tourism as new economic opportunities emerging from a multi-scalar globalising world through what Harvey (1989) calls 'urban entrepreneurship' have focused on these battles as a form of 'inter-urban competition'. Although place marketing, branding and boosterism are not new phenomena, the reliance on such strategies in Europe is increasing, as they are perceived as significant promotional tools in the ongoing struggle for place recognition (Sklair 2011) and strategic, selective efforts to brand a place deserve attention (Boisen *et al.* 2011).

My analysis contributes a complicating factor of nationalism to Taylor's (2007) article on city/state relations in which he identifies the state as an abstract and governmental institution. More precisely city-based entrepreneurship complicates how city identity intersects with national identity, and how this plays into the politics of the state. Many argue that cities

competing in our globalising, multi-scalar world weaken the power of the state. The CdC controversy offers a different scenario in which two cities are competing with each other within the same state, using what Jacobs (1992, p. 19) refers to as urban 'morality' that may reinforce national morality, which allegedly is opposed to state morality. In other words, while Taylor's discussion of world city networks suggests that city networks may weaken the 'triumphant nation-state', Santiago's attempt to create a cultural enterprise in a global market may have worked to strengthen the state.

According to Taylor's (2007) discussion of city/state relations, cities are driven by what he defines as commercial moralities while the state acts as a guardian. Cities are complex entities that embody commercial forces that promote ingenuity and adaptability, and create economic and trade networks that often challenge hierarchies, which are common to the state's guardian syndrome. For example, in accordance with Taylor's description of cities' commercial moralities, the numerous contracts that were signed with a number of private contractors for each of the six CdC buildings quickly weakened the Galician government's absolute, hierarchical control of the project.

While cities are willing to work with outsiders and are open to inventiveness, novelty and productive investments, states' morality insists on obedience and honor, adherence to tradition and ostentation. States' practices work to contain and maintain territorial control in an effort to construct legible, simplified 'spaces of places' (Taylor 2007, p. 141). In this case, the CdC began as the physical manifestation of Galicia President Manuel Fraga's state-driven desires to create an extraordinarily designed container of Galician nationalist culture. But, like the guardian dreams of modernist planners that Taylor argues only succeeded in science fiction, Fraga's plan also failed. He mistakenly believed he and his administration could completely manage the construction of a 'city', grounded in an urban environment that was capitalising on unpredictable, multi-scalar economic forces that eroded state control.

In order to understand the complexity of this controversy, we must examine the project through a multi-scalar framework. What began

as a state project quickly became entangled in an intra-regional conflict when, instead of interpreting the CdC as a Galician national project, one 'competing' city saw the museum strictly as a project for Santiago. But conflicting or supplemental claims of national and supra-national identities also contributed to the confusion and frustration surrounding the CdC debate. For example, when President Fraga tried to use the CdC as a vehicle through which he could capitalise on new economic opportunities emerging in an increasingly globalising world, he visited key North American cities in order to establish economic and cultural relationships. Despite his efforts, unlike Bilbao's, Guggenheim's prearranged partnership with its parent museum in New York, there were no formal negotiations with any institutions or businesses in the US or Mexico established by the time Fraga left office in 2005.

Fraga also tried to describe the CdC as a Galician national project and a European project. He proudly boasted that partnerships would soon be formed with key European institutions so it would become a 'place for cultural expression and social interaction of our people with the rest of Europe . . . and show the world a modern and developed Galicia' (Fraga 2005, p. 7). He believed Santiago was the appropriate location for this project because, as the internationally recognised final destination of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage (Way of St. James) the city had long been considered the 'heart' of Galician culture and 'a European cultural tradition and meeting point' (Fraga 2005, p. 7). The multi-scalar nature of this project and Fraga's effort to create a new image for Santiago, while building upon references to its past, is what Terlouw (2009) describes as layering of spatial identities used to project an intended brand of a place. As a result of these claims, many Galicians inquired if the project was co-funded by other European cities or by EU cultural funds. Ultimately, the CdC project manager confirmed they had not requested outside funds in order to maintain control of the project (*La Voz de Galicia* 2007). When the state was not able to produce evidence of European cultural partnerships, the promotional message of the CdC, as both a Galician and a European cultural project, was replaced by descriptions of a Galician cultural project that

would be admired throughout Europe (*El Correo Gallego* 2002).

However, despite the CdC's nationalist assertions, there would be many who contested the validity of such claims. De-emphasising the CdC's European scale caused some to question the legitimacy of the project and by 2005 when Fraga left office the Coruñan newspaper, *La Voz de Galicia* (2005), which painted it as 'Santiago's CdC', began calling it 'Gaiás' – the name of the hill in Santiago where the museum complex is located, thereby effectively stripping the project of its nationalist claims. Struggling to discredit *La Voz's* negative campaign, Santiago's newspaper *El Correo Gallego* continued to stress that the CdC was designed for the benefit of all Galicians, a claim that contributes to our investigation of city/state relations. Taylor's (2007) use of the moral syndrome framework is useful in understanding broad relationships between cities and states. However, the actual politics of city/state relations is one of contestation between political interests, thus, this discussion will be advanced by a close empirical analysis of the way the moral syndrome manifests in contemporary politics. In this case, instead of challenging the state, Santiago's urban morality, in effect, worked to strengthen that of the state.

The debate surrounding the CdC was frequently reported in the Galician media. Much has been published about the role of the media and its influence on the public's perception of politically charged issues through the use of framing. Media framing, the selection and emphasis of certain elements of a particular subject or event to advance or promote a specific interpretation or perceived solution, can be an influential factor regarding public perception of certain political issues. In the case of the media controversy surrounding the CdC, substantive framing, which can 'define effects or conditions as problematic, identifying causes, conveying a moral judgment and endorsing improvements' (Entman 2004, p. 5), provides a framework for understanding the role of the media in the CdC controversy analysed below. While the impact of the media varies across issues and among individuals (Graber 1988), Iyengar and Kinder (1987) argue that there is evidence to support the assertion that media frames influence readers'

perception of political events and issues. Additionally, in regards to the role of the local media's agenda-setting and issue awareness, Scheufele *et al.* (2002) argue that the local media, such as *El Correo Gallego* or *La Voz de Galicia*, can play a key role in public's awareness of local issues like in the case of the CdC debates. However, in regards to the media's influence on participation, many such as Gamson *et al.* (1992) believe that framing fosters a sense of cynicism and apathy within the public, an apparent theme in the author's interviews with the Galician public.

METHODS

The data for this study was derived by two methods: content analysis of newspaper articles about the CdC and semi-structured interviews. The author conducted a content analyses of all 1,556 newspaper articles (written in Spanish and Gallego) pertaining to the project and its controversies published in the region's two most widely read daily newspapers, *La Voz de Galicia* (hereafter *La Voz*) and *El Correo Gallego* (hereafter *El Correo*), from the project's commencement through when construction on new CdC buildings halted. Because the level of internet use in Galicia is very low and there was little radio or television reporting on the CdC, the vast majority of Galicians learned about the project through these two newspapers (Magone 2009). These articles were obtained through an electronic search conducted at each newspaper's headquarters. More than half of these articles were located or referenced on the front page of the newspaper. Using Charmaz's (2006) grounded theory method, the main research goal was to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the evolution, intended image, political debates and public responses regarding the project over time, and compare the two newspapers' disparate portrayals of the construction. Particular attention was paid to how the government endeavoured to promote the project through the media and compare perceptions of the CdC under the two governments (PP and PSOE/BNG) that controlled its construction over time. The author also conducted a total of 250 semi-structured interviews (Charmaz 2006) in 2005 and 2008 with the public and 80 with key politicians and

architects involved with the project. Interviews were conducted in Spanish or Gallego (the other official language of Galicia), based on the respondent's preference (Institutional Review Board approval #SE-2008-0012).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: A TALE OF TWO CITIES

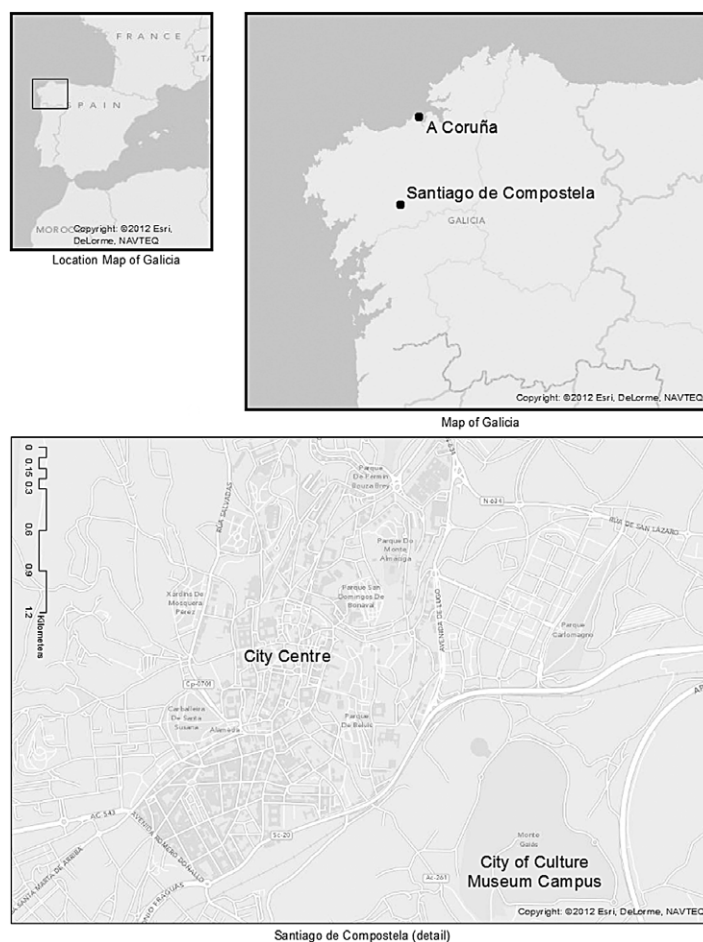
Because the project was only covered on a regular basis in the Galician news, information about the CdC reached the majority of the Galician public through the region's two mostly widely read newspapers, *El Correo* and *La Voz*. While *El Correo* is commonly read in Santiago and surrounding areas, Coruña's *La Voz* newspaper has the larger readership within Galicia (Magone 2009). Analysis of the newspaper articles revealed that the two Galician newspapers had conflicting interpretations of the CdC. Santiago's *El Correo* described it as a national project that will be beneficial for the entire region; *La Voz* (1999) framed the CdC as its rival city's own commercial project funded by Galician taxes. The two papers even used different names for the CdC. While Santiago's *El Correo* used the Spanish name, 'La Ciudad de la Cultura', *La Voz* in Coruña, used the Gallego name 'Cidade da Cultura'. Not only did one newspaper's headlines about the project often contradict the headlines of the other, the different names used for the museum suggest the papers saw two different projects. Indeed, the different way in which each newspaper reported the unfolding events surrounding the construction of the CdC is an indicator of the tensions that exist between these two competing rival cities.

The manner in which these cities' newspapers described the CdC can be an analytical lens through which one can elucidate the social and political climate in Galicia during these years. For example, under Fraga's conservative centre-right PP administration, Santiago's *El Correo* celebrated the project and Coruña's *La Voz* was either mildly celebratory or diplomatic, muting negative statements or reports of any setbacks. It was only after Fraga's electoral defeat in 2005 to the coalition Socialist/Galician Nationalist (PSOE/BNG) government, when the CdC was no longer controlled by the powerful political figure, that the more

censorious source, *La Voz*, radically altered the tone of its reports and began an overtly hostile anti-CdC campaign. The sudden and drastic change in the tone of *La Voz* reveals the amount of political power that President Fraga accumulated in Galicia during his long tenure as president, an argument purported by many Spanish political scientists (Gemie 2006). As a result of his authority, instead of conceiving the CdC as a national Galician project, many members of the PSOE and BNG parties interpreted it as a prop for enhancing Fraga's own personal and political reputation (Losa 2005). While both newspapers cited statements from politicians who perceived the CdC as a political project, it is important to note that the media construed the project differently. *El Correo* struggled to present the CdC as a Galician project and tried to appeal to Galicians' nationalist sentiments to gather support for what they described as a future world icon. In contrast, *La Voz* perceived the CdC project as part of an on-going city rivalry driven by increasing pressures of urban competition in a globalising world. To *La Voz*, the CdC was Santiago's project at the financial expense of the Galician community (*La Voz* 1999).

Soon neighbouring cities throughout the region also criticised the necessity of the CdC and its location in the modestly sized capital city of Santiago (*La Voz* 1999). In the case of the Galician media coverage of the CdC, the two newspapers became increasingly polarised until, in 2005 after Fraga left office, *La Voz* (2006b) became outright vitriolic and attacked the CdC for being 'Santiago's' project parading under the guise of a national project. This striking change raises an important question: if the CdC was a project 'for all Galicia' what would explain the drastic division in the two newspaper's interpretation of the project? Each was acting as their local city's mouthpiece in efforts to frame the debate in a particular manner. In order to answer this question, one must understand the connection between the CdC and Galicia's deeply rooted internal political divisions.

Although generally recognised as a distinctive part of Spain, Galicia has always had a reputation for its internal divisions. It is a lightly populated region of isolated districts and villages, each with its own distinctive local dialect



Source : Patrick McHaffie, DePaul University.

Figure 1. *Galicia's 2 competing cities: Santiago and Coruña. The largest map depicts the location of the CdC. Museum Campus in Santiago.*

of Gallego, which contributed to certain 'localist' sentiments (Gemie 2006). There is also a disparity between coastal districts and the financially weaker rural interior districts. Most importantly regarding the controversy about the CdC, there is also a deep-seated rivalry that exists between the region's two most recognised cities, Coruña and Santiago (Figure 1).

While many long considered Santiago the spiritual and cultural capital of Galicia, the larger port city of Coruña housed many of Galicia's key cultural, legal and military institutions. Thus when Santiago became the official capital

of Galicia and location for Galicia's regional government against the urging of the Coruñan deputies, there were numerous protests in Coruña (Muruais 1978). Since that time, many people in Coruña continue to resent Santiago's official political role and the fact that a large percentage of the region's public funds are allocated to this small city. Some Coruñans have gone as far as to challenge Santiago's legal eligibility as the region's capital, arguing that its designation was in fact unconstitutional because Galician law states that the capital city must have more than 100,000 inhabitants (Espiñeira 2002). Thus, from its very begin-

ning, the CdC, located in Santiago, was rooted in a highly political climate and intra-regional city rivalry.

As *La Voz*'s headquarters is located in Coruña, its articles often emphasised Coruña's 'localist' concerns raised against the project. For example, *La Voz* (1999, p. 4) published an article in which Coruña's mayor, Paco Vazquez, declared the CdC was 'a waste of 108 million Euros and won't provide anything for the rest of Galicia'. *La Voz* was also quick to report other 'localist' statements against the CdC, including the Secretary of the Association of the Friends of Coruña's complaint that the CdC was a poor use of regional funds and declared the project a 'bottomless pit of 150 million Euros' (Espiñeira 2002, p. L12). The competition between these two cities even triggered a division within the Galician Socialist (PSOE) party. Because Santiago's PSOE mayor had little choice but to support this project within his city's limits, he quickly found himself the target of heated political attacks from within his own party and accusations that he was too cowardly to protest a project that goes against Socialist ideals. This perceived 'betrayal' quickly became a contentious and longstanding issue within his party and *La Voz* (2002) was the first to report it under sensationalist headlines 'Mayor Bugallo attacks his party in order to defend the Cidade da Cultura'.

Acting in defence of the CdC, the Santiago-based newspaper, *El Correo* (2001b), often published articles and op-eds that criticised opponents of the CdC and prominently featured the counterclaim that those who did not support it were being 'anti-Galician' by challenging a project that would generate tourism in Galicia. Emphasising the CdC as a 'national' project, *El Correo* commonly described the CdC as a Galician project and heralded its future international notoriety. For example, Galician Cultural Minister Pérez Varela (2007) declared that Galicia, which is relatively unknown in Spain and Europe, would become much more visible thanks to the CdC. He also predicted a 5–10 per cent boost in tourism over the next few years (*El Correo* 2002). Other *El Correo* (2001a, p. 35) reports such as the one entitled 'Unanimous support for the CdC as a new revitalising force' quoted a local businessman who argued that the CdC would serve as a

'platform for Galicia' and become 'the most important contemporary construction project in the world'.

In contrast, *La Voz* rarely made any attempt to report declarations about the project's future international notoriety. Nor did the paper make any effort to report on the assertions that the construction would benefit Galicia as a region instead of just Santiago. The apparent lack of attention given to the international promotion of the CdC in *La Voz*'s articles reflects not only the Coruña paper's perception of the museum as a local and politically self-serving project in Santiago, but also a scepticism about whether the project would likely have any kind of notable international impact upon completion.

The cost of the CdC also became a contentious topic that would only intensify over time. While both papers factually reported project's costs based on information provided by the government, only *El Correo* attempted to pair this information with the potential financial benefits of the CdC. For example, *La Voz* printed a single article that contained the budgeted cost of the buildings, which the newspaper noted was slated to take up 40 per cent of the municipal income. That same day, *El Correo* (16 February 2001) published a series of positive articles including one titled 'The Project of the Millennium', which described the CdC and its anticipated cost, but also made positive comparisons of the costs and the financial benefits with those of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao. But increasing concerns about the rising cost of the CdC would continue to plague the project. By 2005 and immediately thereafter, as the new PSOE/BNG government assessed the true cost of the CdC, these concerns would become a staple of *La Voz*'s newspaper reporting.

While *El Correo* published some negative articles about the project over the years, they were generally few and far between. In fact, in an interview with the director of *El Correo*, Jose Manuel Rey (personal communication, 29 July 2008) admitted that his paper intentionally responded to any negative statements that *La Voz* published about the CdC. As a result, disagreements between the two newspapers regarding whether the purpose or contents of the CdC were clearly defined became

increasingly acute over time. As the Galician presidential elections drew near in 2005, *El Correo* made a discernible effort to describe the CdC as a Galician project and portray it as a future international world icon. After Fraga's political defeat in 2005, *La Voz's* change in tone of its CdC reports was notable as it began to caustically describe the CdC, in accordance with Taylor's (2007) discussion of urban morality, as a single city's attempt to capitalise on new international economic opportunities. The unrestrained nature of *La Voz's* attacks demonstrates not only the political power that Fraga held in Galicia, but also reveals how the CdC controversy was fuelled by competing multi-scalar moralities.

2005: LA VOZ'S UNRESTRAINED ATTACK

Manuel Fraga, who had spearheaded the formation of the Spanish and Galician conservative PP (People's Party), and served as Galicia's president for 15 years, had become so powerful that most members of the press were careful to treat him with some respect (Lugilde & Carreira 2005). With the conclusion of this powerful politician's tenure in 2005, Coruña's *La Voz* ended its self-imposed restraint regarding the project and began an intensive attack campaign against the CdC; almost every article they published about the project referred to the CdC as a catastrophe (e.g. *La Voz* 2006). One of the most notable changes after the 2005 elections was that not only did *La Voz* begin to openly criticise the project, but in September 2005, *La Voz* (2005) recast the CdC in its articles by referring to the museum as 'Gaiás', the name of the small hill outside of Santiago on which the CdC is located. This intentional semantic substitution underscores Coruña newspaper's true intention: to demean the CdC project and strip it of its purported relevance for 'all of Galicia' and portray it instead as a stalled construction project on the outskirts of Santiago. Returning to Entman's (2004) discussion of substantive media framing, *La Voz* indeed defined numerous elements of the CdC as problematic and systemically over time, identifying and describing the aforementioned various causes that resulted in the CdC controversy.

This semantic substitution of Gaiás was of great concern to many involved in the project

because it devalued the importance of the CdC by referring to it as a location on a small, diminutive hill on the outskirts of Santiago instead of a grand monumental Galician icon. Unfortunately for the CdC supporters, these intra-regional city tensions would become a key contributor to the uproar over the construction of the CdC.

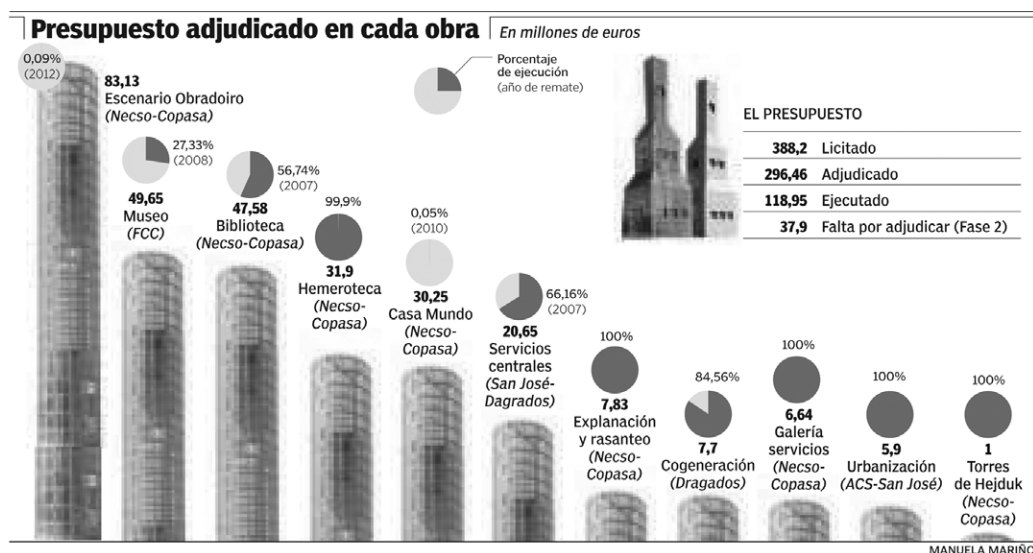
While *El Correo* (2007) eventually referred to the CdC as 'Gaiás' on occasion (e.g. 25 March 2007), it was unfaltering in its support for the CdC. Its reports continued to cast the project in a positive light and described it as a great opportunity for Galicia and a source of great pride from which all of Galicia would profit. As the director of *El Correo* stated in an interview, 'We passionately defend the CdC and for each of *La Voz's* negative statement, we published three times as many positive articles. The CdC will draw people to Santiago, but then they'll also visit other Galician cities. The CdC is the new symbol of the Galician people' (J. Rey, personal communication, 29 July 2008).

Another prominent change in *La Voz's* attack campaign was the inclusion of sizeable, eye-catching images. Instead of text-only articles, the press often published articles with large, bold diagrams or charts that visually depicted the immensity of the project. Thus even readers who were just browsing the paper could hardly avoid noticing these reports (Figures 2–3).

Santiago's *El Correo* responded to Coruña's *La Voz* with a variety of large coloured photographs of the project with laudatory headlines. In one of the most interesting and deceptive examples, *El Correo* (2005, p. 1) printed a front-page headline, 'Ciudad da Cultura is an unstoppable project that will be open to all of Galicia'. Directly underneath this headline, the newspaper included a large colour photograph of the Spanish King, Juan Carlos, gallantly waving as if in support of the CdC. It is only upon closer inspection that one is able to see that the picture is actually associated with another article about sailing and not the CdC (Figure 4). *La Voz's* emphasis on the financial aspects of the project is a clear indicator of its interpretation of the CdC as Santiago's project. According to Taylor (2007), one of the key elements of commercial morality is the demand for contracts to be respected; to *La Voz*, the CdC was a contract that all of Galicia was forced into

GALICIA

EL LABERINTO DEL MONTE GAIÁS



Incrementa en 12 millones la inversión comprometida en el complejo respecto a enero pasado

La Xunta eleva ahora a 388 millones la factura de la Cidade da Cultura

Source: La Voz de Galicia (2006b, p. 8).

Figure 2. Depiction of the increasing cost of the CdC overtime.

without their consent and would gain nothing as a result of their financial contributions to a so-called 'national' project. For example, *La Voz* (2006a) published an article that contained the budgeted cost of the buildings, which the paper suggested might have strong repercussions on the region's budgetary provisions.

COMMON MEDIA THEMES AND THE PUBLIC

As a result of the litigious and often contradictory reports, the Galician public's perception of

the CdC became increasingly divided. Despite these differences, there were three identifiable themes that permeated the reports of both newspapers over the years. In addition to reporting on the political debates surrounding the building, they also reported on concerns about the disproportionate expenditure of cultural funds on the project and the cost of a construction project that may only be beneficial for Santiago, the physical size of the building, and if the six CdC buildings had specific contents and purpose.

Of these three issues, the vast majority of the reports on the CdC published after 2005

El complejo en construcción iba a costar 108 millones y tiene obras comprometidas por 373

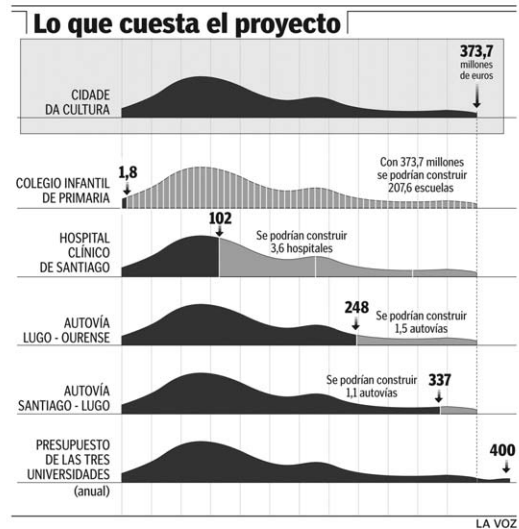
La inversión en la Cidade da Cultura equivale ya al 40% del AVE atlántico

El desembolso supone el presupuesto anual que manejan las tres universidades gallegas

■ El golpe que implicará la Cidade da Cultura para las arcas autonómicas es todavía una incógnita. Seis años después de la colocación de la primera piedra en la colina compostelana de Gaiás, el complejo encargado por Fraga ha engullido ya 373,7 millones de euros en obras licitadas. Este esfuerzo pulveriza los cálculos con los que la Xunta encargó el proyecto al arquitecto Peter Eisenman, en agosto de 1999, que estimaban una inversión de 108,1 millones. El gasto comprometido por el Ejecutivo en una obra aún en ejecución equivale al 40% del

anual de las tres universidades gallegas (405 millones de euros en el 2005), en las que se forman 75.000 alumnos. Las cifras del coloso superan los 360 millones de euros procedentes del Fondo Tecnológico de Bruselas que la Xunta gestionará en el septenio 2007-2013 para políticas de I+D+i (investigación, desarrollo e innovación).

Los 373 millones licitados en la Cidade da Cultura multiplican con creces la inversión de gigantes similares como el Guggenheim bilbaíno o la Ciudad de las Artes y las Ciencias de Valencia. Hasta el punto de que, con los recursos comprometidos en Gaiás, la Xunta podría financiar la construcción



Source: *La Voz de Galicia* (2006b, p. 11).

Figure 3. The investment in the CdC is already equal to 40% of the Atlantic AVE [high-speed train].

focused on the increasing cost for Galician citizens. In the case of *La Voz*, after the 2005 election, the cost of the CdC becomes omnipresent, especially after the new cost calculations for the project produced the specific amount of money that had already been invested in the project. While Fraga's PP government initially expected that the CdC would be finished in 2004 and budgeted €108 million for the completed project, in 2006, *La Voz* (2006a) reported that the estimated cost of the project had climbed to €388 million with an additional €48 million for annual maintenance and was now projected for completion in 2012, eight years later than its original date. In many of these *La Voz* (2006c) articles, the Spanish word 'gastar' meaning 'to waste' was typically used to describe the money

invested in the project. In another article, *La Voz's* (2006b) headlines aggressively attacked the CdC claiming that it instead 'deprived the Galician public of 373 million Euros'. To make its point, this article vehemently contended that the CdC's budget was equivalent to that of three universities and continues to increase.

In contrast, *El Correo* continued to make every effort to cast the CdC in a positive light and defend it as a Galician national project. For example, on the same day that *La Voz's* (2006a) aforementioned headline read, 'The operation of the Cidade da Cultura will cost 48 million a year', *El Correo's* headline included the exact same phrase, but strategically inserted the phrase 'will employ 500 people' in the middle of the headline to portray the CdC as a project

El Correo Gallego

Domingo 13 de Noviembre 2005

Director: José Manuel Rey Nôvoa ▶ Nº 44.689 ▶ Fundado en 1878 ▶ www.elcorreogallego.es ▶ grupocorreoallego@elcorreogallego.es ▶ Este ejemplar se distribuye de forma conjunta e inseparable con EL MUNDO

LOS DEBATES DEL GRUPO CORREO GALLEGO: ¿QUÉ HACER EN EL MONTE GAIÁS?

La Cidade da Cultura es una obra imparable que se abrirá a toda Galicia

► Políticos, intelectuales y arquitectos apuestan por convertirla en un gran faro de la investigación y la creación artística con fórmulas que involucren al conjunto de la sociedad ► Vencer el rechazo que produce fuera de Santiago es el gran reto actual ► Optimismo sobre el resultado final **PÁGS. 6 A 8**



El Rey saluda desde el 'Galicia Movistar', acompañado por Pedro Campos y su tripulación, a los demás barcos de la Volvo

Vibrante despedida a los titanes del mar

PRESENCIA DEL REY. En torno a 2.000 embarcaciones despidieron ayer a los siete vele-

ros que participan en la regata Volvo Ocean Race, la mayor aventura náutica del mundo,

que partieron de Vigo rumbo a Ciudad del Cabo. El cañonazo de salida fue disparado por el

Rey, que estuvo acompañado por las principales autoridades de Galicia. **PÁGS. 48 A 50**

Reportajes del domingo

Una encuesta de Anova otorga a Cuíña ventaja popular sobre los demás candidatos a liderar el PPdeG

► Recibe el 46,4% de los votos, por delante de Feijóo, con el 25%, Barreiro (19,2), y Veiga (9,5) **p12**



Alarma general por la imparable cadena de catástrofes naturales

► Tornados y seísmos constantes demuestran que el idílico planeta azul tiene 'fiebre' **ELCORREO2**

El 'hongo asesino' se ceba con los árboles centenarios de la USC

► Una muestra realizada en el campus santiagués confirma la presencia de la armillaria **p18**

ENTREVISTA

HUMBERTO LÓPEZ

Embajador de Panamá en España

«Panamá está lleno de gallegos

Source: *El Correo Gallego* (2005, p. 1).

Figure 4. *El Correo's effort to celebrate the CdC as an 'unstoppable' project for Galicia.*

that will be economically beneficial for Galicia (Calvo 2006). While *El Correo* tried to downplay the cost of the CdC and present it as an economic motor for all of Galicia, much of the public shared the concerns raised by *La Voz* (Table 1). The fight over the finances and potential benefits reveals the two competing

cities' distinct understanding of the CdC and further contributes to our understandings of the complexity of the actual politics of city/state morality, especially in discussions of national identity. While *La Voz's* campaign against the CdC reveals the media and some politicians in Coruña's efforts to challenge that

Table 1. Percentages of responses from the general public in 2008 to the open-ended question, 'What is the CdC?'

Responses	Percentage Responses
It is an 'empty' building	45
It is a construction that costs too much	41
Unknown/other	14
Total respondents	n = 250

of the state, *El Correo's* efforts to gain regional support for the project through the use of nationalist narratives not only worked to support their city, but these efforts strengthened the power of the state as well.

La Voz also published articles that often suggested that the CdC's massive expenses were matched by the physical size of the massive complex, which was the second most frequent theme in the post-2005 media reports. *La Voz* (2005, p. 11) frequently used the adjectives 'pharaonic', 'massive', 'monstrous' or 'colossal' in their description of the construction project, including statements such as 'the pharaonic work design rises 431,000 m² from Mount Gaiás'. *El Correo*, on the other hand, only occasionally mentioned the square footage of the complex and shied away from describing the CdC as colossal or monstrous.

The third most common theme to appear in both *El Correo* and *La Voz* reports focused on the growing concern about the undefined nature of the museum and whether or not each of the six buildings that comprise the CdC had any clearly defined purposes, even after several years of planning and construction. Over two hundred of the articles published after 2005 used the key terms 'undefined' or 'without contents' in their reports of politicians and urban planners' concerns that there were no specific plans for each of the six buildings (e.g. *La Voz* 2006b).

Predictably, many of these media themes were also common in interviews conducted throughout 2008 with the general public regarding perceptions of the CdC. Their responses suggest that *El Correo's* campaign to promote the CdC as a Galician project that will increase tourism and prestige may not have been successful against *La Voz's* negative

crusade against the CdC, as many expressed concerns about the costly project and did not believe it would become a generator of financial benefits for Galicia. As one Santiagoan explained, 'We don't know what the CdC is. It was designed without a specific purpose and now it's just a huge financial burden for Galicia' (#225, personal communication, 27 November 2008), which supports Gamson *et al.* (1992) argument that media framing can result in a sense of cynicism or apathy among the public. As Table 1 demonstrates, there is no clear consensus among the individuals that expressed their opinion about what the CdC was. When subsequently asked 'for whom as the CdC constructed?' only 40 percent of the interviewees stated it was for all of Galicia.

Concerns about the specific purpose and content for each building, which appeared throughout the post-Fraga media coverage of the project, were also widespread among the public as well. Descriptions of the CdC as 'completely undefined' or 'empty' were quite common. Similarly, like the media reports, concern about the cost of the CdC was another dominant narrative that the author encountered during interviews. The issues of the cost of the building were particularly acute in the 2008 interviews after the PSOE/BNG government published the immense cost that the PP government had already invested in the project. Anytime an interviewee brought up the cost of the project, it was done in a most negative fashion, typically characterised as a waste of public money. One interviewee, for example, lamented how 'Galicia, a poor region, cannot afford to waste money in a small city, especially if there is no use for the construction' (#220, personal communication, 2 November 2008). In fact, of the individuals who specifically answered what exactly he/she believed the CdC was, there were almost an equal number of respondents who identified the CdC as an 'empty' (i.e. purposeless) building as those who perceived it as an expensive project (Table 1).

The fact that the responses of many interviewees are similar to some of the major themes that appeared in the media suggests that the newspapers, particularly *La Voz*, may have had a strong influence on the public's perception of the CdC as Scheufele *et al.* (2002)

suggest in their investigations of the impact of local media's agenda-setting. Thus, despite *El Correo's* valiant efforts to portray the CdC positively, the exuberant cost of an 'undefined' project heralded by *La Voz* ultimately may have swayed the public's opinion of the project. This contentious debate reveals two competing cities' distinct city/state moralities that were formed based on perceptions of the state, either as a threat or an asset, and the importance of national identity. While Santiago and its local press, *El Correo*, perceived the state project as financially beneficial for their city as well as a source of Galician national pride, the city of Coruña rejected the nationalist narrative of a state project and saw the CdC instead as its rival city's investment in multi-scalar globalising world.

CONCLUSION: AN UNREALISED ASPIRATION

The CdC is a byproduct of the contemporary world economy, in which cities are increasingly capitalising on new economic opportunities in a multi-scalar world. In an effort to attract investment, Galician President Fraga attempted to promote Galicia through a campaign to modernise its image as an international cultural centre. Despite Fraga's best intentions, the CdC did not produce a marketable image for Galicia; instead, the unfinished project generated a storm of contestation. Perhaps it should not be surprising it failed. According to Taylor's (2007, p. 147) discussion of the modernist guardian state's efforts to create a 'planned city' (and the CdC was in essence a planned 'city') there were never any successful examples because he contends that guardians are not equipped to control the complexity of such projects in the 'multi-scalar world that is transpiring from a globalizing world'.

The Galician media, divided by an intra-regional city rivalry, played a key role in fuelling the litigious debate surrounding the construction of the CdC. *La Voz's* efforts to challenge the government's narrative that the CdC was a national project is reflected in the divided public responses for the meaning of the construction. The controversy over the meaning and purpose of the CdC also reveals Galician

society's own contemporary political and cultural conflicts as the region struggles to assert its role in a globalising world.

Unfortunately for Fraga, the negative campaign launched by *La Voz*, which perceived the project as beneficial for Santiago at the expense of others, helped to divide the public's perception of the meaning of the CdC. Despite *El Correo's* best efforts to portray the CdC as a Galician project, *La Voz's* demeaning reports of the project reveals the increasing pressures that cities face as a result of urban competition for investments in a global market. While examinations of globalising forces' influence on city/state relationships exist, this investigation includes the complicating element of nationalism into discussions of intra-regional city rivalries and role that cities play in the politics of the state. In this case, two cities, driven by their own urban moralities, employ different narratives, delivered by their local media, in order to compete with one another within the same state. Santiago and its local media laboured to describe the CdC, a state-sponsored prestige project, as a national project in order to gain support throughout Galicia, which subsequently worked to reinforced state morality. In contrast, fuelled by an intra-regional city rivalry, Coruña's *La Voz* publically challenged the project's nationalist claims.

The examination of the multi-scalar complexities that exist within city/state relationships, including the role of nationalism and intra-regional urban competitions, is important for our future engagement with the city/state syndrome framework within the discipline. The presence of national narratives in this debate produced an example that extends beyond a simple city/state dichotomy and invites further investigation of other relationships that are being forged in response to the increasing pressures for international investment in a globalising world. Nationalist claims are not solely confined within state lines, as Basque nationalists in the Spanish Basque Country (Euskal Herria) and the French Basque Country (Iparralde) have demonstrated for centuries. Recently, cities within the Basque Country have invoked Basque nationalism as an entrepreneurial platform for various Basque cities to forge new economic alliances that span the Pyrenees Mountains. The inclusion of

nationalism within city/state debates will be important for understanding some of the prosperous relationships as well as some that are not; as in the case of the CdC, not all attempts to employ nationalist narratives are universally successful.

Only four of the six CdC buildings are open to the public. Due to financial constraints, the last two buildings were never constructed. On 15 January 2012 Manuel Fraga passed away. While a tremendous amount of Galician finances were poured into this unfinished project, because the CdC construction site is silent, so too is the local media's coverage on the project. One interesting exception was published by the *The Guardian* and included a headline that described the CdC as 'Spain's extravagant City of Culture' (Tremlett 2011). This outsider's interpretation of the CdC reveals the complexity of the CdC multi-scalar relationship. By incorrectly identifying the CdC as a 'Spanish' construction that is not funded by or ever claimed to represent the Spanish state, the reporter is also inadvertently concealing contentious Galician city rivalries, which have, surprisingly, worked to either challenge (i.e. Coruña) or strengthen (i.e. Santiago) state morality. Indeed, should discussions about construction on the two final CdC buildings resurface, the intra-regional media debate would most likely continue, as it is fundamentally driven by two cities that are actively competing within the same state in multi-scalar European global market.

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