

The Roots of the 1909 Republican-Socialist Alliance: Changes in the Class Emotional Regime in 1903 in Biscay*

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ABSTRACT | This article explores the roots of the 1909 Republican-Socialist Alliance with the theoretical and methodological tools provided by the emotional turn. This alliance has been considered in most of the historiography to be the product of a political context. In analyzing the Basque case in this article, I will examine how the central ingredient of that coalition was the change in the class emotional tone and emotional regime starting in 1903. The hegemonic “Red Socialist emotional regime” was challenged for the first time that year, and the definition of class, class emotional tone and class political goals were brought into question at that moment, which is where I situate the roots of the Republican-Socialist Alliance. The anticlerical events of that time, the approval of the *Proposición Quejido* (Quejido Proposal), and the founding of the Socialist Youth organization all provide evidence of the shift in the working-class movement.

KEYWORDS | *Author:* history of emotions; working-class movement; spanish socialism; Republican-Socialist Alliance; socialist emotional regime

Los orígenes de la alianza republicano-socialista. Los cambios en el régimen emocional de clase en la Vizcaya de 1903

RESUMEN | Este artículo explora los orígenes de la alianza republicano-socialista de 1909 usando las herramientas teóricas y metodológicas que proporciona el giro emocional. Esta alianza ha sido considerada por la historiografía como el producto de un contexto político. No obstante, en un estudio del caso vizcaíno, se propone considerar que un elemento central de esta coalición es el cambio en el estilo emocional y en el régimen emocional de la clase desde 1903. En ese año, el hegemónico “régimen emocional socialista rojo” es por primera vez cuestionado, así como la vigente definición de clase, su estilo emocional y sus objetivos políticos. Analizaremos los sucesos anticlericales de ese año en Bilbao, la “Proposición Quejido” y la fundación de las Juventudes Socialistas como evidencias de este cambio.

PALABRAS CLAVE | *Autor:* historia de las emociones; movimiento obrero; socialismo español; alianza republicano-socialista; régimen emocional socialista

As origens da Conjunção republicano-socialista. As mudanças no regime emocional de classe na Vizcaya de 1903

RESUMO | Este artigo explora as origens da Conjunção republicano-socialista de 1909 usando as ferramentas teóricas e metodológicas proporcionadas pelo giro emocional (*affective turn*). Essa aliança foi considerada

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pela historiografia como o produto de um contexto político. Contudo, num estudo do caso vizcaíno, propomos considerar que um elemento central dessa coalizão foi a mudança no estilo emocional e no regime emocional de classe desde 1903. Nesse ano, o hegemônico “regime emocional socialista vermelho” é questionado pela primeira vez, assim como a definição vigente de classe, o estilo emocional dela e seus objetivos políticos. Analisaremos os eventos anticlericais desse ano em Bilbao, a “Proposição Quejido” e a fundação das Juventudes Socialistas como evidências dessa mudança.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE | Autor: história das emoções; movimento operário; conjunção republicano-socialista; regime emocional socialista científico; regime emocional socialista vermelho

During the past few years historians have debated the appropriateness of the category of emotion for historical analysis. Many scholars have joined this debate, establishing the so-called *emotional turn*. According to this approach, emotion is a useful category for historical analysis because it sheds light on certain processes that happened in the past. In this paper I am going to use the tools provided by the emotional turn to study a political process that unfolded at the beginning of the twentieth century in Biscay (Spain): the change in the working-class movement.

Can emotion be a useful theoretical category for historical analysis?

The study of emotion is currently a fashionable topic within the social sciences. Since the eighties, several different disciplines —History (Reddy 2001; Rosenwein 2006; Stearns and Stearns 1985), Philosophy (Nussbaum 2001), Anthropology (Abu-Lughod 1986; Hochschild 1983; Wikan 1990), Cognitive Psychology (Hassin, Uleman and Bargh 2005; Lazarus 1986) and Neuroscience (Damasio 1994)— have become engaged with the emotional turn. In History, the heightened interest in emotions has arisen mainly since the turn of the century. Of course, depending on the research topic, the concept of emotion is used in different ways. In this essay I am neither interested in emotion at the individual, psychological or biological level, nor in presenting a history of the concept of emotion. Like many other historians of emotion, I am more interested in studying it at the collective level: what emotion does in a community, how it influences political action, and how it works within both the subject itself and the community. Therefore, I am going to explain what I understand emotion to be, and how this category can be useful in historical analysis.

Emotion is a natural human aptitude that has cognitive, evaluative and performative dimensions (Ben-Ze’Ev 2000). Emotion is thus an important element of human experience. First of all, emotion is part of the cognitive process (neuroscience, cognitive psychology and phenomenology all support this idea). For scholars of the emotional turn, the Cartesian dualism that separates body from mind is set aside. Emotion includes an evaluative dimension, i.e., the personal relevance that each person attributes to

his or her own context. Once the assessment is made, a person is moved to act in the performative dimension of the concept, in actions involving personal goals. William Reddy defines emotion as “goal-relevant activations of thought material that exceed the translating capacity of attention within a short time horizon” (Reddy 2001, 128). Emotion is thus a key part of both individual and collective decision-making and, depending on our goals, each of our decisions will be either one or the other. We should not, therefore, continue to think of human decision-making as grounded solely on rationality, but rather adopt the viewpoint of the sociologist Randall Collins who argues that it is based on the “emotional flow” (Collins 2001, 27).

Another important idea related to emotion is that it is involved in what may be called the “emotional experience.” This notion works on two levels: the pre-conscious, pre-linguistic and pre-cultural level on the one hand; and that shaped by culture and language —the level of emotional expression— on the other. This second level never totally shapes the first. As a result, it offers an escape from cultural and linguistic determinism. Sociologist Deborah Gould defines the first level, which she names *affect*, as the capacity “to indicate nonconscious and unnamed, but nevertheless registered, experiences of bodily energy and intensity that arise in response to stimuli impinging on the body” (Gould 2009, 19). Emotional expression has been defined as “a type of speech act different from both performative and constative utterances, which both describe (constative utterances) and change (performatives) the world, because emotional expression has both an explanatory and a self-altering effect on the activated thought material of emotion” (Reddy 2001, 128).

Thus, the idea that emotional expression is shaped by culture or by a given discourse, a position associated with cultural anthropology and with authors such as Lila Abu-Lughod (1986) and Catherine Lutz (1988), to mention just two, is insufficient. Culture certainly plays a role, but I rather consider that emotional expression is the product of a complex process in which not just language, but various other variables also take part. Therefore, emotional expression cannot be reduced to the realm of language, because language alone can never capture all the meanings of the emotional experience.

Moreover, emotional expression has great political significance since it is the *locus* of the exercise of power. According to William Reddy (2001), who has developed this idea to a great extent, political power is underpinned by what he calls an “emotional regime,” “the set of normative emotions and the official rituals, practices and *emotives* that express and inculcate them,” which is the “necessary underpinning to any stable political regime” (Reddy 2001, 129). For this regime to work, it is not enough to be consistent with the culture settings of time and place. Emotional expressions also have to appeal successfully to the participants and generate responses within them that ensure they recognize these expressions. This success is something that neither culture nor speech can ensure because it takes place in the background, beyond the reach of intentional action, and since the emotional regime underpins the political regime, it is also involved in political change. Herein lies the clue for a new understanding of historical change related to the emotional turn.

The challenge or threat to an emotional regime often arises in the form of emotional suffering, “an acute form of goal conflict, especially that brought on by emotional thought activations” (Reddy 2001, 129). When that happens, it can launch a self-exploratory process searching for new forms of emotional expression and challenging the existing emotional regime. This challenge explains political change to a substantial degree, for the search can overthrow the present emotional regime (and, therefore, the political regime as well).

Emotion and emotional expression have further important political relevance. Emotions and emotional exchange bind the individual to the community. Emotional exchange and emotional communication are important ingredients in creating a community, ensuring that people can collaborate effectively in pursuing a common goal. Sharing an emotional regime and relying on it are essential elements in explaining how collective action works, and eventually how political consciousness is formed. Thus, historical analysis should bear in mind emotional expressions for a better understanding of collective action.

I find the explanations given by the emotional turn to be very helpful for analyzing the changes happening in class consciousness during the first decade of the twentieth century in various parts of Europe, and specifically in Biscay (Spain). The tools provided by the emotional turn are likewise useful for renewing working-class studies in order to answer the question of why class definition and class political actions change over time.

Red Socialists and Scientific Socialists: Two different ways of understanding Basque class

Industrialization and modernization processes based on mining and on the iron and steel industries began

during the last third of the nineteenth century in the Nervion Basin (Biscay, Spain). A bourgeois society developed during that period, which was characterized by economic liberalism and political and social conservatism. Industrialization brought social changes, including the impoverishment of workers and a deterioration of their living conditions. The bourgeoisie labelled this impoverishment “the social question” (Capellán 2004), while the newborn working-class movement referred to it as “the revolutionary class struggle.” Meanwhile, strikes became more and more common as Marxist and other labor movements gathered strength in Europe, including some parts of Spain (Piqueras 2003, 43-47). The general strikes of the 1880s in Spain, some of which were led by socialists, troubled political authorities who feared the advance of revolutionary Marxist ideas within the country. Some important political changes also occurred, such as the passage of the universal male suffrage law in 1890. The socialist movement was extremely successful among workers in Biscay. Nonetheless, despite their significance, these changes are not the only explanation of why workers in Biscay embraced socialism, and my purpose in this article is to analyze the changes occurring in the emotional realm in that context.

When Facundo Perezagua arrived in Biscay and founded the Socialist Party in 1886, he was accompanied by Felipe Carretero and other artisans and typographers. Indeed, Spanish socialism at that early stage was very closely linked to artisan culture (Felipe 2012), but in Biscay it soon became tied to the mining community. In fact, socialism had been marginalized there until 1890 when the great miners’ strike ended its obscurity and made it both a mass movement and the leading party of the working-class movement in that area. Consequently, miners became the leading group within the organized sector of the working class and the miner became the icon, leaving the artisan by the wayside. This process also established the hegemony of what I will call the “Red Socialist emotional regime.” Working-class consciousness was born and was by definition linked to a very specific emotional style.

The aim of this article is not to analyze the “Red Socialist emotional regime,” but rather the one that would come to challenge it later on. However, for a better understanding of working-class studies and the emotional turn, as well as for a better understanding of the shift that took place in class consciousness in 1903, it is necessary to summarize how the working class and class consciousness have been understood by the social sciences, and what the fundamental features of the “Red Socialist emotional regime” actually were.

Class and the working-class movement has been an important issue for twentieth-century historiography. The teleological understanding of the working class, in which workers *were expected to* embrace the

working-class movement due to their social position in the production system was at last set aside, beginning in the 1960s. Historian Edward P. Thompson was one of the pioneers of the idea of class as a cultural construction. In *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963), he defines class in terms of culture and politics rather than in terms of roles dictated by the capitalist mode of production. In the 1980s, historian Gareth Stedman Jones used the “linguistic turn” to analyze this topic. He asserted that the Chartist political movement constituted the working population’s political experience (Stedman Jones 1983) and that political discourse shaped people’s experience, and not vice versa. Another historian of the working class, Patrick Joyce (1991), went even further. He stated that “class needs to be seen in cultural and political terms of the playing out of values and traditions in changing circumstances,” and held the category of “people” to be a more accurate analytical tool than that of “class” for nineteenth-century England (Joyce 1991, 4). Indeed, Joyce also stresses that class is the cultural and political expression of the prolonged sequence of industrial change throughout the nineteenth century.

Spanish scholars since the late 1980s have debated whether the concept of class could be used in the context of nineteenth-century Spain (Castillo 1989),¹ and certain studies somewhat belatedly embraced the different historical trends. The “cultural turn” has deeply influenced Spanish historians since the late 1980s (Barrio Alonso 2008; Cruz and Pérez Ledesma 1997), but the “linguistic turn” has not been very popular among them in the past two decades, and only a few have defended said approach (Cabrera, Divasson and Felipe 2000).

A revival of working-class studies and diversification of the topics covered has been taking place in recent years, and Geoff Eley and Keith Nield’s work, *The Future of Class in History* (2007), is a noteworthy example of this. Nevertheless, no such revival has yet occurred in Spanish historiography. International historiography has tackled different issues regarding the working-class movement, such as the private lives of members of the working class (Strange 2015), workers’ different identities that are unrelated to class, and the case of national identity (Pasture and Verberckmoes 1998).

Nowadays, the “emotional turn” has come into historical analysis and I consider it a useful theory for a renewal of working-class studies. Adopting the perspective of the emotional turn requires a change in the definition of class. I also find Thompson’s category of

“experience” to be very useful, as well as the views of historians who rely on the linguistic turn, but I push beyond them by considering class in terms of emotion. These emotional terms posit class consciousness as the expression of an emotional response to the social, economic and political changes that were occurring in the nineteenth century. Consequently, I define class in terms of emotional regimes. There is abundant evidence that understandings of class arose in relation to the defense of a code of dignity. I thus pay close attention to workers’ emotional expressions, specific goals, and emotional norms. In other words, this definition relies on a concept of class that considers the full complexity of human cognitive and emotional experience.

Working-class studies could use the methodological tools provided by the emotional turn in order to acquire a better understanding of why and how class consciousness arose at a certain point in time. Theoretical models that assume the rationality of workers in joining a class movement limit our understanding of how class consciousness arose. In fact, when I began to explore research sources, they pointed me towards emotion because they led me to realize that workers expressed emotions when performing a political act. They repeatedly expressed emotions in their speeches at meetings, in interviews, and regarding political claims. Moreover, those actions were a way to express the emotions of their experience. Thus, analyzing emotions rather than just politics or ideology gives historians new evidence to study. Sources show that Biscay workers possessed and defended a specific emotional style, a code of dignity, and an emotional regime. To go on strike, for example, was a way to defend these matters, and it was triggered by the emotions elicited through an attack against that code. Thus, the renovation in working-class studies could take into account not only discourses, political speeches and changes in politics or in ideology, but also the emotions underpinning them all, the emotions triggering workers action, as well as the emotions workers expressed when going into action. As Deborah Gould has pointed out, “the efforts to make sense of events and phenomena are never without feeling” (Gould 2009, 13).

Now that I have introduced the basic idea, it is important to comment on the specifics of the case of Biscay. I consider class consciousness to be the product of shared experiences that workers from diverse backgrounds experienced and felt during the industrialization and modernization period. Moreover, I believe that the Basque class experience—especially the experience of miners and of employees of large enterprises—was built upon the contrast they encountered between the principle of freedom of contract and the practical conditions of their employment, which constituted a state of quasi-bondage in which poverty meant abuse, and more poverty. They relied upon a certain code of dignity which they brought to the new capitalist institutions in

1 Manuel Jover and Miguel Angel Artola held that the working-class movement in Spain was linked to the liberal revolutions in the second half of the nineteenth century. In reference to the Basque case, Juan Pablo Fusi has denied that class existed in that region until the end of the first decade of the twentieth century (Fusi 1975).

order to deal with this contrast. One example of their effective defense of this pre-existing code of dignity occurred in 1888, when, during a strike against paper manufacturers in Bilbao, workers insisted that having a new boss with less expert knowledge of the craft than themselves constituted an offense against their dignity (ENB 14-10-1888).² According to that pre-existing code, the lack of freedom they experienced constituted a form of humiliation to which they were subjected by the foremen and other agents of their employers. In addition to this pre-existing code, a new sense of community elicited by new emotional norms arose that embodied certain features of liberal individualism and a related voluntary understanding of group solidarity. As wage laborers, they developed a new sense of family responsibility and love, and they became concerned about the system of voucher payments used by the mining companies.

Experiences of contradiction elicited certain emotions and led to a goal conflict and subsequent emotional suffering for workers. Goal conflict occurs within an individual, but it can also have a collective consequence when it creates a new emotional regime. That is what happened in Biscay when workers and the bourgeoisie defined their own distinct emotional regimes. The emotions that this suffering and experience of contrast produced in workers were expressed by using language borrowed from the Second International, and specifically from socialism. “We are the working class” was one of the statements most frequently repeated by workers in 1890. Although I do not consider class to have been the “natural” political subject of the working-class movement in Biscay, it did become the political subject of the working-class movement, and workers in Biscay did indeed define themselves as a class, which is why I consider the term appropriate for this specific case. Thus, in the Biscay scenario, workers’ suffering and goal conflict had a huge political consequence: the making of class consciousness and the development of a working-class movement.

Class consciousness is neither universal, nor static, nor unique. However, it does concentrate a myriad of identities and perceptions within it, which respond to the workers’ background, gender, homeland, educational level, religious beliefs, i.e., to their past experiences. Nevertheless, class identity has defined the identity of millions of people in Western societies in the past century, establishing action guidelines and characterizing their conduct and behavior. How did this happen? How can this common collective action be explained? Various scholars have tried to answer this question. According to Edward P. Thompson, the main ingredient in the making of the English working class was “common experience.” Gareth Stedman Jones believes that Chartist language

created the consciousness, while politics created the class. Patrick Joyce believes that there were the “visions of the people” which eventually created the identities of “people,” and even of “class.” All of these authors agree on the idea that class consciousness is a cultural construction and not the “natural” result of capitalism or industrialization. Thus, class consciousness is not a static sociological category, but instead a cultural idea created by its own protagonists. In this analysis I focus on how nineteenth-century Biscay workers labelled and defined themselves. I have denominated the first development of an emotional regime that gave rise to the 1890 strike and the initial success of socialism in Biscay the “Red Socialist emotional regime.”

Broadly speaking, I use the term “Red Socialist emotional regime” to refer to the set of normative emotions and emotional expressions with which class consciousness was initially formed in Biscay. It also refers to the emotional management efforts of some workers (emotional norms always call for effortful self-management, the success of which can never be taken for granted.) This regime was established in 1890 and its hegemony lasted until the first decade of the twentieth century under the charismatic leadership of Facundo Perezagua. It also underpinned the socialist political regime. This emotional regime had very special features that differentiated it from the socialism that was developing in other parts of Spain.³ The political result of the establishment of this emotional regime was the making of class consciousness and the establishment of the working-class movement in Biscay. The “Red Socialist emotional regime” was built on the experience of contrast between the idea of freedom of contract, the idea of the worker as a free man, and the idea of the employee as a subordinate who must submit to the authority of his employer. Workers received two contradictory messages from official institutions and from their employers respectively: that the worker is a free man, and that he has to submit to the authority of the employer. There was also a contradiction between the concept of a free man with human dignity and the living conditions in which these free men were forced to live, which they themselves considered subhuman. Some workers considered these contradictions to be insulting, unjust violations of their code of dignity. This contradictory experience elicited certain emotions in the case I am analyzing here that would later be expressed in terms borrowed from the Second International. This contradictory treatment entailed a goal conflict for many workers: on the one hand they needed the salary, but on the other hand they wanted to resist the injustice,

2 All the quotes in this text have been translated from Spanish by the author.

3 The Socialist Party in Madrid, led by Pablo Iglesias, showed very different characteristics from the one in Biscay. Typographers were the leading group in Madrid and their emotional tone differed from that of the miners in Biscay. However, a comparison of these two groups would go beyond the scope of this work.

the unfair treatment. For the “Red Socialist emotional regime” this goal conflict was expressed through the strike, an event in which we can again see the use of socialist language (Hidalgo 2015).

As a matter of fact, striking was a central ingredient in the creation of class consciousness in Biscay. Great emotional communication and exchange, a *sine qua non* for creating and reinforcing a sense of community, inevitably takes place during a strike. By striking, class as a community was created and reinforced because the workers involved in the strike shared an emotional style, performed an emotional regime, and sought common goals. In this regard, it is not surprising that class consciousness in Biscay was born during the great miners’ strike of 1890. That event created community by eliciting emotions like indignation and outrage against the living conditions in which workers were forced to live and which contradicted both their code of dignity and their concept of humanity. It is not surprising that the strikers claimed that the “truck-system results in workers being treated like beasts, and this treatment must end” (ENB 6-5-1890).

The “Red Socialist emotional regime” displayed a specific emotional tone. The miners set the emotional tone for the socialist movement in Biscay. This specific feature of socialism as it developed in Biscay conflicted with the emotional tone of the artisan community, which was hegemonic in other parts of Spain. In this regard, the miners’ emotional norms in the emotional regime that emerged in 1890 led them to value behavior which the bourgeoisie or the artisans would have considered rude or bad mannered.⁴ The leader of the miners, the socialist Facundo Perezagua, provided a good example of this rude behavior, for which he was described as “illiterate yet resolute” (Gómez Molleda 1980, 132) and bad mannered⁵ (Hidalgo 2016). This behavior was not considered rude by socialist miners, however, and when they responded aggressively or rudely to a foreman’s insult, they believed they were defending their dignity in the best possible way.⁶ As a matter of fact, the defense of their code of dignity was a central component of the “Red Socialist emotional regime.” Going to the tavern and drinking was another important feature of the Reds. Miners felt that drinking was a way to reinforce their manhood and reinforce class pride rather than a shameful activity. Given this idea, the Reds did not believe that drinking alcohol or going to the tavern conflicted with

their code of dignity or with socialist politics (Hidalgo 2013). Another element of the “Red Socialist emotional regime” was a sense of family responsibility and love, i.e., defending their family and providing it with good food and a house to live in.⁷

The hegemony of the “Red Socialist emotional regime” began to be challenged and threatened around the turn of the century. The coming of a new generation of workers, certain changes in the Republican Party, and the continuous electoral defeats the socialists faced have been considered the main factors leading to this development. Moreover, the power of the miners decreased while factory workers (especially metalworkers) gained in strength. However, this does not entirely explain the change because the hegemony of miners within the working-class movement was not overturned until 1910. I suggest that, along with these elements, the essential ingredients for this political change were the shift in class goals (from the improvement of living conditions to democracy, republicanism and anticlericalism), and in class emotional tone (from temperamental behavior to the practice of emotionally constrained behavior).

These changes in the emotional regime, in goals, and in the emotional management were expressed in the events of 1903. That year, for the first time, part of the working class supported and defended certain Republican values and goals, thus challenging the “Red Socialist emotional regime.” My interest in these events lies in the fact that I consider them the origin of the Republican-Socialist Alliance of 1909, one of most influential political alliances in Spanish politics in the 1920s. Moreover, 1903 was important because the differences between the two ways of understanding class, the code of dignity, and the working-class movement became clear at that time, and I believe that those elements make the events of 1903 in Bilbao a good case study.

The roots of the Socialist-Republican Alliance in 1903

On November 7, 1909 Pablo Iglesias, the head of the Socialist Party, took part in a meeting with Republicans in Madrid. This event represented the alliance between the two parties, and the speeches of both parties stressed that the aim was to strengthen the Republican values which guaranteed democratic freedom and social reform. The Republican Benito Pérez Galdós said that “Spain’s regeneration lies in its freedom” (LV 8-11-1909⁸), while the Socialist Pablo Iglesias explained the

4 There is a good analysis of the “rough character” of miners in Sierra Alvarez, (1994).

5 An argument between Facundo Perezagua and the mayor of Bilbao, Gaspar de Leguina, in 1895 is a good example of this behavior. (ENB 24-10-1895).

6 Statements like “Comrades, we must gather strength in order to free the working class, which is enslaved and miserable” were common during these events. See more evidence in ENB 4-5-1890 to 6-5-1890.

7 The marriage rate in the mining area was high given that 66.1% of immigration to the Nervion basin consisted of families, i.e., married couples, usually with children (García 2012, 728-730).

8 *La Vanguardia*, LV. A Liberal newspaper founded in Barcelona and close to the movement for Catalan autonomy.

alliance—which had previously been denied—in the following way: “the aim of the Alliance is to bring an end to clericalism and conservatism, which are responsible for Spain’s misfortune.” Socialists and Republicans came together on two main issues: first of all, democracy, freedom, and social reform; and secondly, anticlericalism (LV 8-11-1909).

Indeed, this meeting took place in the wake of Barcelona’s Tragic Week, in which the conservative government of Maura violently repressed demonstrators who opposed sending troops to the war in Morocco. The alliance was triggered by the repression, the suspension of democratic rights, and the execution of Vicente Ferrer—an anarchist educator who was the head of the *Escuela Moderna de Barcelona*. At that moment socialism realized that its existence was somehow linked to democracy and, thus, to the Republicans. The consequence of this alliance was the long-term collaboration between Republicans and Socialists that eventually led to the proclamation of the Second Republic in 1931. I not only consider this alliance a convergence of the two political programs, but also the consequence of a shift in class goals and class emotional regime, changes that would affect the socialist political program and its political agenda.

According to current historiography, the Republican-Socialist Alliance was the result of a change in the Socialist Party’s political strategy. Socialism was facing a contradictory situation: workers supported socialism during the strikes, but they did not vote in the elections. As a result, for 25 years after it was formed, the Socialist Party had never achieved representation in Parliament. Historian Antonio Robles (2004) has analyzed this alliance by framing it within a European context. In his opinion, the Spanish Alliance, like those in other parts of Europe, was a result of the ideological and strategic changes in socialist and liberal parties during the first decade of the twentieth century. These changes became the political instrument for creating the so-called “welfare State.” Both parties wanted a democratic, secular, interventionist state on economic issues, especially on issues related to workers. They also wanted to promote education (Robles 2004).

Similarly, other historians have situated the roots of the alliance in the policies of Maura’s conservative government from 1907 onward, as well as in the influence of the progressive bourgeoisie inside the Socialist Party (Suárez Cortina 1986, 141-142). As a matter of fact, Pablo Iglesias’ refusal to accept the agreement until 1909 and his claims that the Republicans were not “trustworthy people” have led some historians to conclude that Barcelona’s tragic week changed the political agenda of the party (Santos Juliá 1997, 53-64). This event did mark a

milestone, of course, but other important ingredients were also involved in this shift.

Other historians have interpreted this allegiance as the result of class compelling party leaders (Fusi 1975, 285; Miralles 2002), an idea supported by the testimony of some contemporary socialist leaders such as Juan Antonio Morato, who said that “The Republican-Socialist Alliance has been accomplished. While the leaders were reluctant to accept the Alliance, the crowd supported it” (EHM 8-9-1909⁹).

Taking these analyses into consideration, I would like to emphasize some additional important elements regarding the alliance. The changes in the class emotional style and in the socialist emotional regime since 1903 also contributed to this political shift. A change occurred in the way workers expressed their emotions and the way they experienced the context. To explain this process, I will now analyze the events of 1903 in the Nervion basin in Biscay. The main episodes were the anticlerical rally, the meetings advocating democracy, and the proposal of the Republican Socialist Alliance known as the *Proposición Quejido*.

These events were not the whole story however. A change also occurred in the Socialists’ emotional tone as they began paying attention to a new generation of workers whose complaints and goals differed from those of the Reds. Those events showed a change in the way class consciousness was understood. They were also both the symptom and the consequence of a new class experience and a struggle between two different socialist emotional regimes: the “Red Socialist emotional regime” and the “Scientific Socialist emotional regime.”

Broadly speaking, the “Scientific Socialist emotional regime” was built on the experience of contrast between a code of dignity and the continuous humiliations workers faced in the public and private spheres; between the idea of freedom of conscience and the Church’s control over society; between the idea of being a free man living in a democracy, a man deserving civil rights, and the political corruption (*caciquismo*) that benefitted liberals; between a community based on solidarity, understood as love, and a community based on individualism, *egoísmo* (selfishness) and *maldad* (malice). The “Scientific Socialist emotional regime” also considered the worker to be the productive element in society and the bourgeoisie an element that was lazy and unproductive. Indeed, they believed it is productiveness that makes workers citizens. Moreover, the code of dignity was redefined and linked to democracy and freedom. It is not surprising that in 1904 they proclaimed that “What dignifies man is the dissemination of the ideal of human

Barcelona. Year analyzed: 1909.

9 *El Heraldo de Madrid*, EHM. Madrid. Year analyzed: 1909.

freedom” (*LLC* 6-02-1904¹⁰). This experience of contrast had an emotional meaning for workers. They expressed their emotions of indignation, outrage and shame, but also of pride and love. These emotional expressions and the emotional tone workers sought was what constituted the “Scientific Socialist emotional regime,” which underlies their politics.

Changes of class political goals and emotional suffering

In 1903 the “Red Socialist emotional regime” was challenged for the first time and a shift in class political goals took place. The goals of the “Scientific Socialist emotional regime” were to end the hegemony of the Church, to achieve democratic rights, and to establish the Republic. With this in mind, they came together with the Republicans to form the Socialist-Republican Alliance of 1909.

Socialist antagonism with respect to the Church’s hegemony in society was expressed during the anticlerical events of 1903 in Bilbao when the Socialists joined the Republicans. In September 1903, the Church named the *Virgen de Begoña* the spiritual protector of Biscay in a presentation sponsored by the Catholic parties (the Basque Nationalist Party and the Conservative Party) as an expression of their political power. The importance of these events lay in the reaction of some socialist sectors as both a symptom and a consequence of the shift taking place in socialism.

The Socialist Party had never defended the Church and had consistently pleaded for separation between Church and State, but it had an ambiguous stance on anticlericalism, which it considered a bourgeois debate and struggle (Arbeloa 2012; Cueva Merino 1997, 108). This is why the Socialist Party did not want to be caught up in the anticlerical discourse of the Republicans, and the socialists of Biscay shared this opinion at the end of the nineteenth century. Indeed, the Reds considered anticlericalism a Republican interest, and the Republican party a bourgeois party. Thus, when some socialists, whom I will call “Scientific,” proposed joining the anticlerical fight at the turn of the century, the Reds did not agree.

The Scientific Socialists believed that the values the Church was promoting collided with their own values of freedom and democracy. Symptomatic of this were the continuous demands of the Scientific Socialist Felipe Carretero in Bilbao that the municipal government eliminate Sacred History and Christian Doctrine from

public schools (*EL* 19-09-1903¹¹). Those demands were always eventually rejected by the conservative majority until September 1903, which was a turning point. At that moment, groups of Catholic pilgrims flocked to Bilbao from all around the province to honor the *Virgen de Begoña* in pilgrimages that concluded with a great Mass. This experience elicited some strong emotions among the Republicans and Scientific Socialists who felt that pilgrims occupying public spaces and exhibiting religious items threatened the religious freedom in which they believed, so they proceeded to express their outrage and indignation as seen in the events that followed.

Moreover, said outrage and indignation were not the product of this episode alone, but were also the emotional effect of the contradictory message the Church was sending. Catholic doctrine was supposed to be favorable to the poor, the group to which most workers belonged. Nonetheless, the Church was defending the economic policies of liberalism and capitalism, and aligning itself with the bourgeoisie. In fact, both the Church and the bourgeoisie were portrayed by socialists in general, and especially by the Scientific Socialists, as indifferent to the plight of the workers. An example of this indifference was expressed in the following way by Tomas Meabe, one of the most important Basque Socialist leaders during the first decade of the twentieth century:

[...] workers are the modern martyrs, an excluded and miserable group. Workers are persecuted, arrested and executed. In the countryside, misery predominates, leading farmers’ daughters to prostitution. Anemia, typhus and tuberculosis are merciless with workers. Those problems do not concern and do not conflict the “pious” ladies and priests. (*LLC* 5-09-1903)

The multitude of pilgrims in the streets infuriated Republicans and some Socialists who considered such pilgrimages part of a program to politicize Catholicism in support of liberalism and the political power of capitalists: “What is taking place in Bilbao happens nowhere else. Processions take place every day, and they have a very specific political purpose” (*ENB* 5-10-1903¹²).

In expressing their outrage, both Socialists and Republicans were acting in defense of freedom and citizenship, concepts that were equally linked to anticlericalism. “We the liberals cannot patiently put up with these Catholic demonstrations. They are a provocation” (*ENB* 5-10-1903). That is why when the pilgrimages passed through the streets, “some priests shouted ‘God Save

10 *La Lucha de Clases*, LLC. This newspaper, founded in 1893, was the official Socialist Party newspaper in Biscay. Bilbao. Years analyzed: 1894-1906.

11 *El Liberal*, EL. This newspaper, founded in Bilbao in 1901, was a supporter of Republican and democratic ideas. It soon developed close ties to Scientific Socialism. Bilbao. Years analyzed: 1902-1904.

12 *El Noticiero Bilbaíno*, ENB. This daily newspaper reported social events and other news concerning the everyday life of Bilbao’s population. Bilbao. Years analyzed: 1888-1904.

the Virgin of Begoña' and insulted the Republic [...]. Consequently, some anticlericals defended the Republic. Spirits were agitated" (EL 5-05-1903). The Republicans felt insulted by the crowd of pilgrims, which is why they convened an anticlerical meeting some days later.

For Socialists, the Church's influence on civic life—and consequently on people's everyday lives—was unacceptable and contradicted the freedom they believed every person should have. This view was expressed by the Scientific Socialist Felipe Carretero in 1903 in the following words: "clericalism is leading us to a new Inquisition. The Church's influence over the municipal government of Bilbao and over asylums has to be combated. Moreover, the Church is teaching Sacred History in state schools, and that is useless" (EL 5-10-1903).

Republicans and Socialists were involved in violent confrontations with Catholics in the wake of the grand Mass held to celebrate the coronation of the Virgin of Begoña. These events were described by the press as follows:

Unfortunately our pleas for calm and caution have not been observed by the population, and yesterday we saw censurable scenes in Bilbao which outraged reasonable people. [...] An incident that occurred at noon raised a wave of protests. Several groups gathered in *El Arenal* in the afternoon. Pilgrimages coming from *San Nicolas* church were jeered. At that moment the situation turned anarchic. Pilgrims vindicated their right to celebrate the pilgrimage while the anticlericals blamed pilgrims for the riots. As a consequence of those events, one person died and several others were injured. The army took up positions in order to preserve public order. (ENB 12-10-1903)

Republicans and Socialists expressed their rage and indignation by throwing the statues of saints, which stood at the front of some buildings in the Old Part of Bilbao, into the river. Anthropologist Bruce Lincoln, among others, has interpreted this iconoclastic attack as a kind of "obscene collective ritual," a way of reinforcing radical freedom and militant solidarity (Lincoln 1999). This analysis has led me to think about the events of 1903 as a moment in which the ideological bonds between Republicans and Scientific Socialists were reinforced as indignation and outrage against the Church were expressed by both groups. These events mainly involved artisans from Bilbao and Socialist intellectuals. Miners were generally not involved, and in fact, Perezagua and the Reds summoned them on that same day to a meeting in which a miners strike was being planned (EL 12-10-1903).

The Scientific Socialists' attitudes were emphatically condemned by the Reds, who were convinced that "both neoconservatives and republicans are enemies of the workers" (EL 12-10-1903). The contradictory

messages of the Church did not conflict with the political agenda of the Reds, but it did conflict with the values of the Scientific Socialists.

Apart from anticlericalism, the Scientific Socialist emotional regime considered democratic rights and the coming of the Republic their political goals. In this regard, democratic rights were seen as a way of reinforcing the code of dignity and, moreover, democratic rights were linked to a specific type of government: the Republic.

There were some differences between the way the Reds and the Scientific Socialists interpreted their code of dignity as well as their goals, and 1903 is the year when this became clear. Enforcement of the dignity code had been a constant component of class consciousness since the very beginning. As mentioned previously, workers had begun to defend their dignity and refuse to be humiliated and abused as early as 1890. However, a subtle change took place with the turn of the century when the Scientific Socialists linked dignity to citizenship (not just to humanity, as was the case with the Reds). Citizenship was linked to the worker's capacity to contribute to the productivity of the country,¹³ and it was explained as such in the Socialist press: "Worker, you must devotedly fulfill your duties in order to oppose those who want to subdue your consciousness as a citizen" (LLC 5-03-1904). Being the productive part of society dignified and transformed workers into citizens (unlike the bourgeoisie, who were presented as a lazy and unproductive group). Thus, workers claimed "respect, justice, and freedom in return for their work" (LLC 23-04-1904).

In 1890, miners faced a conflict between the goal of being well-treated, with the respect they deserve as humans and citizens, and the goal of earning a living, a key element for their day-to-day survival. However, beginning around 1903, the Scientific Socialists reinforced the miners' sense of humanity and citizenship—usually linked to manhood—both in the workplace (where they made use of it to oppose abusive practices that treated them like animals) and in their private lives. The emotional suffering resulting from the conflict between their goal of achieving a *vida digna* (respectable life) and that of earning a living, which entailed subjection to abusive practices, was described as a "sad situation" by Tomás Meabe: "What grieves workers is the unequal balance between the cost of nutrition and the food they consume. It is profoundly sad to realize that workers spend their energy in their workplace but

13 In this regard, Jesús de Felipe in his study of the Spanish working-class movement asserts that one of the features of class consciousness is worker identification with the idea of *ciudadanos productivos* (productive citizens) and *hombres dotados de derechos y libertades* (free men endowed with civil rights and freedoms) (Felipe 2012, 367). Nevertheless, he does not analyze the emotional aspect of this process.

cannot afford to ingest enough food to replace the same amount of energy” (*LLC*, 4-04-1903).

Unlike the Reds, the Scientific Socialists considered the protection of democratic political rights the key to ensuring better pay and decent treatment and, therefore, they introduced democracy into their political agenda. For the Scientific Socialists, the best way to end such mistreatment was not to strike but to try to change the government from within by gaining representation in Parliament. In this regard, class experience for this group was built upon the contrast between the idea of freedom and democratic rights and the desperate suffering in their own everyday lives. Universal male suffrage had been approved in 1890 in Spain, yet constant political corruption invalidated this law in practice. The political system of the Restoration was characterized by bipartisanship, which meant that the liberal and conservative parties alternated in government in order to guarantee what they considered “political stability.” For this oligarchic system to work, the practice known as *encasillado* was developed, in which candidacies were prearranged before elections. The corrupt nature of the political system was one of the reasons why the Reds, unlike the Scientific Socialists, did not pay attention to elections as a way to develop their political struggle. The Scientific Socialists, however, belonged to the political and intellectual wave linked to the *regeneracionista*¹⁴ movement, according to which, Spain needed political regeneration in order to move ahead. This regeneration was linked to democracy and the Republic.

According to Scientific Socialists, workers would improve their situation only through elections because they believed that Socialist deputies in the Parliament would legislate in favor of the workers. Voting was also a way to respond to the emotional suffering that was part of their everyday existence, which is why Felipe Carretero “condemns those workers who sell their vote” (*EL* 5-10-1903). Workers were supposed to vote for the Socialist Party because:

[...] in the case of Pablo Iglesias being elected, he would take the voice of the working class to the Parliament. The working class was claiming justice and Iglesias would be its first genuine representative... The working class had never had a representation in Parliament, so, [he proclaimed] “Workers, honest workers from Bilbao, Long life to electoral sincerity!”

For Scientific Socialists, the *hombres honrados* (genuine and authentic honest men) were those who sincerely

voted for what they wanted, not those who exchanged their vote for money, which was a common practice at that time. Ahead of elections, these socialists claimed: “Workers, I hope tomorrow you will fight for the worker candidate, so, Let’s vote!” (*LLC* 25-04-1903). In other words, the Scientific Socialists wanted workers to support socialist candidates in order to improve their working and living conditions. They believed that class power had to be exerted in Parliament, where the laws were drafted. At that point, socialism and republicanism managed to agree. The issue marked a difference for the Reds, who disdained Parliament as a bourgeois institution that did not represent them. Despite the fact that the Socialist Party had had some representatives on the city council of Bilbao since 1891, the Reds did not believe that class power was exerted there. Instead, they thought their power resided in the number of workers they could get to strike.

As mentioned previously, Scientific Socialists and Republicans came to agree on different issues. Both groups shared similar views on politics and on the way to improve the situation of workers. In 1903 this became a political goal for the first time with the *Proposición Quejido*, a proposal launched by Antonio García Quejido. The core idea of the plan was to “make an alliance with the republicans ahead of the next elections in order to deal with the nation’s political situation” (*EL* 5-08-1903). In other words, the only way to reform and modernize the country was through the Republic. The *Proposición Quejido* was born in the federation of Madrid and it caused a great debate between its supporters (Antonio García Quejido, Jaime Vera) and detractors (Pablo Iglesias), but the proposal soon became popular in Biscay. It was especially acclaimed by the newborn Socialist Youth, who were highly compatible with the Republican Youth. It is thus not surprising that the *Proposición Quejido* was voted on in Erandio (the metalworkers’ village near Bilbao where the Socialist Youth organization was born). The proposal was debated in Bilbao, but it was not approved (*LLC* 5-09-1903).

The Scientific Socialists believed their proposal was going to be highly beneficial for workers. If workers embraced their class definition, struggled to achieve their goals, and adopted the emotional tone of the Scientific Socialists, they would be respected, treated well, dignified, and considered men. This notion is reflected in the following text:

Before the Union existed in Bilbao, how were we treated? Worse than savages, like beasts. Who would confront the foreman when he issued a command? Nobody. Today things have changed. Today we are respected. Are we respected because bosses have changed their behavior? No. We are respected because the Union has taught the bosses some lessons. Members of the Union achieved dignity when they joined

14 *Regeneracionismo* was an intellectual movement that appeared mainly in the wake of the disaster of 1898 when Spain lost the last of its colonies in Cuba and the Philippines. That loss came as a shock to Spanish society, which interpreted it as the ultimate proof of the country’s decline. The *Regeneracionista* movement demanded political regeneration and democracy in order to modernize the country.

us. Fellow comrades, bosses hate us, fear us and, above all, they consider us men. (LLC 2-04-1904)

The Scientific Socialist emotional regime thus proposed a new way of exerting class power, a new way of having the worker respected, dignified, and treated as a human being.

Class emotional tone and its changes in 1903

The Scientific Socialist emotional regime, apart from proposing a change in class goals, also suggested a shift in class emotional tone. Some of the main features of the Scientific Socialist emotional tone were constraint, solidarity (which was already present in 1890, but now took on new meaning linked to loving one's fellow comrades) and "healthy and cultivated" leisure time, without drinking and wasting time in taverns.

According to the Scientific Socialists, the Socialist man had to control his emotions and exercise emotional constraint. The Scientific Socialist emotional tone aimed at moving workers away from the temperamental behavior that had characterized the Reds and leading them to become a "model of urbanity and politeness" (EL 10-08-1903). They believed that workers should express their emotional suffering through elections rather than through wildcat strikes, "Workers must not think of striking all the time. If temperamental workers call a strike for the slightest cause, what will they claim when facing serious matters?" (EL 28-11-1903).

Another feature of the Scientific Socialist emotional regime was solidarity. This emotional norm was central in the making of working-class consciousness because it assured group cohesion and coordinated collective action. In order to make the norm work, it was linked to the code of dignity, to being an *hombre digno*. This idea remained in effect in 1903. Solidarity was the emotional norm and a *sine qua non* for being a member of the socialist community, "Solidarity has to rule among workers in order to avoid traitors and scabs. Solidarity is also compulsory for the enthusiastic defense of our right to strike" (LLC 17-11-1906). Solidarity had to be elicited to have a *vida digna* (decent life), because "when encouraging solidarity, socialism ennobles" in order to achieve its goal, which is a *vida dignamente humana* (decent human life) (LLC 4-04-1903). In contrast, socialism portrayed the bourgeois emotional regime as one driven by individualism, selfishness and baseness. "Malice, hypocrisy, ignorance, deception, anger, theft, shamelessness, dishonesty, falseness, deceitfulness and greed" (LLC 4-11-1894) were the terms used to describe the bourgeoisie.

For Scientific Socialists, solidarity had a very specific meaning: solidarity means love. This new meaning was added to the Reds' understanding of this emotional norm as a way to reinforce the community, as a way to strengthen class pride, as an emotional norm for

creating a bond among fellow comrades, and as a way to shame those who would betray the strike. Tomas Meabe stressed the importance of life in a community characterized by love of others instead of life in an individualistic society. According to him, lack of love leads to suffering: "Men suffer because they fight each other instead of living as fellow brothers" (LLC 6-06-1903). To remedy this situation, Meabe proposed love, the ultimate goal for socialism and the finest expression of solidarity, as expressed in his article entitled "True Love" where he says: "Socialists are good-natured people. They want true love, real human solidarity" (LLC 6-02-1904).

Class leisure was also brought into question at that time. Scientific Socialists were deeply concerned about the stigmatizing effects of drinking alcohol on class (Serrano 1989, 22; Uría 2001). Entertainment away from the tavern and free of alcohol was thus strongly encouraged by the new emotional tone. The newly-founded Socialist Youth advocated a new kind of leisure: "We have to separate youth from taverns and from alcohol" (LLC 12-09-1903). In order to foster "healthy" amusement, the Socialist Youth organization began its anti-alcohol propaganda by saying, "We have to launch an anti-alcohol campaign. This vice dishonors, enslaves and dulls the working class" (LLC 16-01-1904). Indeed, the anti-alcohol campaign led by the Socialist Youth exhorted Parliament to pass the "Anti-Alcohol Law" in 1904: "Our fellow comrades in the *Instituto de Reformas Sociales* must fight taverns in order to reduce their number. This is the only way to regenerate Spain" (LLC 12-09-1903). The anti-alcohol discourse worked with some workers, especially with young ones who were tired of the negative effects that drinking had on their comrades. Different activities were launched, such as trips to the countryside and theater performances. Perhaps the paradigm of healthy entertainment was the *Casa del Pueblo*, a place where workers could enjoy themselves in a wholesome way. These places became very popular from 1910 onwards.

The seeds sown in 1903 came to fruition in the second decade of the century. At the end of this decade many *Casas del Pueblo* were built all over Spain, especially in Biscay (Luis and Arias 1997). Moreover, the Republican-Socialist Alliance was achieved in 1909 and Pablo Iglesias became the first Socialist deputy in Spanish history the following year. Great class changes occurred, which were the result of the shift incubated in 1903.

Conclusion

In this article I have explored the roots of the 1909 Republican-Socialist Alliance using the tools provided by the emotional turn. I consider this theoretical view useful for a renovation of working-class studies as it provides historians with new tools for historical analysis. The events that occurred in Biscay in 1903 are a good

subject for a case study because they were at the root of the Republican-Socialist Alliance of 1909, they show the struggle between two different ways of understanding class and the working-class movement, and they provide evidence of the shift in the class emotional tone.

A renewal of working-class studies requires a new definition of class which considers the full complexity of human cognitive and emotional experience. Class has thus been defined in terms of emotional regimes rather than in terms of culture and politics. I understand class consciousness to be the expression of an emotional response to the social, economic and political changes occurring in certain industrial areas during the nineteenth century. In Biscay, industrialization and modernization occurred along with the making of what I have called the “Red Socialist emotional regime,” the set of normative emotions and emotional expressions with which working-class consciousness was initially formed there. In 1890, miners had set the socialist emotional tone, and their claims for better treatment and respect for their humanity marked socialist policy in that area. At the turn of the century, however, a shift took place and class experience and the socialist emotional regime changed. What I have called the “Scientific Socialist emotional regime” was born at that time with features that differed from that of the Reds. A new generation of workers who founded the Socialist Youth organization, a new leader named Tomás Meabe, and new political goals such as democracy and anticlericalism appeared, all of which challenged the “Red Socialist emotional regime.” Moreover, the predominant emotional tone of the working class changed from one of rudeness to constraint, from pride in drinking alcohol at the tavern to the pride of being a literate and healthy worker. Indeed, the metalworker displaced the miner as the working-class icon. The Scientific Socialists thus expressed different emotions from those of the Reds, and they did so in a different way. An emotional regime was established which challenged that of the Reds, and the politics underpinning the emotional regime had changed as well.

The roots of the Republican-Socialist Alliance of 1909 became manifest for the first time in 1903. Scientific Socialists introduced anticlericalism and democracy into the socialist political agenda. Moreover, the way to exert class power changed and elections were proposed instead of strikes. Indeed, from that moment on, Scientific Socialists would ask workers to vote in the elections, as happened in the municipal elections of that year. The Scientific Socialist emotional regime, and the new policy it was underpinning, converged with Republicanism. The seeds sown in 1903 would come to fruition not only in 1909, but during the 1920s and 1930s as well. The Scientific Socialist political goals were achieved during the Second Republic when governmental power and the power of the Church were separated. Moreover, Scientific Socialist thinking on how class power should be exerted was put into practice in 1931, when

local elections removed the Monarchy and installed the Republic. And in the years after 1910, the *Casas del Pueblo* became the most important leisure space for the working class, not only in Biscay but in other parts of Spain as well. All those developments were produced not only by a different political program, but also by changes in the working-class experience, the emotions this experience elicited in workers, and the way they expressed them. The influence of the Scientific Socialist emotional regime lasted until the end of the Second Republic, but its origin was clearly rooted in 1903.

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