

The Catalan Deputies and the Great War (1914-1918)

Borja DE RIQUER*, **Gemma RUBI****
Laura CANALIAS***, **Oriol LUJÁN******

Abstract: *This article focuses on the action of the Catalan deputies in the Spanish parliament during the First World War. It analyses the measures of pressure they developed in relation to social and economic consequences of the conflict, the evolution of their position in the debate between pro-allies and pro-central powers, as well as the parliamentary speeches about political and economic autonomy for Catalonia. Although the option of deciding on neutrality was widespread among Catalans, there was no unitary position. On the contrary, Catalan politicians joined for other reasons. They wanted to protect not only from the negative impact of war and profit from its benefits, but also they wish to take advantage of the situation to make visible, in an international sphere, their willingness to obtain the political autonomy for their region. Despite Catalan demands for autonomy found no concessions, the international context and the requests that had been made helped to visualize the so-called Catalan question. The Spanish Congress and the country on the whole were completely weakened after the war. However, the expectation for change and regeneration was closer than ever as the First World War had accelerated the crisis of the political system of the Restoration.*

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* Professor, History of Parliamentarism Group, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (borja.riquer@uab.cat).

** Reader, History of Parliamentarism Group, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (mariagemma.rubi@uab.cat).

*** PhD, History of Parliamentarism Group, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (laura.canalias@uab.cat).

**** PhD, History of Parliamentarism Group, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (oriol.lujan@uab.cat).