

The New Criterion

Letter From Barcelona December 2017

The Catalan problem

by Gerald Frost

On recent political developments in Catalonia.

The sardana is a Catalan folk dance in which those taking part link hands in a circle that widens as newcomers arrive, or shrinks as those tiring from their exertions leave to talk to friends or sit in nearby cafés as the dance continues. Lacking the passionate intensity of the flamenco, visitors to Spain often find it dull, but since the dance illustrates the way in which social harmony may be combined with the freedom of the individual it is possible to see the sardana as a metaphor for the open society. General Francisco Franco banned the sardana, along with other forms of traditional Catalan culture, because he regarded it as subversive; as a consequence, the dance, which Catalans continued to perform, came to be regarded as an act of defiance. “There was something silent...

The rest of this article is locked. Please make sure you are logged in to view the full article.

Gerald Frost is a London-based author and journalist.

This article originally appeared in The New Criterion, Volume 36 Number 4 , on page 40

Copyright © 2024 The New Criterion | www.newcriterion.com

<https://newcriterion.com/issues/2017/12/the-catalan-problem>