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### ***State of the Art and Historical Report***

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### **Spain: 'Europe' as a Symbol of Modernity, Democracy, and Renewed International Prestige**

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# **SPAIN: ‘EUROPE’ AS A SYMBOL OF MODERNITY, DEMOCRACY, AND RENEWED INTERNATIONAL PRESTIGE**

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## **PART I**

### **1. Introduction**

The ideals and emotions of nationhood are often considered to be the fundamental obstacles which have always stood in the way of European integration, and which continue to block this process today. One author, for instance, has described national identity as ‘the biggest stumbling block on the road towards a united Europe’ (Odermatt 1991: 220). Others have suggested that if ‘a European feeling’ does not yet exist, this is due to ‘the predominant emotional fixation on our nation-states’ (Papcke 1992: 66), and that the ‘nationalism of the peoples’ still remains one of the ‘major problems besetting the idea of a European supernational-state’ (Llobera 1994: 207). Spain, however, is a country which exemplifies how in certain sociohistorical contexts, national sentiments may become harmoniously fused with the idea of belonging to ‘Europe’ and contributing to the project of European unity. As we shall argue throughout this report, Spain’s particular historical trajectory is one which ultimately transformed its membership of the European Union into a potent and widespread source of national pride (Jáuregui 1999, 2001). This is fundamentally because, in the aftermath of the Franco dictatorship and the transition to democracy, Spain’s ‘entry into Europe’ in 1986 could be celebrated as a great collective triumph, a major promotion of the country’s international prestige.

The notion of ‘becoming European’, in the Spanish context of collective memory, essentially represented the opportunity to leave behind what was popularly known as *el atraso* (‘the backwardness’) of the nation’s past for good. It was by ‘getting into Europe’ that Spain could cease to be a sort of moral outcast after decades of rejection from the leading Western European powers, symbolized by its exclusion from the EEC throughout the Franco dictatorship. ‘Europe’, furthermore, was viewed as the chance to definitively jump on the train of Western modernity, prosperity, and progress, by overcoming the shameful legacy of Spain’s so-called ‘Africanism’ – in other words, its relatively poor levels of political, economic, and cultural development. For this reason, the dominant discourses of nationhood which emerged in post-Franco Spain depicted the achievement of ‘entering Europe’ as an emotionally charged symbol of national resurgence. To a great extent, this is a self-representation that has continued to colour the attitudes of Spaniards towards the EU until the present day, given that Europe has largely retained its association with values of freedom, modernity, and democracy. Consequently, in the case of Spain, national sentiments have rarely clashed with the project of European integration, since the ideal of ‘becoming European’ has widely been seen as a crucial source of international influence, economic prosperity, and collective self-esteem.

### **2. The role of Europe in the construction of Spanish national identity**

Spain is one of the oldest political units in Europe, having maintained practically identical borders since the alliance between the Crowns of Castile and Aragón in 1479, followed by the ‘Reconquest’ of Granada (the last Moorish Kingdom) in 1492, and the annexation of Navarre in 1512. This dynastic union comprised separate kingdoms with different legislations and autonomous institutions, as well as a multiplicity of languages. Nevertheless, the subjects of the Spanish monarchy shared the Catholic religion and viewed themselves as beset by common enemies, due to centuries of struggle against the threatening Other of Islam, and subsequently against the ‘heresy’ of Protestantism in Northern Europe. As Álvarez-Junco has argued (1996: 89-90), this historical trajectory gradually forged an overarching ‘ethno-patriotic identity’ which was characterized by a

fusion of religious and political identity, given that the subjects of Spanish monarchs were by definition Catholic. In this way, Catholicism became the most important agglutinating factor in the early stages of Spanish nation-formation.

However, in Spain the road to the construction of a modern nation-state ultimately proved to be littered with obstacles. Indeed, the tensions between the Castilian center and the peripheral nationalisms of the Basque, Catalan, and Galician regions which have characterized Spain until the present day clearly demonstrate that the Spanish state did not ultimately manage to create a fully unified nation with linguistic-cultural and emotional integration. This can be linked to the fact that after having previously enjoyed the status of an established European and world power, the era of nationalism coincided in Spain with a period of decadence and crisis, characterized by bitter ideological conflicts, the loss of its colonial Empire, economic backwardness, and uneven development. As Linz (1973: 99) has suggested, the nineteenth century was ‘a period in which the center, Madrid, and its government, had little to offer the periphery and limited resources for a successful policy of Castilianization’. The poverty of the state, poor communications, and the polarized divisions between liberal and conservative versions of Spanish national identity led to the fact that the construction of a unified nation-state was still rather incomplete at the beginning of the twentieth century (Fusi 2000).

The weakness of Spanish national consciousness was also due to the fact that the country’s political elites did not adequately employ the main instrument of national socialization, education (as Eugene Weber explained in his classic study). Instead, they left this task in the hands of the Church, which was not interested in ‘creating’ citizens, but rather in building a community of believers. Furthermore, even when the Spanish state detected the necessity to create a public system of education, it never endowed it with the economic resources that it needed to compete with private educational institutions, which for the most part remained in the hands of the Church (Álvarez Junco 2001).

Given the concerns of this research project, what is particularly significant with regard to Spain’s conflictive nation-building process is the role which the contested concepts of ‘Europe’ and ‘Europeanization’ played in the rival visions of national identity which intellectual and political elites promoted.

### *The conflict between European modernization and Catholic traditionalism from the War of Independence to the Civil War*

By the end of the eighteenth century, the desirability of adapting Spanish institutions to those of the rest of Europe had already become ‘the stuff of national political controversy’ (Preston and Smyth 1984: 25), when the ideas of the Enlightenment were alternatively seen by the country’s elites as a recipe for civilized progress, or as a dangerous foreign heresy. Indeed, it is noteworthy that at the time of the Napoleonic invasion of Spain in 1807-8, some of Spain’s liberal reformists – the so-called *afrancesados* – supported the occupation forces of post-revolutionary France, in the hope that this would lead to the radical transformation which they believed their country needed. The inevitable consequence of this was that, after Spain’s victory in what came to be known as the War of Independence against the threatening French Other, the project of ‘European modernization’ was depicted as something alien and ‘un-Spanish’ in the discourse of the country’s conservative traditionalists:

The ‘real’ Spain was defended by reactionaries as an immutable social hierarchy dominated by the traditional triumvirate of crown, church, and aristocracy. Any attempt to challenge the socio-economic status quo could be condemned as the

sinister maneuverings of national apostates and foreign agents: ‘Europeanizers’.  
(Preston and Smyth 1984: 26)

As Álvarez Junco (2001: 118) has argued, the historical trajectory of Spain is that of a peripheral country in which the project of modernization was adopted by the country’s liberal elites in a mimetic fashion, borrowing exogenous models, and for this reason it became tainted in conservative traditionalist discourses with the idea that the spirit of ‘the nation’ was being threatened by ‘Frenchified’ or ‘Europeanizing’ traitors.<sup>1</sup>

This impassioned dispute between *européismo* (European modernization) and *casticismo* (Hispanic traditionalism) became particularly intense in the aftermath of the so-called *desastre* (‘disaster’) of 1898, the year when Spain lost Cuba, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico, the last remnants of its colonial Empire, in a short war with the United States. At a time when ‘the possession of colonies was seen as the hallmark of a vigorous nation’ (Balfour 1996: 107), and when the fashionable theories of social Darwinism ranked nations into superior and inferior ‘races’, the disappearance of Spain’s last overseas colonies was experienced as a devastating blow to collective self-esteem. Adding insult to injury, the British Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury, delivered a humiliating speech shortly after the Spanish defeat in which he described Spain as a ‘dying nation’ (Álvarez Junco 1998: 448).

It was in this context that the project of *uropeización* (‘Europeanization’) was fervently promoted by the influential intellectual Joaquín Costa (1981 [1900]) as the most effective remedy to cure the national disease. Costa, the leading proponent of the current of thought known as *regeneracionismo* (‘regenerationism’), was convinced that Spain would only be saved from its deteriorating condition if it assimilated Europe’s rational mentality. What was absolutely indispensable, he proclaimed, was the ‘deaffricanization and Europeanization of Spain’, and the ‘remaking of the Spaniard in the European mould’ (cited in Beneyto 1999: 23). ‘Europe’, in Costa’s mind, was essentially the land of science, education, technology, and progress. In his view, this was the only medicine that would allow Spain to survive in the global struggle of rival national ‘races’. Other important figures, such as the renowned Spanish neurologist, Ramón y Cajal, similarly believed that ‘the sickness of Spain is none other than its remoteness from Europe; in other words, from science’ (cited in Serrano 1998: 190).

Not all intellectuals, however, agreed with this invocation of ‘European modernity’ as the ideal solution for Spanish decadence, since many saw the adoption of ‘foreign’ or ‘alien’ ideas as a dangerous threat to the unique traditions, and above all the Catholic spirituality, of the ‘national spirit’. This was also a time when German Romantic theories of nationhood had spread to Spain, and began to inspire a number of literary attempts to define the ‘soul’ of the Spanish people through idealized depictions of the barren Castilian landscape and the pious stoicism of the rural peasantry (Abellán 1988: 37-8). The diplomat and essayist Angel Ganivet (1990 [1897]), for instance, was repelled by the irreligious, egoistic materialism of ‘European modernity’. In his view, ‘European civilization’ was characterized by ‘anti-human’, ‘anti-natural’, and ‘pitiless mercantilism’, while Spain was a morally superior land of spirituality, generosity, and idealism (cited in Beneyto 1999: 83). Hence, according to Ganivet, the resurrection of Spain could only come from the inside, by looking for the truth and the strength that lay hidden in the depths of the national soul. In his view, Spain should fully resist the misleading temptation of European modernity, because with time it would ultimately be *them*, the Europeans, who would ultimately beg *us*, the Spaniards, to teach them the moral truths and the spiritual strengths

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<sup>1</sup> In a recent article, the Spanish sociologist Emilio Lamo de Espinosa has similarly suggested that the Napoleonic invasion created a ‘schizophrenic alternative’ in Spain between ‘patriotism’ and ‘modernity’, or between ‘being Spanish’ and ‘being enlightened’ (2001: 13).

of what he called *la España eterna, virgen y madre* ('the eternal Spain, virgin and mother').

One can see, therefore, the way in which during this difficult period of collective anxiety and uncertainty, 'Europe' was seen by some Spanish intellectuals as an inspiring Other, an ideal model which should be imitated to save the nation by modernizing it, while others viewed it as a threatening Other, a terrible danger which should be avoided at all costs to preserve the purity of the nation's Catholic soul. Indeed, this opposition between European modernization and Hispanic traditionalism led to a notorious public confrontation between the two most famous and influential philosophers of early twentieth century Spain, Miguel de Unamuno and José Ortega y Gasset. Both of these thinkers were fully 'Europeanized' Spaniards, in the sense that they spoke several European languages and were very familiar with the intellectual currents of thought on the other side of the Pyrenées. However, while Unamuno ultimately developed a rather hostile attitude to the modernizing project of 'Europeanization', Ortega fully embraced it with passionate conviction. As Salvador de Madariaga pointed out, these two philosophers most clearly represent the two main patriotic responses which emerged amongst Spain's intellectuals after the 'disaster' of 1898: 'one saw the salvation of Spain in its own substance; the other, in its renovation through the influence and example of Europe' (1989: 94).

In some of his early writings, Unamuno had originally promoted the idea that the Spanish people could only reawaken if they opened the windows of their *patria* to the influence of 'European winds' (1966 [1895]: 866). Eventually, however, he turned against the project of 'Europeanization', because he identified this notion with a dogmatic scientific mentality that would completely wipe out the spirituality of the Spanish people, and the vital consolation offered by their religious belief in eternal life. In a famous essay he wrote against 'European modernizers', Unamuno wrote:

I ask myself, alone with my conscience: Am I European? Am I modern? And my conscience responds: no; you are not European, that which they call European, you are not modern, that which they call modern... And if I do not feel European or modern, is that because I am Spanish? Are we Spaniards ultimately incapable of yielding to Europeanization and modernization?... I must confess that, the more I meditate on it, the more I discover the intimate repugnance that my soul feels towards everything that is supposed to represent the guiding principles of the modern European spirit, towards the scientific orthodoxy of today, towards its methods, towards its tendencies. (1983 [1906]: 926)

Furthermore, Unamuno proclaimed that the national religion of the Spanish people was represented by their great literary hero, Don Quixote, who stood for an undying, utopian faith in the immortality of the soul – in opposition to all rationalistic, scientifically-minded 'Europeanizers'. Therefore, he concluded that a full-scale 'Europeanization' was simply incompatible with the spiritual needs of the quixotic Spanish people. Spain, in his view, was a land of mystics with a medieval soul, and therefore it could never become a 'modern' land of scientists, unless it completely allowed its true national spirit to be conquered and swallowed up by the rationalistic European Other. In opposition to those who had turned modern technology and machinery into new objects of worship, Unamuno proclaimed, "*¡Que inventen ellos!*", "Let them (in other words, the 'Europeans') invent!" (1988 [1912]: 289-90). Hence, although to some degree Unamuno acknowledged that European modernization was undoubtedly a pragmatic necessity, he insisted that the Spanish people would betray their own national soul if they gave up their age-old religious spirituality, and above all their faith in eternal life.

In contrast to Unamuno, Ortega fully took up Joaquín Costa's proposals for national salvation through 'European regeneration'. In his view, there were absolutely no doubts about what the Spanish *raza moribunda* ('dying race') needed to recover a respectable position in the world (1989 [1911]: 18). Only the adoption of Europe's scientific rationality could rescue Spain from the calamitous, humiliating condition in which it found itself. In opposition to those who continued to idealize the supposed spiritual and cultural virtues of the nation, Ortega promoted what he called *el patriotismo del dolor* ('the patriotism of pain'), which consisted in drawing attention to the miserable backwardness of Spain, in order to perceive, by contrast, the marvels of the 'magnificent European possibility' (1989 [1911]: 18). As he put it in a public lecture in Bilbao, delivered in 1910:

Regeneration is inseparable from Europeanization; for this reason, from the moment in which the reconstructive emotion was felt – the anguish, the shame, and the desire – the idea of Europeanization was conceived. Regeneration is the desire; Europeanization is the means to satisfy it. It was clearly seen from the beginning that Spain was the problem and Europe the solution.(1983 [1910]: 521)

Spain, in Ortega's view, was an 'invertebrate' nation threatened by internal, egoistic particularisms and ignorant, indocile masses (1972 [1921]). It was, in short, a decadent country in danger of self-destruction, which could only be saved by the rise of a new, enlightened elite with a fully modern or 'Europeanized' mentality.

This discursive battle between Unamuno and Ortega was not, of course, a purely academic debate. On the contrary, these two intellectuals were very well-known public figures, and the issues they were debating with regard to the 'problem of Spain', and whether or not 'Europe' was the best solution, were at the heart of the political conflicts of the time. Indeed, during the turbulent decades that preceded the ultimate rise to power of General Franco, the opposition between 'European' modernization and 'national-Catholic' traditionalism was one of the fundamental cleavages that divided Spanish elites and contributed in a crucial manner to the ultimate outbreak of the Civil War. This was reflected, for instance, in the rival visions of national history promoted in school text books by the right and the left. On the one hand, conservatives proclaimed that Catholicism was intrinsic to the Spanish soul or 'race' and above all defended the nation's providential mission to defend this true faith throughout the world. On the other, progressives lamented Spain's continuing failure to modernize and promoted the need to adopt 'European' virtues industry, tolerance, and sobriety in order to revitalize the nation (Boyd 1997: 118-25). Some historians have illustrated this point by referring to the conflict of 'two Spains': 'a contest between the Spain of progress and free thought which looked to Europe and the inward-looking Spain of traditionalist Catholic values' (Carr 1980: 12).

To a great extent, what one eyewitness observer of the Civil War called 'the Spanish cockpit' (Borkenau 1974 [1937]) was indeed a clash between two radically opposed, mutually exclusive projects of 'national salvation', in which the contested issue of religion played a key role (Gifford 1997). Both the right and the left claimed to be passionately concerned with the health of their patient (the 'Spanish nation' or 'Spanish people'). However, while one side believed that the cure was to be found in the preservation of the nation's Catholic 'essence', as well as the maintenance of its traditional socio-economic and political structures, the other was convinced that the only possible remedy was 'European' secularization, democratization, and economic modernization – or, in the case of its more extreme factions, the success of a Communist revolution. As Álvarez Junco (1997: 62) has suggested, the Civil War can largely be seen as the last bloody confrontation of the two idealizations of Spanish nationhood that had emerged in the

nineteenth century: the liberal-progressive project, in which 'European modernization' was depicted as the example to be followed, versus the 'national-Catholic' one of Spanish traditionalism, which stood for the preservation of Spain's supposedly unique spiritual personality against the imposition of 'foreign', 'alien' models. This situation was of course further complicated as a result of the fact that by this stage, alternative nationalist projects had emerged in Catalonia and the Basque country (Fusi 1990, Payne 1991).

*Franco's defense of 'Christian Europe' against the threat of liberal 'Europeanizers'*

Not surprisingly, Franco himself originally defined his military uprising in 1936 as a 'national crusade' to protect the Catholic values of *la patria* from what he called the 'bastardized, Frenchified, Europeanizing' doctrines of modern liberalism (Franco 1975: 116). Indeed, throughout the duration of his life-long rule, the fundamental threatening Others of Francoist discourse were Communist 'reds' and liberal-minded 'Europeanizers', as well as Basque and Catalan nationalists. Franco proclaimed that he stood for *la España imperial*, the imperial Spain of the Catholic Kings, of Charles V, and of Philip II, the Spain of global prestige whose mission was 'to defend and extend all over the world a universal and Catholic idea, a Christian Empire' (Franco 1975: 116). In his view, liberal-minded 'Europeanizers' were directly responsible for the humiliating collapse of Spain's position in the world, and therefore only a return to traditional 'Hispanic' principles of order, hierarchy, and authority could ensure the recovery of her imperial greatness.<sup>2</sup>

However, it would be inaccurate to define Francoist discourse as 'anti-European'. In fact, from his own particular standpoint, *el Generalísimo* actually claimed to be fighting for the authentic values of the 'true Europe'. Essentially, the crusade of 'national Catholicism' represented by his forces was placed within the larger context of a continental struggle for the preservation of 'Europe's Christian civilization', threatened by the 'evil forces' of liberalism and communism. In this way, Francoist discourse constructed a symbolic representation of the 'real Europe' which was said to coincide with the spirit of the 'real Spain'. As in earlier centuries, when Spain had successfully protected 'Europe' from Moorish invaders, it would now proudly continue this role against new infidels. Franco explained his position as follows, in a speech delivered during the Civil War in Burgos:

This is a conflict for the defence of Europe, and, once again, Spaniards have been entrusted with the glory of carrying at the point of their bayonets the defence of civilization, the maintenance of a Christian culture, the maintenance of a Catholic faith.(Franco 1975: 49)

When the forces of *el Generalísimo* emerged victorious in 1939, his regime's discourse divided Spanish society into two camps: the *vencedores* (victors), who represented the 'true' Spain, and the *vencidos* (vanquished), who represented 'anti-Spain'. The very survival of *España* was thus symbolically identified with the maintenance of the regime, while all of its opponents were classified as 'traitors' or 'bad Spaniards'. Until the final years of his dictatorship, during which all media institutions of symbolic power were controlled by the Francoist state, only this exclusionist vision of the 'Spanish nation' and its foreign-inspired 'enemies' could be officially promoted in the public sphere (thereby alienating all Spaniards who did not share the Francoist version of *España*).

Although Spain remained formally neutral throughout the Second World War, Franco did not conceal his moral identification with the kind of 'European order' envisioned by

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<sup>2</sup> On Franco and the Francoist ideology, see Payne (1987) and Preston (1993).



Hitler and Mussolini. There were many occasions during the course of this conflict in which 'Europe' was invoked as a way of identifying the Francoist national project with the ambitions of the Axis powers. For instance, on 17 July 1941, the fifth anniversary of the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, Franco delivered a public address in which he presented the World War as an interrupted sequence of Axis triumphs, and spoke of:

these moments when the German armies lead the battle for which Europe and Christianity have for so many years longed, and in which the blood of our youth is to mingle with that of our comrades of the Axis as a living expression of our solidarity.(Cited in Preston 1993: 441)

In fact, it seems clear that until the victory of the Allies became increasingly obvious in 1944, Franco attempted to flatter the self-image of Spaniards by presenting himself as the leader who would wipe out the shame of 1898 and guide them to a new age of imperial splendour in which 'the nation' would finally recuperate its lost prestige in the world, through a powerful partnership with Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy. Indeed, it was only in 1944, when the defeat of the Axis became increasingly evident, that Franco made the symbolic gesture of removing the pictures of the *Führer* and *il Duce* from his desk (Pollack and Hunter 1987: 13).

The Allied victory, however, radically altered Franco's plans of renewed glory for the Spanish *patria*. Instead, his regime's collaboration with the defeated totalitarian powers led to a harsh period of international ostracism and economic penury. Spain was excluded from the United Nations, as well as from the Marshall Plan for post-war recovery. Nevertheless, after this initial isolation, America's strategic priorities in the Cold War ultimately provided Franco with a new vital source of money, prestige, and moral legitimacy. In return for allowing the establishment of US military bases on its territory, Spain would receive over one billion dollars of aid. Two years later, Spain was admitted into the United Nations, diplomatic relations were re-established with most Western countries, and hence the days of total international ostracism were over. The regime's propaganda now symbolically constructed a self-image of Spain as 'the sentinel of Occident', an honourable partner in the Western family's struggle against the threatening Other of Soviet Communism. Furthermore, its disastrous traditional policies of economic autarky were abandoned, and a successful programme of capitalist development was implemented, which led Spain to achieve growth rates in the 1960's which were exceeded only by Japan (Carr and Fusi 1981: 49). Until the end of his life-long rule in 1975, Francoist propaganda therefore claimed that *el Generalísimo* had saved 'the nation' from economic ruin and transformed it into an advanced, prosperous 'Western society'.

Franco, however, was much less fortunate in his attempt to gain an additional source of moral legitimacy by trying to get accepted into the European Economic Community. In February 1962, the Spanish state officially requested entry into the EEC. However, the authoritarian character of the Franco regime made this a futile pretension. Only a few days before the Spanish application was made, the European Parliament had approved a report which asserted that 'states whose governments do not have democratic legitimization and whose people do not participate in government decisions, either directly or through fully elected representatives, cannot aspire to be admitted into the circle of peoples which forms the European communities' (Pollack and Hunter 1987: 134). Hence, although the Spanish request received a sympathetic response from some conservative circles and sectors of European public opinion, accession into the EEC was not ultimately allowed to an old ally of Hitler and Mussolini. To a great extent, Franco remained an anachronistic symbol of

everything which the 'new Europe' was being constructed against, a shameful reminder of the Nazi and Fascist past.

Nevertheless, throughout this period, the official Francoist propaganda constantly proclaimed that Spain had a 'European vocation', that it wanted to participate in the great collective project of the Common Market. At the same time, however, it continued to classify the liberal politics of other European countries as 'dangerous' and 'inferior' (La Porte 1992: 396). In opposition to the so-called 'inorganic democracy' of other European countries, which were viewed as a dangerous first step towards Communism, Franco claimed to stand for 'organic democracy' – a 'natural', harmonious order based on traditional 'Spanish' institutions such as the Church and the family. The 'Europeanism' of *el Generalísimo* was thus limited exclusively to the sphere of economics – in other words, to a desire to share in the prosperity of the Common Market –, but in no way did it imply a conversion to the principles of Western liberal democracy.

However, in opposition to this official 'European vocation' which the regime tried to promote, many Spaniards who rejected Francoism began to unify under the symbolic banner of a very different 'Europeanism', which stood for the full modernization and democratization of their country (Tusell 1977). In fact, one of the most notable gestures of anti-regime protest which occurred during the Franco dictatorship took place in Munich during the IV Congress of the European movement in June 1962, when opponents of the regime from both within the country and abroad demanded that the EEC should reject the Francoist request to enter the Common Market, unless a full-scale programme of democratic reform was implemented in their country. At the end of the meeting, all Spanish participants signed a joint manifesto in which they asserted that accession into the European Community should necessarily compel every member state to establish genuinely representative and democratic institutions, and to guarantee basic human rights. In opposition to the divisive, Civil War rhetoric which Francoist discourse employed to legitimate its existence, these anti-Francoist rebels proclaimed that a democratic, truly 'European' nation in which Spaniards of all political tendencies could legitimately participate and live in peace with each other was possible.

Hence, for the first time since the Civil War, Spaniards from across much of the ideological spectrum joined forces in the Munich reunion to oppose the Franco dictatorship and demand political reforms. In opposition to the regime's own official 'European vocation', a new rival 'Europeanism' therefore arose which openly stood for the rejection of a 'backwards' regime and the 'democratization' of Spain. Not surprisingly, the Francoist press branded all those Spaniards who had participated in this gathering as 'filthy conspirators' who had stabbed *la patria* in the back. Egged on by this official propaganda, thousands of people gathered to demonstrate in many Spanish cities to denounce these 'traitors', and Franco delivered several addresses to condemn their 'betrayal of the nation'. At that stage, the regime's monopolization of national symbolism and sentiment was still relatively effective.

Over the course of time, however, the legitimacy of Franco's version of Spanish 'patriotism' began to dwindle, and the rival national project of a modern, democratic, and hence 'European' Spain eventually gained the upper hand (Carr and Fusi 1981, Gilmour 1985). By the 1970's, Spain had been transformed into a fully industrialized, better educated society by Franco's own regime. At this point, students, intellectuals, workers, Basque and Catalan nationalists, and even many representatives of the Catholic Church were publicly rejecting the official discourse of the regime. A new national project was increasingly spreading, which sought the recovery of collective self-esteem through the achievement of the kind of 'freedom' and 'liberty' enjoyed in 'normal European countries'. Although the regime itself had repeatedly made the promise that it would

satisfy the country's 'European vocation', the most it ever accomplished was a purely commercial trade agreement with the EEC in 1970. Full membership, however, was never allowed to Franco's Spain, and 'Europe' therefore remained an unfulfilled aspiration throughout the dictatorship.

By the time *el Generalísimo* died in 1975, it had therefore become obvious, even amongst many elites within the authoritarian power structure, that if Spain truly wanted to become 'European', political democratization would be a necessary condition for this ideal to become a reality. By this stage, Francoism was increasingly seen as something which was still keeping Spain at humiliating, 'African' levels of political backwardness. From this perspective, it was thus only through a complete 'Europeanization' of the country that national self-esteem could be fully regained.

*'Europe' as a unifying symbol of democratization during the transition*

After Franco's death, a new political discourse emerged in the Spanish public sphere which identified 'freedom' and 'democracy' with the desire to achieve a 'modern' and 'European' status. King Juan Carlos I, initially stigmatized amongst all the forces of the opposition for being Franco's appointed successor, clearly positioned himself on the side of 'European' democratization, and therefore managed to legitimate his rule amongst a population that was now overwhelmingly demanding political change. Indeed, it is interesting to observe how, in his inaugural address to the Spanish Parliament in November 1975, the new monarch proclaimed that 'a free and modern society requires the participation of all in the forums of decision-making', and went on to emphasize the 'Europeity' of Spain:

The idea of Europe would be incomplete without reference to the presence of the Spaniard, and without a consideration of the acts of many of my predecessors. Europe should reckon with Spain, for we Spaniards are European. It is a necessity today that both sides understand that this is so and draw the consequences that derive therefrom.<sup>3</sup>

In this way, the King suggested from the beginning of his reign that his aim was to lead Spain to 'Europe', via the achievement of 'freedom' and 'modernity'.

Similarly, the leading politicians of the transition, such as the first democratically elected prime minister, Adolfo Suárez, often associated Spain's modernization and democratization with the idealized concept of 'becoming European' (Armero 1989). Indeed, the aspiration to become a full member of the EEC was one of the fundamental issues on which there was a broad consensus in Spain amongst the political forces which made the negotiated transition to democracy possible. As the socialist politician Fernando Morán has put it: 'At the time of the transition from dictatorship to democracy [Spain's Europeanism] attained almost a metapolitical worth and constituted one of the facts on which the unanimity which permitted change was established' (1980: 289). It is undoubtedly significant, for instance, that at the time of the first elections in June 1977, the campaign slogans of the two parties that gained the most seats in the Spanish Parliament, Suárez's *Unión de Centro Democrático* (UCD) and Felipe González's *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (PSOE) both made references to their capacity to satisfy the country's European ambition: 'Vote Center. The ideologies that make possible a democratic Europe. The people that will make possible a democratic Spain'; 'The key to Europe is in your hands. Vote PSOE' (Desfor- Edles 1998: 57).

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<sup>3</sup>ABC, 23 November 1975.

Indeed, when Suárez won these first elections, he triumphantly declared in his first press conference as Prime Minister that his government would do its utmost to get the country into the EEC, because, he proclaimed, ‘Spain is Europe and forms part of it’ (Bassols 1995: 187). The phrase ‘Spain is Europe’ could now be uttered with a renewed confidence in the public sphere. The nation’s leaders had now been elected through democratic procedures, and it was this above all that was seen as the key component of a ‘European’ status. In all of this, one can observe how the concept of ‘Europeanness’ had become not so much something a country could *be* through mere geographical location, history, or culture, but rather something that had to be *achieved* through the accomplishment of certain moral and political conditions.

If, as Paloma Aguilar (1996) has shown, the Civil War was viewed as the collective tragedy of the past that had to be avoided at all costs during the Spanish transition to democracy, one could say that ‘Europe’ was the mythical aspiration of the future which the majority of Spaniards desired to reach. In opposition to the radical, extremist, violent ‘two Spains’ of the past, the symbolic ideal that was promoted in the dominant political discourse of this period was the notion of a ‘third Spain’ characterized by moderation, tolerance, and dialogue.<sup>4</sup> Only by respecting such values of mutual respect could the aspiration to ‘European modernity’ finally become possible. It is for this reason that Spain’s ultimately successful accession into the EEC in 1986 could be celebrated as the culmination of the struggle for the widely cherished, quasi-mythical ideals of *la transición*: freedom, modernity, and democracy.

Hence, one could say that it was precisely ‘Europe’ which played a crucial role in the construction of a cohesive Spanish national identity after Franco’s death, by functioning as a unifying prestige-symbol and a potent source of national pride. At the time of the transition, the aspiration to gain acceptance into the EEC became a common national project that transcended the separate interests of different parties and ideologies across the political spectrum, because essentially it stood for all the widely shared ideals of the new, ‘modern’ and ‘democratic’ Spain. In contrast to the monolithic, divisive definition of *España* that had characterized Francoist discourse, the concept of a ‘European Spain’ was therefore a key ingredient in the symbolic construction of a much more inclusive definition of nationhood grounded on the values of the transition, with which both Catholics and non-Catholics, progressives and conservatives, could conceivably identify.

This process of redefining Spain in a more pluralistic manner also crucially involved recognizing the right to autonomy of ‘the nationalities and regions which make up the Spanish state’ in the new 1978 Constitution (cited in Whitehead 1996: 256). Nevertheless, it is important to note that Spain’s successful transition to a ‘European’ form of democracy and the subsequent decentralization of state power through the creation of regional autonomous governments, has never fully satisfied the demands of nationalist movements in the Basque Country and Catalonia, as well as to a lesser extent in Galicia. For such minority nationalisms, the project of the European Union has rather represented an opportunity to bypass the Spanish state and to ultimately achieve a new international status as separate ‘nations in Europe’ (Corkill 1996: 160-1). The tension between center and periphery is thus a lingering problem which still remains to be resolved in Spain, particularly with regard to the continuing activities of the Basque terrorist organization ETA.

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<sup>4</sup> The idea of a ‘third Spain’ was promoted in particular by the intellectual Pedro Laín Entralgo (Beneyto 1999: 216-25).

### 3. Dominant discourses of nationhood: 'Europe' as Spain's inspiring Other

Spain's particular historical trajectory therefore led to the emergence of a dominant discourse of nationhood in which 'Europe' was portrayed as the inspiring Other that would allow the country to fully consolidate its democracy, modernize its economy, and recover a respectable role on the world stage. In a country where the very name of the nation, *España*, and notions such as *patria* and *patriotismo*, had become widely discredited by the time of Franco's death due to their symbolic association with the aggressive nationalist rhetoric of the dictatorship, the idea of a 'European Spain' – in other words, a modern, tolerant, democratic, and pluralistic Spain – was employed in the dominant political discourses of the transition period to re-define and re-legitimate the project of Spanish nationhood. As Lamo de Espinosa (2001: 9) has written, 'in opposition to an exceptional and abnormal, Hispanicized, traditional, and violent Spain... emerged the national project of maintaining peace by constructing the Spain that should be: normalized, Europeanized, modern.'

Following Smith's distinction (1991) between the ethnic and civic components of national identities, one could argue that during the Franco regime, a predominantly ethnic version of the nation was promoted by the state, which fundamentally grounded the unity of Spain on two essential cultural ingredients: the Catholic religion and the Castilian language. During the transition period, however, this was replaced by a more civic vision of Spanish nationhood based on the democratic values established by the Constitution of 1978, which guaranteed political and religious freedoms, as well as recognizing the linguistic diversity of Spain's 'nationalities and regions'. It was precisely this civic vision of Spanish nationhood which depicted the objective of 'entering Europe' as one of its fundamental aspirations, in order to fully insert Spain in the community of Western liberal democracies.

#### *'Europe' as a source of national pride at the time of Spain's accession into the EEC*

The powerful emergence of this Europeanized national self-image can be illustrated by considering the triumphalist discourses which emerged in Spain at the time of its accession into the EEC, a period which I have analyzed closely in my own research (2001). A good example is the televised address which Prime Minister Felipe González delivered on 29 March 1985, when he announced to the Spanish people that his Foreign Minister had reached a definitive agreement in Brussels which would make possible Spain's entry into the EEC at the beginning of the following year:

Today, with honour and satisfaction, I address all the citizens and peoples of Spain to transmit to them a message of hope in our future. Early this morning, a transcendental, irreversible step has been taken for our integration in the European Economic Community... For Spain, this is a deed of great significance. As a historic fact, it signifies the end of our age-old isolation. It signifies, as well, our participation in the common destiny of Western Europe. For democratic Spain, for the Spain which lives in freedom, it also signifies the culmination of a process of struggle of millions of Spaniards who have identified freedom and democracy with integration in Western Europe. For Spain as a social reality, as an economic reality, it undoubtedly signifies a challenge, the challenge of modernity and competition, a challenge to which I am certain that our workers, our businessmen, our scientists, our professionals, and society as a whole will rise up... I think we have the obligation to do so, and that we are going to comply with this obligation of leaving our children a

Spain with a greater level of economic efficiency, a greater level of culture, and a greater capacity for solidarity.<sup>5</sup>

‘Entering Europe’ was therefore something which could be confidently announced in the Spanish public sphere ‘with honour and satisfaction’. It was ‘a deed of great significance’, because it signified the end of Spain’s ‘age-old isolation’, the culmination of the struggle for ‘freedom and democracy’, and the opportunity to rise up to ‘the challenge of modernity’. In short, it was ‘in Europe and with Europe’ that Spain’s future generations would benefit from a greater level of economic and cultural development, as well as a respectable moral standing in the world.

The Spanish Prime Minister also emphasized that the decision to opt for a ‘European future’ in no way implied a breakage of Spain’s historic links with ‘our South American brothers’. On the contrary, in opposition to the discredited imperialistic attitudes that had characterized Francoist discourse, the ‘new democratic Spain’ was portrayed as a global-minded, cosmopolitan nation which could act as a unifying bridge between Europe and Latin America. In this way, it was suggested that Spain would finally begin to play an honourable, worthwhile role in the international community.

This portrayal of ‘Europe’ as Spain’s inspiring Other was also very evident in the discourse which the two leading national newspapers employed in this ‘historic moment’. For instance, in an article entitled *Aleluia por Europa* (‘Alleluia for Europe’), the editor-in-chief of *El País* stated that the encounter with ‘Europe’ signified above all ‘the discovery of a mental and ideological space still new to us, in which the words invoked for so long by Spanish intellectuals – tolerance, freedom, and rights – are deeply rooted in a way which will inevitably and happily benefit us.’<sup>6</sup> Similarly, *ABC* displayed on its cover an EEC door which opened widely to welcome Spaniards inside its terrain of prosperity and prestige, while an editorial in this newspaper, entitled *Un Día Histórico*, ‘A Historic Day’ asserted that this achievement was:

a turning point which will anchor us, for a long time, in the orbit of the nations in which individual rights, free enterprise, and the freedom of ideas impose themselves upon any totalitarian temptation... a space which is still, in spite of everything, the geographic platform of reason and liberty.<sup>7</sup>

Another article in *ABC* also celebrated the way in which Spain had finally ceased to be ‘African’, by proclaiming that ‘from yesterday, Europe no longer ends at the Pyrenées’, and defining the accession into the EEC as a ‘genuine democratic baptism’ that had saved the dignity of the Spanish people.<sup>8</sup>

‘Europe’ was thus presented in these emotionally charged discourses as the ideal antidote for all remaining traces of Francoist backwardness, and as the fundamental collective achievement that made possible the recovery of national self-respect by finally being recognized as a ‘modern democracy’. From this perspective, a shameful national past of bloody fratricidal conflicts, economic stagnation, political oppression, and international isolation were depicted as tragic disasters which should never again be repeated; an in opposition to these painful collective memories, a promising future of peace, prosperity, liberty, and European solidarity were presented as the fundamental objectives of a new, self-confident Spain. In this sense, ‘Europe’ clearly became the inspiring Other for the

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<sup>5</sup> *El País*, 30 March 1985.

<sup>6</sup> *El País*, 31 March 1985.

<sup>7</sup> *ABC*, 29 March 1985.

<sup>8</sup> Manuel Blanco Tobio, ‘¿Daremos la talla?’, *ABC*, 31 March 1985.

future, while Francoist authoritarianism was portrayed as the threatening Other of a past which had to be overcome for good. It should not be forgotten that only five years earlier, a group of armed civil guards led by Lieutenant Colonel Antonio Tejero had stormed into the Spanish Parliament, shouting *¡Todos al suelo!* ('Everyone to the floor!'), in a shocking *coup d'état* attempt which was only aborted by the dramatic intervention of the King. With this memory still fresh in the collective consciousness of Spaniards, the entry into the EEC was thus widely seen as a definitive safeguard against the authoritarian ghosts of the past.

This same emotional climate of Europeanist enthusiasm was also displayed in the spectacular signature ceremony which was organized in Madrid to formalize the country's accession to the EEC. The official entry of Spain into the Common Market did not take place until 1 January 1986, but the signing of the treaty of adhesion on 12 June 1985 was transformed into a major 'national event' by the socialist government of Felipe González.<sup>9</sup> The ceremony, which took place at the Royal Palace of Madrid, was attended by King Juan Carlos, González and his entire cabinet, the President of the European Commission, Jacques Delors and other EEC authorities, the leaders of all political parties, the heads of Spain's regional governments, bankers, businessmen, trade union leaders, artists, writers, sportsmen, and many other national personalities. The mayor of Madrid, Tierno Galván, published a special proclamation on that day in which he called Europe 'the Reason of the universe that guides the rest of the world's peoples with the light of intelligence and the health of its sentiments.'<sup>10</sup> After declaring that on this day 'we are more European than we have ever been', he asked his fellow citizens to show the world their exuberant happiness on such a joyous occasion. The enormous importance which Spanish authorities gave to the event was further illustrated by the fact that the main public television channel broadcast the entire ritual live from the grand hall of the Royal Palace. In this way, the entire country was invited to participate in this civil liturgy of national self-veneration.

The main highlights of the ritual were speeches delivered by the King and Prime Minister González, in which 'Europe' was depicted as the culmination of Spain's triumphant passage to modernity and democracy. Juan Carlos I, for instance, welcomed Europe's dignitaries as follows:

Spain is proud to receive the most illustrious dignitaries of the European Communities and the nations which integrate them. You represent what the Spanish people understand by Europe: the principles of liberty, equality, pluralism, and justice, which also preside over the Spanish Constitution. The Spanish people welcome you with satisfaction, and conscious of the great significance which this event implies.<sup>11</sup>

The King also stressed that Spain, in spite of its centuries of co-existence with Islamic and Hebrew cultures, as well as its expansion abroad to America, 'had never lost its desire to be European.' In any case, this multicultural heritage, according to Juan Carlos, in no way diminished Spain's 'Europeanness', because a closed, fortified 'Europe', disdainful of other peoples, would not be true to itself:

This is why Spain, by manifesting its ties to Hispanic-speaking peoples, and encouraging friendship with the African and Arab world, does not diminish its Europeity, but rather manifests it creatively.

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<sup>9</sup> My description of this ceremony is based on the reports published in *El País*, *ABC*, and *Diario-16*, 13 June 1985.

<sup>10</sup> Cited in *Diario-16*, 13 June 1985.

<sup>11</sup> Cited in *El País*, 13 June 1985.

In this way, the monarch's discourse represented a repudiation of Francoist Spain and its Christian religious purity. The new self-image of Spain was one of tolerance and openness, and these were now defined as the true values of 'Europeity'. Hence, in the name of his people, the King manifested Spain's will to contribute to the construction of a united Europe, an objective 'which fills our future with hope'.

Felipe González, similarly, called the event a 'historic occasion' for Spain, a country which identified entry into the EEC 'with participation in the ideals of liberty, progress, and democracy' and with 'the challenge of modernity'.<sup>12</sup> The symbolism of Spanish political discourse on 'Europe' therefore reached its ultimate climax: 'the nation' had finally become 'European' through a democratic transformation and a passionate desire to be 'modern'. In this way, the project of European unification was equated with all the ideals that represented major sources of pride for a country that until very recently had suffered the painful stigma of 'backwardness'.

*'Europe' as a symbol of civic democratic values against the threatening internal Other of ETA's terrorism*

It is noteworthy, however, that the joy of the festive ceremony which formalized Spain's 'entry into Europe' was partly marred by the Basque terrorists of ETA. On the very same day that the treaty of accession into the EEC was signed, ETA's gunmen assassinated four people: an army colonel, his chauffeur, and a policeman in Madrid, as well as a Navy officer in the Basque city of Portugalete. The choice of this particular day was obviously no coincidence: a ritualized moment of 'national celebration' such as this one was chosen by this Basque separatist group in order to make clear that it had absolutely nothing to cheer about. On the contrary, for ETA and its supporters, *España* remained a symbol which stood for the oppression of what they saw as their own 'nation', *Euskadi*, and hence on a day which was supposed to mark the 'Spanish national success' of 'entering Europe', the terrorists attempted to spoil the festivities by murdering four men who in their own minds were classified as 'enemies of Basque freedom'.

If one looks at the way in which the main Spanish national newspapers covered these events, it is interesting to observe the way in which the dominant vision of 'Europe' as Spain's inspiring Other was directly contrasted to the threatening Other of ETA's terrorism. Hence, all the main national dailies depicted the European signature ceremony as a symbol of the new, proud Spain of 'liberty', 'modernity' and 'democracy', in opposition to the old, shameful Spain of 'violence', 'barbarity', and 'intransigence' represented by the assassinations of the Basque separatist group.

*El País*, for instance, entitled its front-page headline 'SPAIN JOINS THE PROJECT OF A UNITED EUROPE WHILE ETA ATTEMPTS TO SPREAD TERROR', and in its editorial article, 'Europe, against the enemies of liberty', this newspaper stated:

Yesterday's terrorist assassinations did not manage to overshadow the historic moment of Spain's entry into Europe... The desperate attempt to spread terror in an indiscriminate manner clashed with our society's vocation of modernity.<sup>13</sup>

'Europe' was therefore identified with the Spanish people's 'modern' ethical aspirations, while ETA was defined as 'a violent minority which tries to detain the clock of history',

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<sup>12</sup>Cited in *El País*, 13 June 1985.

<sup>13</sup> *El País*, 13 June 1985.



and their actions were viewed as ‘a vain and desperate attempt to prevent the progress of solidarity and freedom in this country.’

Another leading national newspaper, *Diario-16*, significantly entitled its main front-page headline ‘DEMOCRACY INTEGRATED SPAIN INTO EUROPE’, an implicit allusion to the Franco regime’s incapacity to do so.<sup>14</sup> Its second main story centered on the terrorist actions, and explicitly contrasted one event with the other: ‘ETA CLOUDED THE DAY WITH FOUR ASSASSINATIONS’. A cartoon published in the opinion section reflected the same dichotomy between the joy of Europe and the tragedy of terrorism: a bottle of champagne had been cracked open by four bullet holes. This was also very visible in the emotive discourse of the newspaper’s editorial article, ‘ETA, against Europe’:

As on so many other occasions when the Spanish democratic system has taken successive steps towards its consolidation, the terrorist organization ETA, dramatically present in all the transcendental landmarks of the Spanish pluralist process, decided to leave its despicable stamp of blood yesterday on the signature ceremony of the Spain’s Treaty of Adhesion to the European Communities... Indeed, the entry of Spain into the European Community, which represents an explicit support for Spanish democracy, constitutes a serious setback for all of those who still believe they can still defeat the State, ripping off a piece of its territory and constructing an impossible Albania.

*ABC* entitled its own front-page headline, ‘MADRID, CAPITAL OF EUROPE’, and in its leading editorial called the accession into Europe ‘a Copernican change and the beginning of a rationality indispensable for our country’.<sup>15</sup> As in the other newspapers, one of its opinion columnists also wrote that the ETA terrorists:

have covered in blood our entrance into the market of liberties and the concert of progress, as if they wanted to demonstrate that a country in which savage and ferocious beasts with a human appearance still exist has managed to slip through the doors of Europe.<sup>16</sup>

Hence, an identical dichotomy thus characterized the discourse of all the main national dailies, and indeed it was probably a dichotomy that existed in many Spanish minds: ‘Europe’ stood for progress, liberty, democracy, and modernity, while ETA was the chilling reminder of an ‘uncivilized’ past in which guns and bombs, rather than words and ideas, were the main weapons employed in the political arena.

I have analyzed the discourses which surrounded Spain’s accession into the EEC in detail because I think that they perfectly encapsulate the key components in the dominant representations of Spanish nationhood which emerged in post-Franco Spain, and which are still largely observable today. Since the period of the transition, the idea of a modern, democratic, and hence European Spain has been the proud vision of Spanish national identity which has emerged in contrast and opposition to the backward days of the Francoist past, during which Spain was shamefully isolated from the project of European integration. As Moreno (2001: 171) puts it, ‘Spain’s incorporation into Europe and its participation in European integration was accepted as a positive step which was necessary in order to definitively bury our immediate historical past’. At the same time, as I have illustrated, this vision of a modern, democratic, and hence ‘European Spain’ has been

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<sup>14</sup> *Diario-16*, 13 June 1985.

<sup>15</sup> *ABC*, 13 June 1985.

<sup>16</sup> J. Campmany, ‘La Rúbrica’, *ABC*, 13 June 1985.

symbolically constructed in direct opposition to the nation's main internal threatening Other, represented by ETA terrorism, whose employment of violence for political ends is typically delegitimized by Spanish leaders as an attack on the principles of democratic life which all 'civilized European countries' (amongst which Spaniards now confidently include themselves) abide by.

### *Roma gypsies and immigrants*

Spain is the EU country with the largest population of Roma gypsies. Their entry into Spanish territory began at the beginning of the fifteenth century, and today it is estimated that approximately 500.000 gypsies live in Spain, although it is very difficult to know the exact number. Nevertheless, in spite of this long history of coexistence, the magnitude of the gypsy population, and the undeniable influence which some features of its culture have had on Spanish cultural life, the Roma have always been excluded from official definitions of Spanish national identity, at least in the discourse which the political and cultural elites have employed internally.

However, a very different picture emerges if we consider the Spanish discourse which has been articulated for 'external consumption' – in other words, for foreign audiences. Here it is evident that there has been an instrumentalization of certain features of Roma culture, which correspond to the Orientalist stereotype of Spain that began to spread throughout Europe during the Romantic period (Álvarez Junco 2001). This stereotype, typically symbolized by flamenco music and dancing, was utilized by the Franco regime to attract tourism in the 1960's. It was during this period that the Minister of Information and Tourism at the time, Manuel Fraga, launched a famous tourist campaign which aimed to entice foreign tourists with the slogan 'Spain is different'. The aim of this campaign was to exploit Spain's tourist potential by accentuating the supposed 'differences' which distinguished Spaniards from other Europeans. In this way, it was implicitly suggested that a visit to Spain would allow Europeans to enjoy a sort of Oriental exoticism without leaving their continent. The main images of this exoticism, which included a certain dose of primitivism (once again, corresponding to the Romantic idea of an ancient Spain that jealously guarded its ancestral traditions, and was supposedly inhabited by bullfighters, gypsies, and bandits), were based on some of the most characteristic features of Roma folklore. Nevertheless, as we have already noted, it seems extremely difficult to find any references to the ethnic or cultural features of gypsies in the works of the leading intellectuals which, during the course of the twentieth century, have explored the nature of Spanish national identity. The country's leading intellectuals, such as Américo Castro, have highlighted the Arab and Jewish legacy to a much greater extent than that of the gypsies, which is hardly ever mentioned, perhaps because what has been incorporated into Spanish cultural life from Roma folklore is no longer considered to be a characteristic of gypsies, but rather of Spaniards.

After Franco's death, the Orientalist stereotype, which was so heavily exploited by the dictatorship, provoked – in the same way as the nationalist *españolista* discourse inherited from Francoism – a widespread rejection amongst the Spanish population. On the one hand, intellectuals complained that the image of Spain which had been exported abroad was utterly superficial and unrepresentative of the reality of a modern and plural Spain. On the other hand, Basques, Catalans, and Galicians have never felt represented in any way by an image of Spain which is primarily coloured by Andalusian features (curiously not Castilian ones), rather than by those of other Spanish regions.<sup>17</sup> Finally, during the

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<sup>17</sup> The fact that Catalonia has been one of the regions which has received the greatest number of Andalusian emigrants explain, nevertheless, that some of the best and most innovative expressions of

transition period, there was an obsession with leaving behind any traces of a supposed Spanish ‘difference’, which was generally viewed as a crippling historical legacy that had led to the country’s international isolation. This is why Europe played such an important role in the new definition of Spanish national identity, since it served to put Spain on an equal level with its neighbours, and to do away, once and for all, with the ‘Spain is different’ slogan, which was now widely despised along with all its political consequences.

These claims need to be qualified, however, since Spain’s Orientalist stereotype is still very firmly entrenched in Europe, and therefore remains a great source of attraction for tourism. For this reason, those Spaniards who are responsible for the development of the country’s tourist industry have continued to export that image, especially if we take into account that tourism is one of the main sources of income in Spain. All of this explains the ambivalence which Spaniards feel towards the stereotype which foreigners have of them: on the one hand, they fully reject the stereotype of ‘bullfights and tambourines’; but, on the other, now that democracy has been consolidated and that Spaniards feel that they are a part of Europe, to some extent they have begun to reconcile themselves with certain cultural features, particularly flamenco, which were previously scorned by leftist intellectuals, and are now considered to be highly valuable expressions of Spanish national culture. What now seems to be taking place is an attempt to maintain the traditional stereotype, but to simultaneously complement it with other images that transmit the idea of a plural Spain, by accentuating – without abandoning the old images – certain additional features that characterize other Spanish cultures, such as those of the Catalans, Basques, and Galicians.

Andalusian discourse, which like all Spanish nationalist and regionalist discourses has acquired considerable strength in the past few decades, has attempted to incorporate in its cultural self-image both the historic Arab heritage of the period which preceded the expulsion of the Moors, as well as some of the previously mentioned features of gypsy culture. In Andalusian rhetoric, the Arab cultural legacy is today being presented as a source of pride, and a distinctive Andalusian identity is celebrated for its splendid historic and plural cultural richness, exemplified by provinces such as Granada, Cordoba, and Seville. Since Andalusia is the region which has traditionally had the greatest Roma population, the integration of this community has had its fair share of problems. In spite of the evident intermixing which has taken place in many areas of this region, racist attitudes towards gypsies, which exist in the rest of Spain, have also been maintained in Andalusia, and in some cases have been particularly intense due to the high concentration of Roma inhabitants who live there.<sup>18</sup>

It is a well known fact that, aside from some exceptions, Spain’s gypsy population lives in conditions of poverty and marginality. Nevertheless, it is also true that the Roma are an ethnic group with endogamic traditions and a strong sense of racial pride which occasionally leads them to display racist attitudes towards all others (which they call *payos*). Furthermore, the fact that they have maintained a series of autochthonous laws which regulate their social life provoke more obstacles to integration than in the case of other communities, since this sometimes leads to incompatibilities between different codes of conduct which cannot easily be reconciled. At the same time, there is a widespread fear amongst the Roma population concerning the possibility that their integration in Spanish society would wipe out their own distinctive identity.

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flamenco are taking place there (such as the ‘Catalonian rumba’). However, Catalan nationalist discourse has similarly not incorporated these cultural features in its definitions of Catalan culture, since all nationalist discourses tend to negate internal plurality.

<sup>18</sup> According to SOS Racism’s report on Spain in 1999, 70% of the Roma population in Spain live in Andalusia, Valencia, and Murcia, as well as Madrid and Barcelona.

As is well known, until the last few years of the twentieth century, Spain was not an immigrant receiving country, unlike many of its neighbours. As one of the most recent studies on this issue puts it:

Immigration, which has a long tradition in the United States and in some European countries, is a very recent phenomenon in Spain, which has taken place in a highly accelerated manner, as is shown by the fact that in the 1990's, the number of non-EU foreigners residing in Spain tripled. Immigration, furthermore, is concentrated in a few areas, since 60% of foreigners reside in only six provinces (Pérez-Díaz *et al* 2001: 7).

All of this explains both the great degree of ethnic, and even religious, homogeneity which has existed in Spain until recently, as well as the fact that immigrants have not been incorporated into definitions of Spanish national identity. A country with borders that have remained practically unchanged since the end of the fifteenth century, which forged its political and religious unity in this same period, and which has not been a receptor of immigrants, but rather the other way around, has not had to deal with the problems of integration (with the exception of the Roma population that we have already analyzed) which other countries have faced. Religious homogeneity has been so strong that, even today, Catholic culture is an important component not only of the concept of the Spanish nation, but also of other nations or regions that are part of the Spanish state, such as that of the Basques, Catalans, Galicians, Andalusians, etc. The Roma, of course, also share this faith. Hence, the absence of challenges explains the hegemony of the Catholic Church in Spain and, as we have pointed out, the important role which this institution played in Spanish educational institutions, and in the process of socializing citizens.

Although Spaniards seem to be less xenophobic than other Europeans,<sup>19</sup> this is probably not due to the fact that Spaniards are somehow more tolerant, but rather because, as we have stated, the presence of immigrants is a much more recent phenomenon, much more concentrated in certain geographical areas, and much less abundant than in other EU countries. This last point is illustrated by the fact that in 1998, foreigners made up 9% of the German population, 6.3% of the French one, and 8.8% of the Belgian one, but only 1.6% of the Spanish one.

Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that, even now that immigration – especially from North African countries – is becoming more visible in Spain, and in many cases begins to be perceived as a problem, Spaniards continue to display a greater degree of racism towards gypsies than against almost any other ethnic group. However, it is also evident that, as in so many other cases, what provokes the greatest feelings of repugnance against gypsies is their marginality, since wealthy gypsies, those who have triumphed in society (almost always through their talents as singers or dancers) are in no way rejected, but fully accepted by Spaniards.

In spite of the prolonged history of coexistence between gypsies and *payos*, according to figures published by *El País* on 4 September 1998, 24% of students and 16.3% of students affirmed that gypsies were not Spanish. Furthermore, 11% of the former and 5% of the latter were in favour of expelling them from society. SOS Racism's report on Spain in 1999 states that although 'violent racism is not a very widespread phenomenon', 'daily manifestations of racism undoubtedly occur every day, particularly against the Roma/gypsy population, blacks, North Africans, and Arabs.' According to this same

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<sup>19</sup> While 27.3% of Italians, 31% of Britons, and 25.6% of French citizens believe that 'immigrants represent a threat for our culture and our identity', only 10.6% of Spaniards agree with this statement.

report, although gypsies ‘have Spanish nationality and currently possess the same rights... in many respects they continue to be discriminated against and marginalized.’

According to a survey carried out by the CIS (Spanish Center for Sociological Investigations) in 1996, 50% of Spaniards view themselves as very or quite tolerant of the customs of foreigners, while only 32% felt this way towards the customs of gypsies. At the same time, in this study, 54% of the respondents defined Spanish society as ‘racist’ (*Datos de Opinión*, nº 3, CIS). In study nº 2212 of the CIS, 93% of Spaniards claimed that they would care very little or not at all if their neighbours were immigrants or foreign workers, while only 79% responded in this way when asked about people of a different race, such as gypsies or blacks (*Datos de Opinión*, nº 5, 1996).

Another CIS poll carried out in 2001 revealed that 80% of Spaniards claim that having immigrants in their workplace does not bother them ‘at all’, and that they do not mind if their sons and daughters share their classroom with children.<sup>20</sup> At the same time, however, the same survey suggested once again that Spaniards clearly display a degree of ‘ethnic preference’ for some immigrants over others, with Latin Americans and EU citizens receiving the highest ranking in a scale of sympathy from 1 to 10 (7.1), compared to the lower sense of affiliation felt towards East Europeans (6.5), Asians (6.4), and North Africans (5.9). Furthermore, up to 27% admitted that they would be ‘quite concerned’ if their sons and daughters would marry a North African, while these figures are considerably lower in the case of EU citizens (6.3%), Latin Americans (10.2%), and East Europeans (11.7%). This suggests that there is a continuum of ‘strangeness’ in people’s conceptions of immigrants, which tends to favour those whose culture is perceived to be more similar to one’s own.

### *Peripheral nationalisms: the Basques and the Catalans*

The inclusion of the Basque and Catalan cultures in Spanish national discourse has not taken place until very recently, when Spaniards learned to appreciate the richness of belonging to a plural nation, a ‘nation of nations’ as it was called during the constitutional debates, when the essence of ‘Spanishness’ became associated with the plurality of its cultural, culinary, and geographic manifestations.

It is interesting to note that, as Álvarez Junco has shown (2001), Catalan cultural elites played a very important role in the reinforcement of Spanish national identity during the nineteenth century. At the same time, Basque financial elites actively participated in the urban and architectonic design of Madrid, the capital of Spain. Nevertheless, it is clear that traditional Spanish discourse was excessively centered on Castilian culture and, as we have noted, on certain folkloric features which are particularly visible in Andalucía (curiously, these are two of the poorest regions in Spain, in direct contrast to Catalonia and the Basque Country). All of this, along with the age-old tradition of Spanish centralism, provoked feelings of isolation and humiliation in some regions with firmly entrenched cultural and linguistic characteristics, particularly Catalonia, the Basque Country, and – to a much lesser extent –, Galicia. The widespread discontent and sharp sense of crisis which was provoked in Spain after the ‘disaster’ of 1898 spurred on Basque and Catalan cultural elites to articulate a national discourse which would distance them from a Spain which they considered to be a decadent nation, and which, furthermore, had never wished to incorporate the cultural contributions of other regions in Spanish national discourse.

These differentiated discourses achieved political recognition in the Second Republic (1931-1936), where Catalans were granted self-governing institutions (Basques only achieved them in the midst of the Civil War). The defeat of the Republican regime and the

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<sup>20</sup> CIS, Estudio 2049, Barómetro de Febrero 2001 ([www.cis.es/baros/mar2409.html](http://www.cis.es/baros/mar2409.html)).

implantation, during almost forty years, of a rigidly centralist dictatorship, explains the radicalization which was provoked in the preexisting peripheral nationalist discourses, as well as the resurgence of others which had hardly existed previously. The Francoist repression of some of the autochthonous cultural features which existed within Spain, notably linguistic ones, as well as the insistent, dogmatic Spanish nationalist discourse of the regime, are well known. All of this led to the fact that during the transition period, Basque and Catalan nationalist elites, as well as leftist political elites throughout the whole of Spain (all of which had established close contacts in exile during the dictatorship), distanced themselves from Spanish nationalist discourse and embraced Europeanism. From their perspective, integration in Europe was the only way to ‘normalize’ the country and equate it with Spain’s European neighbours through a commitment to the ideas of modernity and democracy (rather than tradition and Orientalism).

Today, more than 80% of the population views itself as Spanish, although the abundance of multiple identities is noteworthy. Spaniards constitute one of the most pro-European countries in the EU and, interestingly, there are no differences in this respect between the left and the right (with the exception of extremists on both sides), nor between peripheral nationalists and Spanish nationalists (with the exception, once again, of extremists in both groups). There is a widespread consensus on the articulation of Spanish identity as a plural concept which allows the majority of Spaniards to willingly identify with their region, Spain, and Europe. Nevertheless, it is also true that some Basque and Catalan nationalists have inserted the idea of Europe in their discourse as a way to bypass Spanish identity. Yet in spite of this, the idea of a Spain in Europe is much more tolerable for them than that of a Spain outside Europe.

#### **4. Concluding remarks**

Spain’s historical trajectory represents a fascinating illustration of how national sentiments may become smoothly combined with the incorporation of a European identity. As we have argued, it is precisely the notion of *una España europea* (a European Spain) which played a crucial symbolic role in the construction of a cohesive national identity in the aftermath of the Franco dictatorship. Since the notion of Europeanization became synonymous in Spain with the values of modernity, democracy, tolerance, and dialogue, this ideal became a key component of the national self-image which helped to heal the polarized oppositions of the past between the ‘two Spains’ that clashed in the Civil War. Hence, the historical self-understanding which predominates in current representations of Spanish nationhood typically depicts the country’s entry into ‘Europe’ in 1986 as the climax of a democratic transition process that allowed Spain to regain a significant, respectable status on the international stage. An illustrative recent example of this dominant national self-image can be found in the triumphant language which the leading national newspaper *El Mundo* employed on 20 November 2000, the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Franco’s death, to describe Spain’s achievements since that historic day:

A quarter of a century later, there are reasons to feel proud... The bloody conflict of 1936 is today a page of history, the constitutional monarchy has obtained the consensus of the immense majority of Spaniards, Spain has found its identity in Europe, the economy has modernized, and most importantly, the mentality of its citizens has changed profoundly. The Pyrenées have ceased to be a spiritual and topographical barrier.

In short, echoing Ortega y Gasset, one could say that if the ‘backward’ Spain of Francoism was seen as the problem, then the Europe of ‘modernity’ and ‘democracy’ clearly became the solution.

The emergence in Spain of an emotionally charged Europeanist discourse illustrates how national identities have not only a cognitive, but also a crucial affective dimension. They not only classify individuals as member of nations, vis-à-vis other nations, but they can also ignite sentiments of superiority and inferiority, or pride and shame, in response to national successes and failures. As the German sociologist Norbert Elias (1987: xi-xii) pointed out, part of people’s self-love and self-respect typically becomes attached to the power and status of their respective nations. Hence, nationalized individuals can feel proud or ashamed, respected or insulted, with regard to their country’s shifting fortunes on the world stage. From this theoretical standpoint, one can observe how in Spain the achievement of ‘becoming European’ was viewed as a great promotion or a step up in the world’s pyramid of international prestige. It therefore became a crucial source of national pride, not only in the sense of acquiring greater political influence and economic prosperity, but also of recovering a sense of moral respectability in the international arena. To be accepted by ‘Europe’ was viewed as a just reward for the ‘peaceful’, ‘civilized’ way in which the Spanish people had managed to become a ‘modern democracy’ in which human rights were respected.

## **PART II**

### **5. Relations with Europe: brief historical overview**

As I outlined in section 2, Spain was excluded from the project of European integration throughout the Franco dictatorship, as a result of the authoritarian nature of this regime. Although in 1962 Spain officially put forward an application to enter the EEC, this was impossible as long as *el Generalísimo* held the reins of power, and hence the only ‘European’ achievement of the Franco period was a purely commercial preferential trade agreement in 1970. Full membership, however, always remained out of the question until the democratic reforms of the transition were accomplished, and the first general elections took place in 1977. It was in this way that ‘for Spain, democracy was identified with Europe, and Spain’s renewed democracy became its passport to the continent’ (Arango 1995: 314). After Franco’s death, the ‘Europeanism’ which for decades had been a unifying slogan of the anti-regime opposition now became the officially sanctioned national project defended by the leading political figures of the transition period.

Once the first elections had taken place, the centrist UCD government of Adolfo Suárez immediately presented a new application to enter the EEC, now with the legitimacy of a full-fledged democracy. From the beginning, the aspiration to ‘enter Europe’ was presented in the discourse of the leading figures of the Suárez government, such as the Foreign Minister Marcelino Oreja, not only as a matter of economic interests, but also of Spain’s moral commitment to the ‘European’ values of democratic pluralism and human rights (Armero 1989: 81). Nevertheless, Spaniards still had to wait almost ten years before their European dream became a reality. This was largely due to the competitive threat posed by the entry of Spain’s agricultural products into the Common Market, which provoked the staunch opposition of French farmers (Bassols 1995: 193). Nevertheless, after a prolonged period of complex negotiations, Spain finally gained accession into the EEC in 1986 under the leadership of the socialist PSOE government of Felipe González. As I showed previously in section 3, this was an achievement which was celebrated as a

great national triumph that symbolized the nation's successful democratization and its recuperation of a respectable status on the international stage.

The legacy of this historical trajectory has clearly been reflected in the dominant discourses which have prevailed towards the EU in Spain until the present day. For the most part, there has been a widespread political consensus in Spain with regard to the crucial importance of EU membership for the country's economic prosperity and international influence, both during the period of socialist rule under González, as well as under the conservative governments of José María Aznar since 1996.

An important dimension of this Euro-enthusiasm has been the benefits which Spain has received from the EU's Cohesion Funds, which have been seen as a key instrument in the country's continuing process of 'catching up' with its more developed European neighbours. During the negotiations of the Maastricht Treaty in 1991, it was above all the Spanish government led by González which staunchly defended the necessity of establishing these funds, not just in defense of Spain's own national interests, but as a principle of solidarity that was necessary to ensure the future success of the EU project. The argument put forward by the Spanish government was that it was only by establishing this mechanism of economic solidarity that the harmonious development of European integration would be guaranteed, by avoiding the creation of a widening gap between the rich North and the poor South. In this way, Spain adopted the role of the EU's leading promoter of 'social cohesion' as a central pillar of the European integration project.

At the same time, it is noteworthy that in Spain the importance of achieving the convergence requirements for the common European currency was always a widely uncontested objective, and it was therefore depicted in the dominant political discourse as a crucial aspiration that Spain had to achieve if it did not want to 'fall behind again' like in the past. Hence, when the successful entry into the euro was accomplished in May 1998, this was celebrated by Prime Minister Aznar as a demonstration of the fact that this time, Spain had caught *el tren de la historia* ('the train of history') by entering the common European currency (Barbé 1999: 169-70). This triumphalist discourse was also perfectly reflected in an article entitled *La Hora de España, La Hora de Europa* ('The Hour of Spain, The Hour of Europe') which Aznar published in February 2000, just one month before he won the last general elections by an overwhelming absolute majority:

Only three years ago, there were many in our country who were resigned to finding themselves permanently in the second division, and who did not believe that Spain would be able to make the effort of incorporating herself to the rest of the great European nations. I never listened to those voices: I always believed in the capacity of democratic Spain to rise up by its own merits to the position to which her history entitles her. Today the euro has become a reality. And Spain has regained its place, its weight, and if I may be allowed a term with an Orteguian eco, its level within this great European project.<sup>21</sup>

Hence, one can see how in Spain, the European Union has been seen until today as the fundamental platform for the country's continuing prosperity and international prestige. As Moreno (2001: 167) puts it, in contemporary Spain 'there is no national project which is not directly linked to the recuperation of its European vocation'. Indeed, one could say that it is a taken-for-granted commonplace of Spanish political culture that only through the EU can Spain guarantee its future economic progress, as well as its capacity to maintain a significant degree of influence in the international arena. For a country with a history of military interventions in internal politics, the development of a European Common Foreign and Security Policy has also been seen in Spain as a new respectable outlet for the

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<sup>21</sup> *El Mundo*, 5 February 2000.



country's modernized armed forces. Furthermore, the creation of a common European security space has been welcomed as a fundamental weapon to combat the continuing threat of ETA terrorism.

Nevertheless, as Torreblanca (2001a, 2001b) has shown, it is important to note that the conservative governments of José María Aznar have been characterized by a more pragmatic and utilitarian approach to European integration than its socialist predecessors. Contrary to the socialists, the conservatives do not see political integration as a necessary counterbalance to the liberal economic project of the EU. Hence, above all they have stressed the economic benefits which can be derived from the European Monetary Union, rather than favouring the construction of a 'social Europe' and promoting European federalism. For this reason, the conservatives have favoured a more inter-governmental approach with the aim of preventing the excessive interference of European institutions in the spheres of social and economic policy. In this sense, even if the importance of EU membership for Spain's future is not questioned by either of the two major parties, some significant differences have emerged between their approaches to the process of European integration. This is something which should undoubtedly be further explored in the research on political parties which will be carried out by the EURONAT project.

Finally, with regard to the EU's eastward expansion, Spain's position has been characterized both by warm expressions of support for the candidate countries, as well as by a concern that this process may involve a drastic reduction of the cohesion funds from which the country has benefited until now. In 1995, Spain's two legislative chambers approved a joint declaration in which they affirmed that the EU's eastward enlargement was a 'moral and political obligation'. Similar declarations of support have also been voiced by King Juan Carlos I, as well as by Prime Minister Aznar, who has stressed Spain's 'special solidarity' with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, given its own recent historical experience of authoritarian rule and democratization (Torreblanca 1999/2000: 113). At the same time, however, successive Spanish governments have always defended the idea that solidarity with the East must not be carried out at the expense of solidarity with the Southern Mediterranean countries, and have therefore sought to ensure the maintenance of the cohesion funds which Spain continues to receive from the EU (Torreblanca 1999/2000: 115-16).

## **6. Attitudes towards Europe**

The results from recent Eurobarometer surveys clearly suggest that the majority of Spaniards do not perceive a clash between their national identity and their membership of the European Union. On the contrary, as Table 6.1 shows, throughout the past five years, the percentage of those who see themselves as both national and European has consistently remained higher than those who define themselves as exclusively Spanish. This complementarity between national and European affiliations has in fact increased considerably during the course of this period: the percentage of those who define themselves as both national and European<sup>22</sup> has risen from 50% in 1996 to 72% in 2000, while that of those who define themselves as exclusively Spanish has descended from 43% to 20%. Hence, the degree of compatibility between national and European identification is considerably higher in Spain than the EU average.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> I include here those who define themselves as either 'European and national' or 'national and European'.

<sup>23</sup> It is interesting to note, however, that the results from the Eurobarometer do not seem to coincide with those of the Spanish Center for Sociological Investigations (CIS). According to the latest figures from the barometer of the CIS in July 2001, 64.1% of Spaniards declare that they feel 'Spanish citizens above all',

**Table 6.1 NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN IDENTITY****In the near future, do you see yourself as...?****Evolution of the results for Spanish and European Identity.**

(percentage of respondents, EU 15 average in parenthesis)

	European only	European and Nationality	Nationality and European	Nationality only
1996	5 (5)	5 (6)	44 (40)	43 (46)
1997	6 (5)	3 (6)	43 (40)	44 (45)
1998	4 (4)	6 (7)	53 (43)	34 (43)
1999	4 (4)	6 (6)	53 (42)	31 (45)
2000	4 (4)	7 (7)	65 (49)	20 (38)

Source: Eurobarometer Reports no. 46, 47, 50, 52 and 54.

In the Eurobarometer of Autumn 2000, it is noteworthy that Spain ranked first among all EU member states in the total percentage of people who feel 'European'. This high degree of affiliation to Europe cannot be explained by reference to the length of time Spain has belonged to the EC/EU, given that it has only been a member since 1986. Neither can it be explained by the widespread perception of a common European culture, since Spaniards rank well below the EU average (coming in 13<sup>th</sup> place) when asked whether they agree or disagree that Europeans share a common cultural identity.<sup>24</sup> Hence, considering the particular historical trajectory which I have traced in this report, the most plausible explanation for the affiliation which most Spaniards feel towards Europe is that EU membership has been closely identified with their country's achievement of modernization and democratization, as well as with the recovery of its international prestige.

Indeed, it is noteworthy that in a recent Eurobarometer survey, 78% of Spaniards stated that they are proud of their country (compared to an EU average of 69%), and 59% referred to 'being European' as a source of national pride (compared to an EU average of 33%).<sup>25</sup> Therefore, the majority of Spaniards currently display a relatively high degree of national pride, and a significant dimension of this sentiment of collective self-esteem can be linked to their status as 'Europeans'. In other words, EU membership is widely seen as something which enhances Spanish collective pride, and can therefore be smoothly combined with national sentiments. One could in fact say that if being 'European' is widely seen as a source of national pride, then EU membership is something which makes the Spanish nation a more appealing object of collective identification.

If one looks at the recent Eurobarometer results concerning levels of support for EU membership, once again the evidence illustrates that in Spain, there has been a relatively high level of enthusiasm for the process of European integration. As Table 6.2 and Graph 6.3 illustrate, the idea that EU membership is a 'good thing', as well as the belief that Spain benefits from the EU, has consistently been higher than the EU average, particularly

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and only 20.4% state that they feel 'both European and Spanish at the same time'. The reasons for the discrepancy between the Eurobarometer and the CIS are not clear, although one possibility is that people respond differently to these types of questions, depending on whether they are told that a given survey is being carried out for the Eurobarometer or for the Spanish CIS.

<sup>24</sup> Eurobarometer 52 (Autumn 1999).<sup>25</sup> These are net results for national pride (%Very+Fairly proud)-(%Not very+Not at all proud), Eurobarometer 54, Autumn 2000.

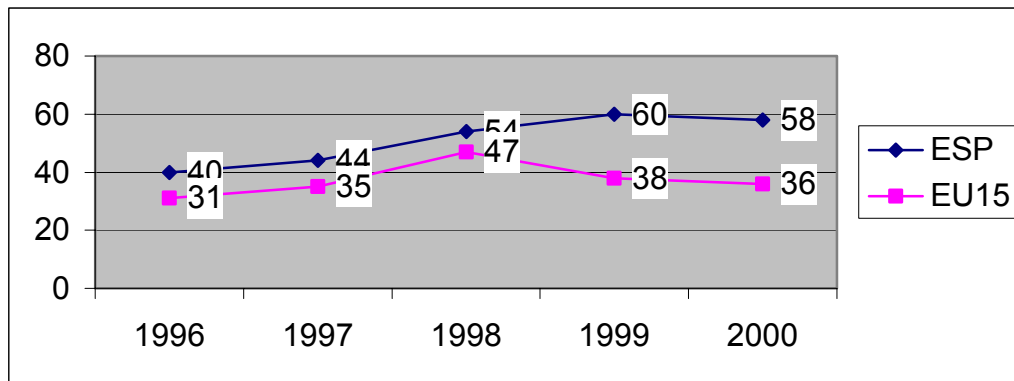
in the last two years. Furthermore, Spaniards have been relatively well disposed to the EU's joint decision-making powers, and the majority of those polled have responded positively to the idea that in the new century, the EU should play a more important role in their daily lives. According to the Spanish Center of Sociological Investigations (CIS), Spaniards tend to see the EU as profitable for general economic development, job opportunities, infrastructure development, consumer rights, the introduction of new technologies, and culture, while they think it brings negative effects for wages and prices.<sup>26</sup>

**Table 6.2: Evolution of Support for EU in Spanish Public Opinion.**

	1997	1998	1999	2000
Support for EU (good thing)	53 (49)	63 (54)	64 (51)	63 (50)
Perceived benefit from EU (benefited)	48 (44)	58 (49)	61 (46)	64 (47)
Average level of support for joint EU decision-making	N/A	63 (57)	54 (53)	56 (52)
The 21 <sup>st</sup> century: Perceived role of the EU in people's daily life to be more important (EU will play a more important role)	40 (46)	49 (51)	56 (51)	53 (51)
The 21 <sup>st</sup> century: Desired role of the EU in people's daily life to be more important (they would like the EU to play a more important role)	47 (45)	53 (45)	51 (45)	56 (45)

Source: Eurobarometers: 48, 50, 52 and 54.

**Graph 6.3. Evolution of net support for EU membership. Spain (EU good thing-EU bad thing)**



Like in the Italian case, it seems plausible to link the support for joint EU decision-making in Spain to a relatively low level support of trust in state institutions. The Euronat-Pragma survey of 1998 (Table 6.4) showed that the trust deposited by Spaniards in European institutions was higher than that placed in state institutions (57.8% versus 51.9%), which undoubtedly helps to explain their generally positive attitude to the process of transferring decision-making powers to the EU.

**Table 6.4: Percentage of people stating that they trust the following territorial institutions ('a lot' and 'at least a little' of trust, percentage on total of respondents in each country)**

<sup>26</sup> CIS, Estudio 2246, 1997. Madrid, Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas.

	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Spain</b>	<b>France</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>Great Britain</b>
Local	59.6	60.7	78.3	77.6	67.2
Regional	55.9	58.9	70.8	69.7	62.8
State	42.2	51.9	53.6	55.7	58.7
Europe	72.7	57.8	56.8	41.6	39.2
Total responses	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000

Source: Eurobarometre-Pragma survey, November 1998.

Finally, with regard to the issue of Eastward enlargement, the results from the last issue of the Eurobarometer suggest that 61% of the Spanish population currently supports this process, a figure which is ten points higher than the EU average.<sup>27</sup>

This quantitative data therefore suggests that Spanish public opinion has largely mirrored the positive outlook towards the project of European integration which has characterized the dominant political and media discourses on ‘Europe’ in Spain. The evidence of these surveys clearly reflects a widespread harmonious fusion between national sentiments and EU membership.

## **7. Qualitative studies on Spanish national identity and European integration**

Relatively little qualitative research has been carried out on Spanish national identity and its relationship to the process of European integration, given the predominance until now of studies focusing on the ‘big three’ of Western Europe, Britain, France, and Germany. Jáuregui’s research (1999, 2001), which we have already referred to throughout this report, has traced the historical emergence of ‘Europe’ as a symbol of national resurgence and a potent source of collective pride, in the aftermath of the Franco dictatorship and the transition to democracy. In this section, we shall review two other recent studies which have also explored this issue employing qualitative methodologies.

The first is an interesting study carried out by a team of Spanish social psychologists (Rosa *et al.* 1998), which gathered three types of qualitative data in 1996 from a sample including members of three generational cohorts (university students, their parents, and grandparents) in thirty-three families. The participants were firstly asked to respond in writing to three open-ended questions about Spain’s past (‘How do you think Spain has arrived at its present situation?’), present (‘Describe Spain’s present situation, with its positive and negative aspects’), and future (‘Comment on how you think Spain will be in the future, and how you would like it to be’). A second set of data consisted of ethnographic notebooks that were filled in by the student member of each family, in which discussions concerning identity issues were described. Finally, a third source of data was a debate in which five students from the younger generational cohort discussed their views on Europe. This study thereby provided a rich collection of Spanish lay people’s attitudes towards the European Union and its impact on their country.

One of the main observations of the study was the way in which ‘Europe’ (practically always used as a synonym for the European Union) was typically portrayed not only as a key event in the history of Spain (linked to recuperating democracy and overcoming isolation after the Franco dictatorship), but also as a *telos* for Spain’s continuing development and as the fundamental vehicle for the country’s progress in the future. Hence, the discourses which emerged in family discussions frequently involved a representation of ‘Europe’ as something which has pulled Spain away from a backwards past, but which is still also a goal that remains to be attained, since there is still a rather

<sup>27</sup> Eurobarometer 56, Autumn 2001 (<http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg10/epo/eb/eb56>).

wide perceived gap between Spain and ‘the European level’ or ‘the standards of other European countries’. In other words, ‘Europe’ was generally seen as both an efficient cause and a comparative criterion for Spanish progress.

The typical metaphor which was employed in the discourse of participants was that of a ‘road to Europe’ on which many important steps had already been taken. Nevertheless, for many there was still ‘a long way to go’ in order to reach the state of higher material and moral perfection implied by the notion of becoming more ‘European’. Hence, a heroic, self-flattering historical narrative prevailed in which following a black period of dictatorship, Spain has become a more open and tolerant country, and will gradually continue to progress through European integration. This discourse was especially evident in the younger generation, as well as amongst all those who placed themselves towards the left of the political spectrum. Even if the economic effects of joining the European Union were sometimes valued negatively by some of the participants, no plausible alternative was seen to Spain’s EU membership. In short, the authors of this study concluded that on the whole, ‘Europe’ is clearly a subject for identification amongst most Spaniards, but mainly through its role as a symbolic and emotional resource of Spanish national identity: ‘it is as if Spain’s joining Europe makes Spaniards become better Spaniards’ (1998: 127). Hence, Europe is primarily viewed by the Spanish citizenry as a key component of the national project (the fundamental vehicle for Spain’s continuing progress, influence, and prosperity), rather than as a supranational project with its own wider objectives.

The recent OPTEM study for the European Commission (2001), which has carried out a qualitative analysis of attitudes to and expectations of the EU in the 15 member states and in 9 candidate countries, has also provided some interesting data on Spain which is worth reviewing here briefly. For one thing, the dominant triumphalist self-representation of the recent Spanish past was evident once again in this study: most of the citizens interviewed spontaneously mention the positive political and economic changes that have taken place in their country in the last 20 years. A recurrent claim within this narration of the recent national history is that Spain’s international influence is much greater now, within the framework of the EU and NATO, than in the days of Francoist isolation and autarchy.

At the same time, however, a lingering sense of inferiority is revealed by the frustration which many Spaniards express with regard to the status of Spain in the eyes of more powerful countries in Northern Europe and the persistence of what is perceived as an arrogant attitude of these countries towards Spain. Furthermore, although the study revealed a widespread desire to be and feel more European, it also suggested that the Spanish feel naturally closer to the Mediterranean Latin countries, whose traditions, climate, lifestyles, view of leisure and cuisine are relatively similar to their own, while the countries of Northern Europe have connotations of gloominess and austerity.

There also appear to be some significant differences in the degrees of enthusiasm for the EU between different socio-economic groups. The relatively better educated urban Spaniards from big cities more frequently see themselves as citizens of a European political project grounded on common historical and cultural foundations. However, those from provincial middle-sized towns tend to associate Europe with a model of modernity that has been manufactured in the ‘North’ and is being forced on them from above.

Finally, this study has also explored the attitudes amongst lay Spaniards towards the EU’s eastward enlargement. As in other Southern European countries, the general outlook towards this process in Spain is firstly characterized by a feeling of solidarity for countries whose difficulties are viewed as similar to those which Spain suffered during its own experience of a dictatorial regime and the subsequent transition to democracy. From this perspective, the enlargement process is fully supported as a moral duty towards countries

which are going through a similar difficult process of recovering prosperity and respectability by 'returning to Europe'. At the same time, however, this empathy is combined with a concern that the entry of Central and Eastern European countries into the EU could imply a drastic reduction in the cohesion funds from which Spain has benefited until now. Nevertheless, these fears are coupled with the observation that it is now logically 'the turn' of the Eastern European countries to receive aid, just as Spaniards benefited from it in the past during their own incorporation into the project of European integration. Furthermore, the Spanish citizens interviewed also cited some important advantages which could be derived from the enlargement process, such as the opening-up of new markets, as well as an opportunity to increase Spain's relative status within the EU, by establishing itself as one of the big powers of the more developed Western half of Europe. These are all undoubtedly issues which should be explored in greater depth in the research which will be carried out amongst European citizens by EURONAT.

## 8. Conclusion

The dominant discourses of nationhood which emerged in post-Franco Spain sought to replace the widely discredited image of an archaic and backwards Spain that was 'different' with the vision of a country that was 'modern' and 'democratic', just like any other 'normal European country'. It is noteworthy that until the end of the Franco dictatorship, Spaniards were stung by a joke which was said to circulate in the countries of Northern Europe, according to which Africa began 'south of the Pyrenées'. As we have attempted to show in this report, it was this historically conditioned self-image of relative inferiority which determined the eventual enthusiastic embrace of a 'European' status in Spain as a symbol of the country's renewed prestige in the international arena.

In this sense, Spain represents a paradigmatic case of how national sentiments, far from standing in the way of European integration, may actually stimulate a general enthusiasm for the idea of 'belonging to Europe' and contributing to the project European unity. As we have argued, in the Spanish context of collective memory, gaining accession into 'Europe' became a source of national pride not only in the spheres of political influence and economic prosperity, but also of ethical respectability. In other words, only by 'joining Europe' after the transition to democracy could the stigma of an authoritarian regime led by an old sidekick of Hitler and Mussolini be definitively wiped off Spain's image in the world. It is interesting to note with regard to this that in his writings on patriotism, Emile Durkheim suggested that:

As long as there are states, so there will be national pride, and nothing can be more warranted. But societies can have their pride, not in being the greatest or wealthiest, but in being the most just, the best organized, and in possessing the best moral constitution (1992 [1950]: 75).

From this Durkheimian perspective, one could say that in post-Franco Spain, national pride became widely identified with the adoption of a moral commitment to the values of democracy – a commitment which was seen as the indispensable condition to overcome the shameful isolation of the recent past, by becoming integrated into Europe.<sup>28</sup> This

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<sup>28</sup> It is interesting to note in relation to this that both the current conservative government, as well as the Socialist Party in the opposition, have recently adopted the Habermasian notion of 'constitutional patriotism', grounded on a firm adhesion to the democratic values which were established during the post-Franco transition (*El País*, 4 November 2001). As this report has shown, Spain's participation and

historical experience crucially determined the relative smoothness with which national sentiments have been combined with EU membership in Spain, and it also underlies the considerable sympathy that exists amongst Spaniards towards the Eastern European countries that today similarly hope to stabilize their democracies by 'returning to Europe'.

The case of Spain therefore reflects a historical trajectory in which a predominantly ethnic vision of Spanish nationhood (the 'national Catholicism' and linguistic homogeneity promoted by Francoism) was replaced during the transition by a civic ideal of Spain as a plural modern democracy in which basic political freedoms had been reestablished and the linguistic diversity of the country's 'nationalities and regions' was recognized. It was within this framework that, as we have argued, 'Europe' became the inspiring Other of a Spanish national project committed to overcoming the backwardness and isolation of the past, fundamentally through participating in and contributing to the project of European integration.

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commitment to the project of European integration has clearly been a key component in the development of this civic vision of Spanish patriotism.

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