

The Spanish Federalist Tradition and the 1978 Constitution

Daniele Conversi

The Roots of Spanish Federalism

Spain's successful transition to democracy (1975-1982) was influenced profoundly by a long-standing 19th-century federalist tradition.¹ Although, as elsewhere, early federalism was understood mostly in territorial terms, in Spain it gradually took on ethnic connotations. By denouncing the monolithic, pre-democratic nation-state, the federalist vision emphasized different cultures and languages. Thus Spain was seen as an ethnically pluralistic country. A homogeneous Spain would have been inconsistent with a pluralistic concept of "Spanishness." Two visions of Spain have competed since the beginning of the 19th century, as part of a long-standing political conflict between centralizing attempts and regional resistance.² They have generated conflicting concepts of the "nation," which in turn has changed meaning from the time of the first Spanish Constitutions (1812 and 1837) to the present.³ At any rate, Spanish nationalism came into being only with the advent of modernity, after the anti-French uprising leading to the Peninsular War (1808).

In the second half of the 19th century, these two visions evolved into the unitarian organicism of most Spanish elites and a republican federalist

1. For an extensive treatment of the events which led to the Spanish transition, see Daniele Conversi, *The Basques, the Catalans and Spain* (Reno, NV: University of Nevada Press, 1997).

2. Solange and Christian Gras, "La Crise de l'État-Nation: Le Cas Espagnol," in *Pluriel*, No. 25, 1981, pp. 53-63.

3. Xavier Arbos, *La Idea de Nació en el Primer Constitucionalisme Espanyol* (Barcelona: Curial, 1986).

tradition based primarily in Catalonia. Its main proponent and ideologue, Francisco Pi y Margall (1824-1901),⁴ spoke of “nationalities” to distinguish the historical regions with a common culture and past history from the politically dominant Spanish nation.⁵ A disciple of Pierre Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865), Margall espoused federalism as a political doctrine in opposition to unitarism.⁶ This distinction became crucial in the constitutional debate of the 1970s and in the management of ethnic conflict throughout the transition period. Margall was an Americanist, who had been inspired by the colonial and pre-colonial American experience.⁷ Thus he sought a resolution of the question of Catalan particularity as part of the overall reconstitution of the Spanish state.⁸ Margall influenced subsequent generations of Catalan nationalist leaders, such as Antoni Rovira i Virgili (1882-1949)⁹ as well as Barcelona’s anarchists.¹⁰

After the chaotic experience of the First Republic, of which Margall was the first President (February 1873), his pluralistic vision was eclipsed and the idea of a monolithic Spain became dominant up to the 1930s.¹¹ Yet

4. The Catalanized name, Francesc Pi i Margall, is often preferred in the literature in Catalan. For a comprehensive vision of Margall’s work, see Antoni Jutglar, *Pi y Margall y el Federalismo Español* (Madrid: Taurus, 1975); *El Constitucionalismo Revolucionario de Pi y Margall* (Madrid: Taurus Ediciones, 1970); and *Federalismo y Revolución* (Barcelona: Cátedra de Historia General de España, 1966).

5. Francisco Pi y Margall, *Las Nacionalidades* (Barcelona: Producciones Editoriales, 1979). 1st ed. (Madrid: Impremta y Libreria de E. Martinez, 1877).

6. Francisco Pi y Margall, *Unitarismo y Federalismo* (Madrid: Emiliano Escolar, 1981); and *Ideari de Francesc Pi i Margall* (Barcelona: Edicions 62), 1965. In order to popularize federalism, Margall translated Proudhon’s *The Principle of Federation* (Toronto/ Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1979), as well as other works on the subject.

7. Francisco Pi y Margall, *Historia General de America Desde sus Tiempos mas Remotos* (Madrid: Astort Hermanos, 1878); *Historia de la America Antecolombiana*, (Barcelona: Montaner y Simon, 1892); and *America en la Época del Descubrimiento* (Madrid: Sucesores de Rivadeneira, 1892);

8. Francisco Pi y Margall, *La Qüestió de Catalunya: Escrits i Discursos* (Barcelona: Alta Fulla, 1978).

9. Antoni Rovira i Virgili, *Lectura de Pi i Margall* (Barcelona: Edicions de la Magrana/ Diputació de Barcelona, 1990).

10. Antoni Rovira i Virgili, *Lecciones de Federalismo* (Barcelona: Seguí, 1931). Margall defined the federation as “a system whereby different groups join and submit to the entirety of the members of their own species for their common goals, without losing their autonomy in what is unique to them. . . . It establishes unity without destroying variety and it might succeed in reuniting the whole of mankind without altering the character of nations, provinces and peoples, or threatening their independence.” See Margall, *Las nacionalidades*, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-4.

11. During the first Republican experience, federalism merged with localist particularism degenerating into *cantonism*, as ever smaller towns declared “independence.” See Charles A. M. Hennessy, *The Federal Republic in Spain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962).

many regionalist movements remained committed to federalism, particularly in Catalonia. Catalan nationalism was first formulated in *Lo Catalanisme* (1886) by Valentí Almirall (1841-1904), then developed more fully in *La Nacionalitat Catalana* (1906) by Enric Prat de la Riba (1870-1917).¹² These key texts, as in most Catalanist literature, defined Catalonia as a distinctive entity. From the pages of *Diari Català*, the first newspaper in Catalan, Almirall launched a crusade to “re-invent” Spain as a federal entity. Almirall was Margall’s disciple and, in his defense of Catalonia’s economic interests, he sought to reinstate the Republicans’ federal tradition.¹³ His approach was not exclusively Catalan, since he never abandoned the project of extending a pluralistic framework to all of Spain.¹⁴ Although his program was relatively moderate,¹⁵ Almirall became the architect of political Catalanism.¹⁶ According to a more “instrumentalist” view, his main platform was a defense of regional economic interests, which needed a cultural basis in order to be articulated politically.¹⁷

Following Almirall, Enric Prat de la Riba drew an even sharper distinction between *state* and *nation*: Spain was a state, not a nation, while Catalonia was a nation, but it had no state.¹⁸ Spain was a “geographical expression” and a “collection of nations,” all of which “should have their own state.”¹⁹ His vision of Catalonia was essentially “bourgeois” and unresponsive to the main problem of the time, i.e., growing labor unrest.²⁰ His work, however, was appreciated even by “progressive” nationalist historians, such as Rovira i Virgili.²¹ Prat’s main strength was as an organizer

12. Valentí Almirall, *Lo Catalanisme* (Barcelona: Edicions 62/ La Caixa de Pensions, MOLC, 1979); Enric Prat de la Riba, *La Nacionalitat Catalana* (Barcelona: Edicions 62 / La Caixa de Pensions, MOLC, 1978).

13. Valentí Almirall, *Articles politics: “Diari català” (1879-1881)* (Barcelona: Edicions de la Magrana, 1984). Almirall was owner and director of the newspaper *Diari Català* from 1879 to 1881.

14. Valentí Almirall, *España Tal Como Es* (Madrid: Seminarios y Ediciones, 1972); and *Obras y Escritos Políticos y Literarios* (Barcelona: A. Lopez, 1902).

15. Valentí Almirall, *Cultura i Societat* (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1985).

16. Josep M. Figueres, *Valentí Almirall: Forjador del Catalanisme Polític* (Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya/Diari Oficial i de Publicacions, 1990). See also Juan J. Trias Vejarano, *Almirall y los Orígenes del Catalanismo* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1975).

17. Jordi Solé Tura, *Ideari de Valentí Almirall* (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1974).

18. Enric Prat de la Riba, *La Nació i l’Estat: Escrits de Joventut* (Barcelona: Edicions de la Magrana/ Diputació de Barcelona, 1987).

19. Riba, *La Nacionalitat Catalana*, *op. cit.*

20. Jordi Solé Tura, *Catalanisme i Revolució Burguesa* (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1967). For an overview of Prat’s approach to the social question, see Enric Prat de la Riba, *El Pensament Social de Prat de la Riba, Exposat per Ell Mateix* (Barcelona: Bosch, 1971).

21. Antoni Rovira i Virgili, *Prat de la Riba* (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1968).

rather than as an intellectual. As president of the newly established Mancomunitat (1914-17) — a sort of inter-provincial government — he supervised the establishment of the first major Catalan cultural institutions.²² The standardization of the Catalan language, completed by Pompeu Fabra (1863-1948), was one of Prat's main achievements.²³ But by that time, Catalanism no longer spoke in the name of an all-encompassing Spanish nationalism or "regenerationism."²⁴ It had become a full-fledged nationalist movement. Yet regionalist views persisted among the movement's more moderate members, such as Francesc Cambó (1876-1947) and other exponents of the moderate regionalist party (the *Lliga*). Its aim was to re-construct Spain from the perspective of its historical regions.²⁵ The ambiguity between nationalism and purely regenerationist principles was never fully resolved. At least until the Civil War, there was always a tacit longing to redefine Spain and the entire Iberian peninsula from Barcelona's perspective. At that time, Catalanism could be seen as a form of Spanish nationalism appreciated by the more moderate Spanish political elites. However, Madrid's response to these appeals was often rejection and suspicion — even resentment for the Catalans' "daring" attitude and its alleged attempts to usurp Madrid's power. In a sense, it was a competition between regional elites. This obviously engendered more radical forms of resistance and protest in the periphery, whose elites slowly abandoned the project of remaking Spain in order to concentrate on their region's self-definition.²⁶

Once Catalan nationalism was defined by Almirall and Prat, its doctrinal body remained stable until the Second Republic (1931-39). Similarly, in the Basque Country, the vision developed by Sabino de Arana y Goiri (1865-1903) remained unchanged, even after the Civil War. Basically, these nationalist formulations responded to predominant state policies as well as to internal conditions. Whenever the state reacted favorably to nationalist aspirations, the peripheral nationalists' demands

22. Jaume Bofill i Mates, *Prat de la Riba i la Cultura Catalana* (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1979); Enric Prat de la Riba, *Prat de la Riba: Propulsor de la Llengua i la Cultura; Articles i Parlaments* (Barcelona: Editorial Selecta, 1974).

23. Mila Segarra, *Pompeu Fabra* (Barcelona: Empuries, 1991).

24. In Spanish, "*Regeneracionismo*" indicates a wide intellectual and political current calling for the "regeneration" of Spain in the aftermath of the loss of Empire (1898). Catalanism was part of the Regenerationist movement, with the only difference that its response to this generalized Spanish malaise was couched in regionalist terms.

25. See Francesc Cambó, *Per Catalunya i l'Espanya Gran*, which advocated a Catalan state within an Iberian federation (possibly including Portugal).

26. See Charles Ehrlich, "Per Catalunya i l'Espanya Gran: Catalan Regionalism on the Offensive," in *European History Quarterly* (in press, 1998).

were mollified. Whenever the state became more intolerant, the movements became radicalized.²⁷

The brief interlude of the Second Republic re-introduced a pluralistic concept of Spanish nationhood in constitutional debates, which eventually resulted in the approval of Catalonia's first autonomy statute.²⁸ With the Francoist insurrection and the advance of Spanish troops in Catalonia and Barcelona, these gains came to an abrupt end. The Civil War (1936-39) was the great fault line between opposing concepts of nationhood: its outcome saw the apotheosis of a unitarian vision of Spanishness. Against this vision, and as a mirror image of it, new forms of Basque and Catalan nationalism emerged.

The Poverty of Cultural Homogenization

Assimilation and congruence between state and nation have been a traditional aim of Madrid's elites since at least the first failed centralization attempts by the Conde-Duque de Olivares (1587-1645).²⁹ The most systematic efforts in this direction, however, were exerted only recently under the dictatorship of General Francisco Franco (1939-75).³⁰ Within the Francoist entourage, the strongest advocate of this view was the far-right Falange Española, which was predominant in the government during

27. Sabino de Arana's version of nationalism was a blend of neo-traditionalism, clericalism, racialism and linguistic nationalism. See Daniele Conversi "The Influence of Culture on Political Choices: Language Maintenance and its Implications for the Basque and Catalan Nationalist Movements," in *History of European Ideas*, Vol. 16, No. 1-3 (1993), pp. 189-200. Arana was not influenced by federal Republicans, but his political platform can be seen as a direct response to the policies of the Spanish state. Basque nationalism was born largely as a reaction against the abolition of traditional provincial prerogatives (*fueros*) and the increasing centralization following the Basque defeat in the Second Carlist War (1872-76). This anti-centralist reaction merged with an anti-modernist and anti-urban trend resulting from the problems caused by rapid industrialization. See José Luis de la Granja Sainz, "La Invención de la Historia. Nación, Mitos e Historia en el Pensamiento del Fundador del Nacionalismo Vasco (Unpublished manuscript, 1994).

28. Joseph Roig i Rosich, *L'Estatut de Catalunya a les Corts Constituents: (1932)* (Barcelona: Curial, 1978).

29. See J. H. Elliott. *The Count-Duke of Olivares: The Statesman in an Age of Decline* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986). Olivares' policies resembled those of his French counterpart Armand Jean du Plessis, duc de Richelieu (1585-1642). See J. H. Elliott *Richelieu and Olivares* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

30. Before 1939, the Spanish state had failed to undertake any serious project of nation-building. See Xavier Arbós and Antoni Puigsec, *Franco i l'Espanyolisme* (Barcelona: Curial, 1980); Salvador Giner, "Nacionalismo Étnico: Centro y Periferia en España," in Francesc Hernández and Francesc Mercadé, eds., *Estructuras Sociales y Cuestión Nacional en España* (Barcelona: Ariel, 1986), p. 447.

the dictatorship's early stage (1939 to 1945). A strong, homogenized state had become an obsession for Madrid's conservative elites since the time of the Second Spanish Republic (1931-1939). Thus, when the right-wing MP José Calvo Sotelo (1893-1936) boasted: "I would prefer a Red Spain to a broken Spain,"³¹ he exemplified the driving force of the ensuing Falangist campaigns. According to the Falangists, the "separatists" were guilty of "ignoring the unitarian reality of Spain."³² The key element of these campaigns was the imposition of a single language, Spanish, through a centralized education system. Coercion rather than consensus became the preferred instrument of rule, and the regime did not hesitate to back its Draconian laws with police repression. The "need" for a common language coextensive with culture, state and territory was adduced as a necessary condition for an orderly government — a Jacobin stress on cultural homogeneity, which was a standard feature of the fascist call for a strong, self-sufficient unitary state.³³ Everyone had to speak "fluently the tongue of Spanish unity, the ecumenical language of our Spanishness."³⁴ Spanish was the language of the empire and for this reason "it must be spoken all over the state territory."³⁵

In 1959, Franco reshuffled his cabinet, allowing a group of Catholic technocrats to take over key positions by instituting a Stabilization Plan strongly favoring the introduction of a market economy. This had immediate and wide-ranging consequences: the post-1963 Spanish "economic miracle," during which the growth rate in Spain outpaced that of all other European countries. Despite his unmitigated authoritarianism, Franco had to allow a modicum of free expression in order to encourage the influx of capital needed for his ambitious development programs. At this point, the Catalan resistance took advantage of all the chinks in the regime's armor. At least since 1945, a low-key linguistic revival had begun in secluded circles of friends and personal acquaintances. Despite constant obstacles

31. Cited in Máximiano García Venero, *Historia del Nacionalismo Vasco* (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1968), p. 561.

32. Quoted in Eduardo Alvarez Puga, *Diccionario de la Falange* (Barcelona: Dopesa, 1937), p. 12-3.

33. There were considerable similarities between the fascist, Nazi, Francoist, and Vichy models of cultural assimilation. See Karl Ille, "Discorso Politico e Glottopolitica all'Epoca Fascista: Fascismo-Nazismo-Franchismo-Vichy," in *Lingua e Stile*, Vol. XXVI, No. 1 (1991), pp. 17-34.

34. Quoted in Puga, *Diccionario de la Falange*, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-13.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 36, italics added. The quoted text also refers to the Francoist directive posted in various Catalan public places intimating "*Habla el idioma del imperio*" ("Speak the language of the empire"), i.e., Spanish.

placed on their path by the authorities, the movement grew slowly and provided a common platform to the Catalan opposition. Among other things, it provided a much-needed inter-generational liaison.

Basque nationalism lacked similar resources for expressing Basque identity. The use of Euskara was confined to rural and small town milieux. Thus it could not function as a bond between classes and generations. It could neither bridge the urban-rural divide nor the immigrant-native gap. An inter-generational crisis ensued, becoming the hallmark of Basque nationalism in the 1960s. A group of radical youth formally founded ETA (Euskadi 'ta Askatasuna) in 1959, the very year Franco decided to put an end to Spain's "splendid isolation." Mainly because of the lack of free speech, the ETA slowly evolved from a cultural elite into a violent organization dedicated to armed struggle.

By the early 1970s, Spain had become fertile ground for ethnic mobilization. Francoist repression only succeeded in reinforcing the determination of Basque and Catalan nationalists. The regime had failed in its original *raison d'être*, i.e., to re-establish "order and unity." When Franco died on November 20, 1975, nationalist mobilizations were increasing at such a pace that the country's territorial integrity seemed to be at stake. On September 11, 1977, over one million people marched in the streets of Barcelona and other Catalan towns demanding "freedom, amnesty and a statute of autonomy." A few months later, on December 4, similar demonstrations took place throughout Andalusia, when nearly a million people marched to demand Andalusian autonomy. New regional challenges surfaced in Galicia, Asturias and Aragon. In the Basque Country, ETA stepped up its attacks on Spanish military and paramilitary targets to unprecedented levels, and toward the end of the 1970s over 100 people were being killed yearly in ETA-related violence.³⁶ At the same time, the Army and the old Francoist cadres entrenched in their "bunkers" were ready to strike at the earliest occasion to re-establish their authority.³⁷ The "founding fathers" of democratic Spain had a truly daunting task ahead.

The Watershed: A New Constitution for a New Country

The period from the first general elections of June 1977 to the popular approval of the Constitution (December 1978) was crucial. As with

36. Robert P. Clark, *Negotiating With ETA. Obstacles to Peace in the Basque Country, 1975-1988* (Reno, Nevada: Nevada University Press, 1990).

37. In Spain, the term "bunker" referred to the "extreme right committed to fighting democracy from the rubble of Francoism." See Paul Preston, *The Triumph of Democracy in Spain* (London/ New York: Methuen, 1986), p. 232.

the demise of most dictatorial regimes, the accommodation of minority aspirations in Spain was inextricably bound with the democratization process.³⁸ Democracy meant the first real possibility for decades of submerged nationalist feelings to express their voices freely.³⁹ The Constitution was the product of the encounter of the two concepts of Spain (Federalism and Unitarian) that had been competing for over 150 years. The constitutional process began on June 15, 1977, with the first democratic elections in post-Franco Spain and ended with the approval of the Constitution.⁴⁰ Although the elections were not focused primarily on a constitutional agenda, most elected MPs saw this as their main objective.⁴¹ On July 26, only thirteen days after the establishment of the Congress of Deputies (Cámara Baja) and the Senate (Cámara Alta), a 36-member Constitutional Affairs Commission was set up, which in turn assigned to a seven-member working group the specific task of drafting the Constitution.⁴² The main reason for this quick pace was political, intellectual and media pressure. At least since Franco's death, the press, academia, and most political parties had insisted on the need to draft a new Constitution.⁴³ The process really began within a few hours after the convening of the Joint Houses of Parliament (Cortes Generales). In the opening ceremony, King Juan Carlos⁴⁴ announced: "The Crown, by

38. The Constitution was passed by the *Cortes Generales* in a plenary meetings of the Congress of Deputies and the Senate (October 31, 1978). It was then ratified by popular vote in a referendum (December 7) and finally sanctioned by the King before the *Cortes* on December 27. See Paul Heywood, *The Government and Politics of Spain* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996).

39. See Richard Gunther, Giacomo Sani and Goldie Shabad, *Spain after Franco. The Making of a Competitive Party System* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986); Juan J. Linz, "Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes," in Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby, eds., *Macropolitical Theory*, Vol. 3 of *Handbook of Political Science* (Menlo Park, CA: Addison Wesley, 1975). Juan J. Linz, "An Authoritarian Regime: Spain," in Erik Allardt and Stein Rokkan, eds., *Mass Politics. Studies in Political Sociology* (New York: Free Press, 1970).

40. Jorge de Esteban, "El Proceso Constituyente Español 1977-1978," in José Felix Tezanos, Ramon Cotarelo and Andres de Blas, eds., *La Transición Democrática Española* (Madrid: Editorial Sistema, 1989).

41. Gregorio Peces-Barba Martínez, *La Elaboración de la Constitución de 1978* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Constitucionales, 1988).

42. Ramon Tamames, *Introducción a la Constitución Española: (Texto y Comentarios)* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1985).

43. Gunther *et al.*, *Spain after Franco, op. cit.*

44. The text of the speech is in Emilio Attard, *La Constitución por Dentro. Evocaciones del Proceso Constituyente: Valores, Derechos y Libertades* (Barcelona: Argos Vergara, 1983).

interpreting the Cortes' aspirations, desires a Constitution which grants space to our people's individuality and guarantees their historical rights."

The 1978 Constitution does not confront the national question methodically; it takes bits and pieces from the peripheral pluralistic vision (as developed in Catalonia), while retaining the older framework of a strongly-united Spain. This organicity, however, no longer entails any homogeneity, which is replaced by a new appreciation of regional differences and a supra-ethnic unitary symbol: the Monarchy. Regional differences are seen as enriching the national texture rather than threatening it, as feared by the older Francoist cadres.⁴⁵

Yet this stress on unity rules out a "truly" federalist framework. Any possible "over-interpretation" of the 1978 Constitution as a federalist document is preempted at the very beginning. The most important point is its acknowledgment of the existence of other "nationalities" within a united and indivisible Spanish "nation." This was not easy to achieve.⁴⁶ The Right sought to sabotage its mention, dragging along many other political forces. However, both Catalan nationalists and the Communists firmly objected to dropping the term.

The Constitution's gestation period lasted sixteen months, during which time the preliminary draft passed through several committees and was the object of over a thousand amendments. Whereas compromise was achieved easily over most of the Constitution's 169 articles, "a large part of the amendments presented to the draft were directed against Article 2."⁴⁷ After long discussions, the term was retained, but not before thoroughly modifying the article in order to stress the indivisible character of Spain.⁴⁸ Jordi Solé i Tura, one of the Constitution's seven "framers," recalls Article 2 as "a veritable synthesis of all the contradictions looming during the constitution-making process. . . . It is an authentic point of encounter between different concepts of the Spanish nation."⁴⁹

Aside from heartland "Castile" (often identified by peripheral

45. Such a malleable approach is particularly evident in the Introduction, which states that: "The Constitution is based on the indivisible unity of the Spanish nation, common and indivisible fatherland of all the Spaniards. It acknowledges and guarantees the right to autonomy of the nationalities and regions which form it and the solidarity among them." See *Constitución Española/Reglamento del Senado* (Madrid: Publicaciones del Senado, 1982), "Titulo Preliminar," Artículo 2.

46. Jordi Solé i Tura, *Nacionalidades y Nacionalismos en España. Autonomías, Federalismo, Autodeterminación* (Madrid: Alianza, 1985), pp. 95ff.

47. Tura, *Nacionalidades y Nacionalismos*, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

48. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

49. *Ibid.*, pp. 100-101.

nationalists as Spain *tout court*), three “historical nationalities” are usually identified within Spain: Catalonia, Euskadi (Basque Country) and Galicia. These are never mentioned explicitly in the Constitution, thereby leaving the door open to interpretations concerning the criteria for regional autonomy. The obvious trick was to extend decentralization to most other regions, thereby “relativizing” the potential impact of Basque and Catalan autonomy. The Constitution also attempted to curb possible unifying trends among the regions, which were plausible in some potentially “irredentist” areas.⁵⁰ Pan-Catalanism spoke in the name of Valencia and the Balearic Islands, while in Euskadi the question of an “irredenta” Navarre fueled the nationalist fire.⁵¹ Present-day peripheral nationalists still complain that the creation of many regions was an attempt to break down “national unity” by gerrymandering. Yet the process has succeeded in softening the overall impact of radical nationalism. Once the constitutional project was completed, 17 “autonomous communities” emerged on the official map, some of which were entirely new creations.⁵²

Among the fundamental rights solemnly proclaimed by the Spanish nation, there is the need to “protect all the Spaniards and peoples of Spain in the exercise of their human rights, their cultures, traditions, languages and institutions”⁵³ The nation is openly multilingual, and the defense of regional languages is mentioned explicitly.⁵⁴ Thus an important parameter

50. An important corrective concerning the possibility of inter-regional alliances was provided by Article 145: “No federation between Autonomous Communities will be permitted under any circumstances.”

51. On the definition of Navarre as a “Basque Ulster,” see Martin Blinkhorn, “The Basque Ulster: Navarre and the Basque Autonomy Question under the Spanish Second Republic,” in *The Historical Journal*, Vol. XVII, No. 3 (1974), pp. 595-613.

52. Recently, local historians have been mobilized to confer regional dignity to these new administrative units. Not everyone is satisfied with the present status: Some regions claim a separate autonomy based on alleged historical roots. Thus some organizations in *León* wish their region to “secede” from the Autonomous Community of *Castile*.

53. *Constitución Española, op. cit., Preambulo.*

54. Conferring official legitimacy on the regionalization process, Article 3 states: “Castilian is the official language of the state. All Spaniards have the duty to know it and the right to use it. The other Spanish languages will also be official in their respective autonomous communities according to their own statutes. The richness of the distinct linguistic modalities of Spain represents a patrimony which will be the object of special respect and protection.” *Ibid.*, Título Preliminar, Artículo 3. Linguistic pluralism is also emphasized in the item related to parliamentary control of the media: “The law shall regulate the organization and parliamentary control of the means of social communication owned by the state or any public entity and shall guarantee access to those means by significant social and political groups, respecting the pluralism of society and the various languages of Spain.” *Ibid.*, Capítulo Segundo, Derechos y libertades, Artículo 20, comma 3.

of traditional Spanish centralism was eliminated: the idea that there should be a congruence between nation, state and language, i.e., that a state should have only one language, lest its unity be threatened.⁵⁵ The term “nation” and its adjective “national” refer exclusively to Spain.⁵⁶ There is obviously some confusion with the term “Spanish nationality” when it refers in the singular to citizenship, while in the plural it is supposed to refer to regions and nationalities: “(1) Spanish nationality is acquired, preserved, and lost in accordance with provisions established by law. (2) No one of Spanish birth may be deprived of his nationality.”⁵⁷ But the Spanish nation is the only subject of the constitutional process. This is achieved through the concept of popular sovereignty⁵⁸ and, in Article 1 of the Introduction, Spain is again defined in terms of the popular will.⁵⁹

According to the Introduction, Spain is not a federal but a unitary state. However, its open character allows for considerable regional autonomy, which may result ultimately in the emergence of a federal system. This openness is assured by the fact that the Constitution can be interpreted in different ways, at least in matters related to the division of power between the central state and the regions. Openness also means that the functioning of the present system “depends almost entirely on the political will of the party in office”. In particular, the Senate does provide full regional representation, as is usual with federations.⁶⁰

55. This can be seen as the flip side of the nationalist slogan “one language, one nation.” This idea became popular with the centralizing crusade of French absolutism, subsequently reinforced by the French Revolution. It was not a product of German Romanticism, as claimed by Kedourie, Hobsbawm and others. When referring to ethnic and linguistic homogeneity as the main goal of the nation-state and to its form of centralist nationalism, it is more appropriate to speak of the French model than of the German or Eastern model. The ideal of ethnic and linguistic purity was sanctified by the creation of state institutions, at least since Cardinal Richelieu presided over the creation of the French Academy as a body to watch over the “correct” use of language.

56. On the Constitution’s use of *nacional* and related terms, see Solé Tura, *Nacionalidades y Nacionalismos*, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-102.

57. *Constitución Española*, *op. cit.*, Capitulo Primero: De los españoles y los extranjeros, Artículo 11.

58. The very first words of the Preface claim: “The Spanish nation, desiring to establish justice, liberty, and security, and to promote the well-being of all its members, in the exercise of its sovereignty proclaims its will to: . . .” *Ibid.*, Preambulo

59. “(1) Spain constitutes itself into a social and democratic state of law which advocates liberty, justice, equality, and political pluralism as the superior values of its legal order. (2) National sovereignty resides with the Spanish people, from whom all the powers of the state derive.” *Ibid.*, Titulo Preliminar, Artículo 1.

60. Montserrat Guibernau, “Spain: A Federation in the Making?” in Graham Smith, ed., *Federalism. The Multiethnic Challenge* (New York: Longman,) 1995, pp 239-56.

Salvador Giner and Luís Moreno identify another anti-federal feature of the Spanish Constitution: the new, greater role of the provinces as intermediate institutions between the autonomous communities and the city councils.⁶¹ Solé i Tura argues that “the main political defeat for the supporters of the autonomies was the constitutional recognition of the provinces’ continuity.”⁶² There are at least three problems with the permanence of provincial institutions:⁶³ First, they contribute to Spain’s already bloated bureaucratic apparatus, often duplicating the functions of the regional governments or of municipal institutions.⁶⁴ Second, some of the autonomous communities include only one province (Asturies, the Balearic Islands, Cantabria, La Rioja, Madrid, Murcia, and Navarre) and these communities have a comparative advantage over more multi-provincial communities in, e.g., political representation and the distribution of public funds. Moreover, some of the latter are new creations lacking historical depth⁶⁵ and they are seen as the result of centralist gerrymandering. Third, most senators are elected from the provinces (by the same electoral constituency as for the deputies), despite the fact that Article 69 of the Constitution defines the Senate as “the chamber of territorial representation” meant to convey the interests of autonomous communities.

These limitations notwithstanding, the Constitution *de facto* grants self-government to autonomous communities and acknowledges regional cultures. As such, it opens the possibility for federal arrangements. Without this compromise, the conflict between those holding opposing visions concerning the country would have escalated, resulting in one of two possible outcomes: the revocation of basic democratic freedoms or the outright disintegration of the Spanish state. The timing of the constitutional change, favorable international conditions and, finally, the will of national elites to negotiate a wide range of settlements prevented either of these outcomes.

61. Salvador Giner and Luís Moreno, “Centro y Periferia: la Dimensión Étnica de la Sociedad Española,” in Salvador Giner, ed., *España* (Madrid : Espasa-Calpe, 1990), Vol. 1; and Luis Moreno, *La Federalización de España* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1997).

62. Solé Tura, *Nacionalidades y Nacionalismos*, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

63. Most contemporary Spanish provinces are the result of Javier de Burgos’ administrative division in 1833.

64. However, in the Basque case, the provinces (Alava, Guipuzcoa, Navarre, Vizcaya) have a much deeper historical legitimacy and function.

65. For instance, autonomy statutes were granted to *Cantabria* (province of Santander), an area whose ancient name was *La Montaña*, and to *La Rioja* (province of Logroño), both regions culturally and historically part of Castile. *Madrid* has been detached from its historical hinterland, Castile, and established as a separate *Comunidad Autónoma* — a sort of “federal district” like Canberra, Washington, or Mexico City.

The Road to Autonomy

Spain's 1978 Constitution cannot be understood independently of the decisive role played by Catalan and Basque nationalism in the debates preceding its approval. The experience of regional autonomy enjoyed by Catalonia under the Republic (1931-38) was often taken as a point of departure for elaborating contemporary concepts of regional autonomy. According to Robert Clark, "the Catalan example proved to be the only one of negotiation over the transfer of powers. Since the Catalan regime was the first to be developed, its powers were subject to more bargaining. Subsequent regional entities, such as the Basque General Council, would have to follow the pattern established by the Catalan Generalitat."⁶⁶ But for the nationalists, the pre-war model lacked guarantees and thus needed to be expanded.⁶⁷ That is what eventually happened.

Once approved by both Houses of Parliament (October 31, 1978), the Constitution was submitted to a popular referendum (December 6, 1978) and, with the exception of Euskadi, was accepted throughout Spain by 87.8% of the voters. Nearly all Basque nationalist forces opposed the Constitution, while the moderate PNV (Basque Nationalist Party, which had also abstained from the parliamentary vote) called for abstention.⁶⁸ The reasons for the boycott had to do with the perceived ambiguities about Basque local rights. In the ensuing referendum, the abstention rate reached 56% in the two most nationalist provinces, Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia. Such a figure shows the extent to which the Spanish state had little legitimacy in Euskadi — a situation prefiguring a further spread of violence.⁶⁹

The next important step was to implement the Constitution's regionalist goals by creating regional self-government. Because of its long autonomist tradition preceding the Civil War, Catalonia was the obvious candidate to launch such a project. The Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia was approved in 1979, after a popular referendum in which 61% of the eligible voters cast ballots with 88% in favor. Catalonia gained an autonomous government and

66. Robert P. Clark, *The Basques: The Franco Years and Beyond* (Reno, Nevada: University of Nevada Press, 1979), p. 349.

67. See José Antonio González Casanova, *Federalisme i autonomia a Catalunya, 1868-1938* (Barcelona: Curial, 1974).

68. On the Basque nationalists' attitude towards the Constitution and the Statute, see George Hills, "Basque Autonomy: Will it be Enough?" in *The World Today*, Vol. 36, No 9 (1980), pp. 356-60 and Virginia Tamayo, *Genesis del Estatuto de Gernika* (Gasteiz: Herri-Arduralaritzaren Euskal Erakundea, 1988).

69. On the relation between nationalism and legitimacy, see Walker Connor, "Nationalism and political illegitimacy," in *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism* VII (Fall 1980), pp. 201-228.

its own parliament. The Statute's charter⁷⁰ declared Catalan the "proper language" of Catalonia, although it had to share the status of "official language" with Castilian. A popular referendum also ratified the Basque Autonomy Statute in 1979, with 61% voting and 89% in favor.⁷¹ Jesús María de Leizaola (1896-1980), President of the Basque parliament in exile, returned from France ending the 43-years-old "government in exile." In April 1980, Carlos Garaikoetxea, the PNV leader, became the first post-war head of the Basque government.⁷² In short, Spain was transformed from a highly-centralized bureaucracy to a quasi-federal system, with the distinct possibility of developing a full-fledged federalism. Political commentators, as well as nationalists, rightly refrain from calling the present system a "federation," since there is considerable ambiguity concerning the regions' authority — matters which still have to be negotiated with Madrid.

As a result, independently of their relative artificiality, all autonomous communities embarked on a process of boundary-building, which included the invention of symbols, as well as the rediscovery of regional cultures. Since 1978, the system of autonomous communities has inspired the formation of new regional parties, often compelling state-level parties to adapt locally by at least regionalizing their names. It also has stimulated research in local history, anthropology, economy and culture in general. Once regions such as Cantabria and La Rioja were created, their institutions encouraged a variety of endeavors in all aspects of regional culture. The result of these efforts has been a vast systematization of local knowledge,⁷³

70. Generalitat, 1979 *Estatut d'Autonomia de Catalunya*, Leaflet published by the Generalitat de Catalunya.

71. J. A. Ayestaran *et al.*, *Euskadi y el Estatuto de Autonomía* (San Sebastián: Erein, D.L., 1979).

72. See Manu Escudero and Javier Villanueva, *La Autonomía del País Vasco desde el Pasado al Futuro* (San Sebastián: Txertoa, 1976). On Navarre's Constitutional history, see Valentin Vazquez de Prada *et al.*, *Cuestiones de Historia Moderna y Contemporanea de Navarra* (Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 1986).

73. Each community now has its own encyclopedia, often supported by regional funds. Thus there are now: a *Gran Enciclopedia Extremeña* (10 vols. — 1989-1992) ; a *Enciclopedia de La Rioja* (4 vols. — 1983); a *Gran Enciclopedia de Cantabria* (8 vols. — 1985); a *Gran Enciclopedia de Andalucía* (10 vols. — 1979); a *Gran Enciclopedia Valenciana* (11 vols. — 1990-1991); a *Gran Enciclopedia Asturiana* (17 vols. — 1981); a *Gran Enciclopedia Aragonesa* (14 vols.); a *Gran Enciclopedia Navarra* (11 vols. — 1990); a *Gran Enciclopedia de Madrid, Castilla-La Mancha* (12 vols. — 1982-1988); an unfinished *Gran Enciclopedia Canaria* (3 vols. — 1994-1995); and an incomplete *Gran Enciclopedia de la Región de Murcia* (1991-1995). The regionalist efforts were also indebted to the *Enciclopedia General Ilustrada del País Vasco* (28 vols. — 1978) and the *Gran Enciclopedia Gallega* (26 vols. — 1974). All of these projects were conceived on the model of their most illustrious prototype and precursor: the *Gran Enciclopèdia Catalana* — a 25 volume project begun in 1969 under the direction of Jordi Carbonell and completed in 1993.

comprehensive reference works and book series. Municipal and regional historians have been most active in this enterprise. In some regions, grass-roots philologists have sought to locate archaic lexicons, to revitalize lost languages and even invent new ones.⁷⁴

Where language is not the distinctive regional element, other aspects of local culture have received institutional support. Yet often the revival has been spontaneous and local artists have had to endure dire economic conditions to survive. Thus, while the Andalusian government has promoted theater, literature and flamenco music, most of the thriving new flamenco scene emerged spontaneously in Gypsy communities outside institutional structures. Encouraged by the existence of regional governments, all regions have engaged in cultural revival and community-building. Yet regions (as opposed to nationalities) still have difficulties and hesitate to regard themselves as cohesive and distinct communities, while Basque, Catalan and Galician identity remain unchallenged.⁷⁵

But for some the process of devolution had gone too far. Provoked by rapid democratization and regional autonomy, as well as ETA's assassinations, the most conservative elements in the military tried to end it altogether. On February 23, 1981, a plenary session of Parliament was interrupted by a group of Civil Guards led by Colonel Antonio Tejero, who seized the assembly and held the MPs prisoner for over a day. Only the King's timely intervention prevented the attempted coup from turning into an open military revolt. This affair, however, has had some long-lasting consequences and has managed to halt for a while further regional devolution. In a move meant to pacify the "bunker" and to silence rumors of a more serious *coup d'état*, Madrid drafted a basic law allegedly to "harmonize" the devolution process. Its tacit aim was to curtail the powers

74. Among the latter, the "Cantabrian language," supposedly spoken in the region before Castilianization, has not gained popularity. Attempts to revive the "Fabla Aragonesa," still spoken in a few Aragonese Pyrenean valleys, have met with mixed success. More successful has been the case of Asturian (nicknamed *bable*), spoken by less than 300,000 people and made co-official in the "Principate" of Asturias. The language is actively promoted by the Department of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth, through its "Language Policy Unit." It has been systematized by the Asturian Language Academy and it is supported by movements such as the "Junta" for the Defense of the Language. There are parallel efforts in the northern areas of Leon, where an *asturiano-lleonés* variant (also known as *asturianu de Lleón* or *asturleonés*) is spoken.

75. Constitutionally, all autonomous communities have the same rights as the Basque Country and Catalonia. Whatever policies they may pursue, however, it will be difficult to develop suddenly the kind of distinctive culture the nationalities have developed over a long period of time.

of the two main autonomous communities, Catalonia and Euskadi, by standardizing the political authority and representation of each community. Its proposal in 1982 triggered vigorous popular protest from most of the opposition. Eventually, in August 1983, the proposed law was withdrawn.⁷⁶ In the 1982 general elections, the Socialist Party won an absolute majority in Madrid's Parliament, crowning the transition process. From then to April 1996 Spain was ruled by a Socialist government.

Conclusions

Under the pressure of powerful nationalist movements, post-Francoist Spain has been transformed from a centralized into a largely decentralized entity. A crucial aspect of this restructuring dealt with ethnic conflict, which in the case of the Basque Country, had taken a violent turn. In Spain, as elsewhere, state nationalism was based on an organic concept of the nation, often expressed in the concept of "unity of fate."⁷⁷ Spanish nationalism, in turn, engendered reactive movements in the "periphery," specifically Basque, Catalan and Galician nationalisms. The new vision of Spanishness that emerged during the transition is radically different from the previous organic idea. The effort to build a new inclusive national identity was behind the entire democratization process. Under pressure from increasing minority mobilization, Madrid's elites had to find a new medicine for the old disease. The earlier federalist tradition provided a good background, but it needed to be cleansed of its Republicanism and adapted to the new challenges, such as gaining admission to the European Community. The EC provided a supplementary and overarching identity, diminishing the importance of state boundaries.⁷⁸ The

76. In addition to all Basque and Catalan nationalists, the law also was opposed by the Communists and the Andalusian regionalists. The law had been agreed on by the PSOE and UCD. For a legislative assessment of the law and of Spanish decentralization in general, see Hurst Hannum, *Autonomy, Sovereignty, and Self-Determination. The Accommodation of Conflicting Rights* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), pp. 263-79.

77. This holistic vision was very similar to the early Basque nationalist idea, even though the envisioned country was conceived as a free confederation of seven provinces. In the earliest stages, the province of Bizkaia (Vizcaya) may have played a central but never a centralist role.

78. As is known, many of the EC's founding fathers, such as Jean Monnet, saw regionalism as a means of defusing nationalist tensions. See Douglas Brinkley and Clifford Hackett, eds., *Jean Monnet: The Path to European Unity* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991). For a regionalist reading of Monnet, see François Fontaine, *Plus Loin avec Jean Monnet* (Lausanne: Fondation Jean Monnet pour l'Europe/Centre de Recherches Européennes, 1983).

Monarchy became the ideal vehicle for the aspirations of a changing society, while embracing the different identities of Spain's various peoples. In this context, the King functioned as a kind of "steerer of change."⁷⁹

The 1978 Constitution is the watershed event of this change, since it fully recognizes and even dignifies the "right to difference." It is a masterpiece of political negotiation and balance between opposing trends. However, a quick reading of the Constitution reveals that the organic vision is never fully abandoned, despite the fact that homogenization is definitely gone. Perhaps, in some unique way, the 1978 Spanish Constitution blends unity and pluralism, allowing the implementation of quasi-federal principles.⁸⁰ Unlike federal constitutions, it stresses the unity of the state. Yet, like most federal constitutions, the working assumption is that social peace cannot be achieved through majority rule, but only by accommodating minority aspirations.

In its most intolerant fashion, Spanish nationalism historically has provoked antagonistic responses, as local elites opposed centralization and assimilation attempts.⁸¹ Basque, Catalan and, to a lesser extent, Galician nationalism are all reactions to Madrid's past failure to accommodate regional elites. Pure coercion has never been an effective tool of nation-building. Nearly everywhere, state repression has only superficially and provisionally ended ethnic dissent. More likely, it has unleashed powerful separatist forces difficult to stop. The recent breakup of multinational states held together by decades of one-party rule indicates that, in the long run, coercion cannot succeed as a tool of conflict management. Because of the historical failure of Spain's attempts at centralization, a more pluralistic vision of Spanishness has emerged, inspired by an earlier federalist tradition. While the new Spain has sought to accommodate ethnic aspirations, deeply rooted memories of earlier oppression linger. The centralist legacy led to some cultural assimilation, which only recently has been halted or even reversed.

Conflict management is not conflict resolution. A constant process of negotiation is imperative for conflict management to succeed.

79. Charles T. Powell, *El Piloto del Cambio: El Rey, la Monarquía y la Transición a la Democracia* (Barcelona: Planeta, 1991).

80. Graham Smith recognizes that it is often difficult to distinguish unitary states from federations. See Graham Smith, "Mapping the Federal Condition: Ideology, Political Practice and Social Justice," in Graham Smith, ed., *Federalism. The Multiethnic Challenge* (London/New York: Longman, 1995), p. 7.

81. Juan J. Linz, "Early State-building and Late Peripheral Nationalism against the State: the Case of Spain," in S. N. Eisenstadt and Stein Rokkan, eds., *Building States and Nations* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1973), Vol. 2, pp. 32-116.

Whereas a “definitive” solution often may remain unattainable, conflict management can succeed only in a democratic context, where elites are free to express their programs and goals.⁸² This implies that the state has to de-ethnicize itself, i.e., it has to drop its exclusivist stress on a single ethnic group or national culture. A de-ethnicized state is the opposite of a nation-state because it becomes the vehicle for the aspirations of all its constituent ethnic groups rather than imposing its own ethnicity on them.⁸³ Franco’s Spain could be defined as an “ethnic state” insofar as it sought to be an organic entity where only one culture and language was allowed. In contrast, democratic Spain has gone through a process of de-ethnicization as the original emphasis on monoculturalism has been dropped.

Spain’s de-ethnicization can be compared favorably to several cases where the state has instead (slowly or abruptly) assumed an ethnic form. The paradigmatic example is post-Titoist Yugoslavia. Its dissolution has shown that the most dangerous prospect for multi-ethnic states is the emergence of exclusivist forms of nationalism at the center. Before its constituent republics even began thinking about secession (and long before they were internationally recognized) Yugoslavia was destroyed by Serbian nationalism. The date of the breakup is often put at 1989, when Slobodan Milosevic abolished Kosovo’s and Vojvodina’s provincial autonomy, triggering vigorous protest in all other republics. Occasionally, the date of the breakup has been shifted to 1987, when Milosevic gained power as President of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Serbia, and even to 1986, when the major Serbian intellectuals in the Serbian Academy of Arts and Science launched a “Memorandum” rife with xenophobic statements, although they were well concealed behind a veil of unitarism and even anti-nationalism. As Noel Malcolm notes, “the fundamental argument of the Memorandum was that the ‘Serb people’ throughout Yugoslavia was a kind of primary entity, possessing a unitary set of claims and rights which transcended any mere political or geographical division. . . . It was the pursuit of that ‘integrity’ which would eventually destroy Yugoslavia.”⁸⁴

82. Victor M. Perez-Díaz. *The Return of Civil Society. The Emergence of Democratic Spain* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

83. See Pierre Van Der Berghe, “Denationalizing the State,” in *Society* (January/February 1996), pp. 64-8; and “The Modern State: Nation Builder or Nation Killer?” in *International Journal of Group Tensions*, Vol. 22, No. 3, 1992, pp. 191-208.

84. Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia: A Short History* (New York: New York University Press, 1994), p. 207.

In his work on conflict management, Louis Kriesberg distinguishes accommodation from de-escalation.⁸⁵ Accommodation occurs when some form of cohabitation or coexistence is reached before the conflict escalates into violence. De-escalation occurs instead after a climax of violence has been reached. Typically, with de-escalation a terrorist movement reduces or even abandons armed struggle. Both cases can be found in Spain and in Europe generally.⁸⁶

A more arbitrary distinction is between low-intensity and high-intensity conflict.⁸⁷ This depends on the level of mass participation to the nationalist movements, rather than on the distinction between violent and non-violent conflicts. There are also different patterns occurring within the same state. Spain had to deal with different conflicts at the same time, one of which involved a widespread use of terrorism. The Spanish elites have done so by restructuring the whole state and achieving a balance between centralizing and separatist trends. Both accommodation and de-escalation have occurred within the constitution-drafting framework. Several problems were tackled simultaneously through the drafting of a new Constitution which granted unprecedented power to dissenting regions. Thus what Spain has also provided is a model of constitution-making.

Democratic institutions turned out to be crucial means in dealing with the conflict. The dictatorship had exhausted itself, but no accommodation could have been reached if free speech and voting rights had not been restored. Also important was the lack of irredentist pressures. Although

85. See Louis Kriesberg and Stuart Thorson, eds., *Timing the De-escalation of International Conflicts* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1991).

86. A case of *accommodation* in Europe is that of the Åland Islands, where the conflict has subsided and a *modus vivendi* has been reached between the Swedish-speaking community and Finland. An instance of *de-escalation* is South Tyrol, Italy, where terrorist groups dissolved and the conflict became manageable after a violent phase in the early 1960s, although tensions remain between the Italian far Right and regional autonomists. On South Tyrol, see Rudolf Joó, "South-Tyrol: From Violent Conflict to Inter-ethnic Coexistence" (unpublished paper, 1997).

87. The two concepts should be kept distinct from those of *low-* and *high-intensity warfare*, which relate to war between states rather than insurgency within a state. See Michael T. Klare, Peter Kornbluh, eds., *Low Intensity Warfare: Counterinsurgency, Proinsurgency, and Antiterrorism in the Eighties* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988). Conflicts can also be *acute* or *latent*, depending on the degree of mass mobilization. A typical case of low-intensity conflict is the autonomist movement on the island of Madeira (Portugal), and the more important one in the Azores, which demanded autonomy in the aftermath of the collapse of the Portuguese dictatorship (1975). See Luis Andrade *et al.* *Congresso I Centenario da Autonomia dos Açores: Actas* (Ponta Delgada, Azores: Jornal de Cultura, 1995), 5 Vols. See especially Vol. 2, "A autonomia no Plano Socio-cultural."

both Catalan and Basque nationalists claim to have brethren in France, their numbers are not significant enough to influence either movement.⁸⁸ Moreover, the Catalan and Basque regions in France are economically “underdeveloped,” traditionally lacking a strong, endogenous, nationalist movement and depending heavily on Paris for economic assistance.

Since ethno-national conflicts can be managed only through a process of continuous negotiation, national conflicts in Spain are not solved forever. With a change of regime or new socio-economic upheavals, conflicts may re-emerge. Yet, through a long process of negotiation, a potentially-explosive conflict has been defused. Most importantly, the Spanish state has acquired a new legitimacy among broader sectors of the population — a legitimacy which it did not enjoy at the beginning of the transition period. Thus the Spanish experience of dealing with ethno-national conflicts provides a model for other political elites. It should be particularly illuminating for those states trying to dismantle decades of centralized administration.

88. Of course, the *international* context has to be taken into account. Thus it has been difficult for India to reach any accommodation with Kashmiri nationalists because of the belief that Pakistan was behind the fast growth of Kashmiri militancy and that any concession to the militants would result in concessions to Pakistan. Similarly, Sri Lanka’s governments usually have been cautious about accommodations with the Tamil insurgents, not simply because of the level of military violence but also because of the perceived threat of being “swallowed up” by India. As the Palestinian and Irish cases show, however, some compromise can be reached even in a problematic international context.