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The Evolution of Spanish Nationalism

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The Evolution of Nationalism in Spain

Abstract

The primary objective of this study is to discover how diversity and immigration affect Spanish nationalism and learn more about the contemporary Spanish mindset. The paper contains a literature review of researchers' findings on the history of Spanish nationalism. In addition, data from the World Values Survey on Spain from 1996 and 2023 demonstrates a shift in societal values. Following is my hypothesis based on the research and data found. A methodology is included with information about the research process. Appendix A contains survey questions and Appendix B interview questions regarding topics including immigration, nationalism, personal identity, and values. The survey and interviews will be conducted in the future in Spain to expand on past research.

Introduction

Limited research has been conducted on Spanish nationalism. In recent decades Spain has experienced an increase in diversity and immigration which has contributed to the transition from a conservative-traditionalist nationalism to constitutional patriotism. I intend to conduct interviews and surveys to gain an up-to-date perspective and understanding of modern-day Spanish sentiment towards this shift in nationalism and increase in diversity and immigration. This will provide insight into the question: how do immigration and diversity affect nationalism in Spain?

Context

To understand the role of nationalism and how it is changing in Spain it is important to examine historical, institutional, and cultural events that have had an impact on Spanish society and its

culture. From 711 until 1492 Spain was under the rule of the Moors and under their rule Christians, Jews, and Muslims coexisted together in peace. After the Spanish Reconquista and the expulsion of the Moors from Spain, the ethnic composition in Spain became primarily Spanish with low percentages of other ethnic groups. Modern-day Spain is a country known for its regional diversity of cultures, Castilian, Basque, and Catalan. The Basque country and Catalonia are recognized as distinct regions each with their own culture, language, and identity. Spain was under the dictatorship of Francisco Franco from 1939 until his death in 1975. His regime significantly influenced Spanish society with the effects still felt today. Under his regime, Spanish society experienced conservative-traditionalist nationalist values with a parochial political culture. At the center of Spanish society were national Catholicism, fascist ideology, and military principles. Cultures and traditions aside from those promoted by the regime were repressed. Peripheral nationalism can present conflict between Catalans, the Basques, and the state. Peripheral nationalism often arises in the face of oppression as shown historically in the Basque country and Catalonia. In addition to cultural oppression, the influx of Castilian immigrants into the Basque country and Catalonia provoked reactive nationalism with fears of their traditional way of life being threatened. Strong ethnic nationalist movements have emerged over the years in the Basque country and Catalonia with differing nationalist reactions to the Spanish Constitution after the decades-long dictatorship. A majority of the political parties in Spain supported the Constitution with a minority group of Francoists who opposed it. The implementation of the Spanish Constitution in 1978 offered a future where a nation with different cultures and languages can coexist together. Since the transformation of the Spanish system from an authoritarian regime to a democracy, a new type of nationalism has arisen. Constitutional patriotism is centered around citizenship-based universal civic principles rather

than a shared culture. Spain has slowly transitioned to a modernized country with secular values and civic culture. This new development can be attributed to the relatively new influx of immigrants, increase in diversity, and cultural tolerance in recent years showing promise in this new nationalism in Spain.

Literature Review

When one examines Spain's historical and current political culture, one will see a recurring theme arise, nationalism. Walker Connor (1994) in his book "Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding" defines nationalism as "identification with and loyalty to one's nation." The book "Imagined Communities" by Benedict Anderson analyzes nationalism and defines a nation as "an imagined political community" (1983). The varying degrees of nationalism in Spain's rich history have been examined by historians and political scientists. Historically, multiculturalism in Spain has been a feature present with Muslim influences dating back to 711 AD. David Fintz Altabé in his article "The Significance of 1492 to the Jews and Muslims of Spain" provides insight into the Muslim, Jewish, and Christian era of peace in Spanish history. Before the arrival of the Moors, the Jews had lived in Spain from 1000 B.C. The Muslims, more commonly known as Moors, invaded Spain from Africa in 711 AD and conquered the Iberian Peninsula. The Moors reigned from 711 Ad until they were driven out by the Christians during the Spanish Reconquista in 1492. During the height of their power, they made significant advancements and contributions to the sciences, mathematics, philosophy, and literature. During the rule of the Moors, they coexisted in peace with Jews and Christians even allowing them to maintain their religious autonomy. This era of religious tolerance created a beneficial environment where these three groups could learn from each other's cultures and

demonstrated the ability of different cultures to exist and prosper in Spain under certain conditions.

While the Moors' power was slowly declining during the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, the Catalan state was establishing itself and by 1350 the Catalan-Aragonese state grew to be the largest in the Mediterranean (Muro and Quiroga, 316-317). In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the rulers of Spain at the time, Ferdinand and Isabella established a state centered around Catholicism which became the foundation for traditionalist Spanish nationalism. Despite the dominance of traditionalist nationalism in Spain, Catalonia managed to maintain its autonomy and cultural identity during this time. During the 18th century, the effects of Castilinization were beginning to show with the dominant culture slowly impacting the Catalonian culture. The ramifications of these effects were linguistic and cultural loss and the appearance of peripheral nationalism.

Researchers Diego Muro and Alejandro Quiroga have provided insight into peripheral, reactive, conservative-traditionalist nationalism and constitutional patriotism in the article "Spanish Nationalism: Ethnic or Civic." According to Muro and Quiroga (2005) "One can see 20th century nationalism as a dialectal struggle between the centre and the periphery" (p. 9). The periphery in relation to Spain is Catalan and Basque nationalism with the opposing centre, conservative traditionalist nationalism. The Basque country is a region located in the north of Spain with its own culture, traditions, and language (Euskera). In the case of the Catalans and the Basques, in times of cultural and linguistic loss in their communities, peripheral nationalism rises to combat outside influences. Laura Desfor Edles (1999) describes how Catalan and Basque nationalism developed differently throughout the years. Catalan nationalism split into two different pathways. The first was a more traditional path that focused on traditional Catalan

symbols and the longing for homeland or childhood. The second pathway centered around a modern approach with a focus on democracy and secular values. Basque nationalism developed differently and became grounded in reactionary nationalism centered around traditionalist conservative values against secular socialist change. Muro and Quiroga (2005) attribute this spark of reactive nationalism to rapid industrialization in Catalonia and the Basque country, from increased immigration from Castilian immigrants, resulting in Catalan' and Basque's fear of cultural loss. Immigration and diversity in the case of the Catalans and Basques sparked peripheral nationalism.

Kenneth Bollen and Juan Diaz Medrano (1998) in their article "Who are the Spaniards? Nationalism and Identification in Spain" explain, "Spain is an example of incomplete nation-building, as attested by the strength of Basque and Catalan nationalism" (588). Historically, Catalan and Basque nationalism have been in conflict with conservative traditionalist nationalism. Muro and Quiroga (2005) define conservative-traditionalist nationalism as "the concept of nation competing with liberal thought" (p. 13). Liberal and traditionalist nationalism can be traced back to the 19th century with these recurring themes arising throughout Spanish history. Muro and Quiroga (2005) explain liberalism is often associated with civic nationalism while traditionalist nationalism is described as ethnic and religious (p. 12). In the case of Spain, the common denominator for traditionalist nationalism was centered around Catholicism and Catholic unity. This concept of traditionalist nationalism can be described as ethnic, a culture centered around religion leaving no space for a civic political culture. It's important to distinguish that nationalism is an ideology while civic and parochialism are types of political cultures. Parochialism is a form of political culture influenced by the church and its values that throughout multiple centuries has dominated Spain. Nationalism is consistent while political

culture is a mass phenomenon that is flexible, but persistent and occurs slowly over time. The slow shift in political culture is demonstrated in the 1996 to 2023 World Values Survey. Certain eras of Spain's history demonstrate a higher degree of parochial culture than others. Saz (2003) illustrates "during Franco's dictatorship (1939-1975), the 'conservative-traditionalist' version of Spanish nationalism became dominant in the shape of National Catholicism, an ideological blend of fascist, Carlist, neo-traditionalist, and military principles." Franco's dictatorship was an era of totalitarianism and oppression of those who opposed the regime.

The effects of Franco's dictatorship on the Basque Country and Catalonia were severely damaging. Muro and Quiroga (2005) point out how policies aimed toward cultural assimilation were implemented. Francis Fukuyama in "Identity: The Demand for Dignity and Politics of Resentment" describes cultural assimilation as one method for creating a national identity. As described by Fukuyama, this can be achieved by "assimilating minority populations into the culture of an existing ethnic or linguistic group" (141) Franco followed this method and policies included mandating Spanish as the only official language and symbols of regional identities were banned and persecuted (Muro and Quiroga, 19).

Political and cultural repression were utilized by conservatives with the intent to suppress Basque and Catalan nationalism. This suppression only fostered peripheral nationalism. Amitai Etzioni examines the role of self-determination movements and the threat they pose to democracy. Etzioni (1992-1993) argued, "Self-determination movements now undermine the potential for democratic development in nondemocratic countries and threaten the foundations of democracy in the democratic ones" (21). The authoritarian rule of Franco from 1939 until 1975 was challenged by the radical separatist group Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA). Etzioni (1992-1993) pointed out, "Self-determination movements gained support because they fought against

oppression, not because they fought for separatism." (35) Etzioni's idea appears to be supported

by the rise of the separatist Basque nationalist group ETA in 1959 as a response to Franco's

repression of the Basque country. According to Jáuregui (1986), "ETA's ideology was a mixture

of radical Basque nationalism and Marxist rhetoric" (19), and "ETA's violent confrontation led

to fierce repression from the Francoist regime, which, in turn, invigorated popular Basque

consciousness" (19). The consequences of repression led to demands for independence by ETA

and what began as a peaceful approach turned radical to achieve this independence. The

atrocities committed by ETA are examples of extremist nationalism and the negative dangerous

side of it.

The end of Franco's dictatorship in 1975 ushered in a transitional period to democracy.

ETA persisted during this transitional period to pose a threat to democracy affirming Etzioni's

argument that separatist groups pose a threat to the development of democracies. While ETA

was still fighting for separatism, the Spanish Constitution was being written and would introduce

a new type of nationalism to the Spanish. Created in 1978, the constitution laid the foundation

for a new Spain to establish a parliamentary democracy and regional autonomy. Muro and

Quiroga (2005) contend a new type of nationalism had developed from the creation of the

Spanish Constitution revolving around the concept of "constitutional patriotism which defends

the idea of citizenship based universal civic principles rather than a shared culture." (22) This

cultural transition represents a change from a parochial political culture to a civic culture with

secular values.

The World Values Survey data seems to further support researchers' findings of this

transition from parochial political culture to a civic culture and Modernization. The Inglehart-

Welzel Cultural Map evaluates countries on the basis of two different dimensions. Traditional

values versus secular values and survival values versus self-expression values. The World Values Survey (2022) reports, "Traditional values emphasize the importance of religion, parent-child ties, deference to authority and traditional family values. People who embrace these values also reject divorce, abortion, euthanasia, and suicide. These societies have high levels of national pride and a nationalistic outlook" and "secular rational values have the opposite preference to traditional values." The World Values Survey (2022) states, "Survival values place emphasis on economic and physical security. It is linked with a relatively ethnocentric outlook and low levels of trust and tolerance" and "self-expression values give high priority to environmental protection, growing tolerance of foreigners, gays and lesbians and gender equality, and rising demands for participation in decision making in economic and political life."

The cultural map for 1996 places Spain at a value score of 0 for traditional and secular values indicating no preference for either. Spain scores -0.5 showing a low preference for self-expression values. Comparatively, the cultural map for 2023 shows Spain with a value score of 0.50 showing a preference now towards secular values. Spain scores 1.50 on the scale measuring survival values versus self-expression values demonstrating an increased preference for self-expression values. The difference in Spanish values from 1996 to 2023 has demonstrated that there has been a shift from a parochial political culture with traditional values to a civic culture with secular values. The World Values Survey data appears to support my hypothesis that over time a greater tolerance toward immigration and cultural diversity will develop and the Spanish will show a preference towards secular values.

The theory of modernization assists in explaining the shift in Spanish political culture from parochial to civic. Ronald Inglehart (1997) states, "For [Max], the central argument in the rise of modernity was the movement away from traditional religious authority to secular rational-

legal authority. Traditional values systems must be shattered in order for modern economic development to take place" (71). Inglehart contends, (1997) the two primary elements of Modernization are secularization and bureaucratization. The World Values Survey and political science research on the history of Spain show evidence that the two necessary elements for Modernization to occur are present. The evidence is present in Spanish preference toward secular and self-expression values demonstrating the secularization element. The creation of the Spanish Constitution and the transition to a parliamentary democracy demonstrates bureaucratization.

Modern-day Spain has grown to become more tolerant of immigration and diversity over time demonstrating the capability for positive change. These changes are evident in the World Values Survey comparing the 1996 survey to the 2023 survey. This positive change could suggest that anti-immigration sentiment and cultural intolerance by the Catalans and Basques in the past may be a result of cultural oppression and not directly diversity and immigration. A society, government, and nationalism that encourages and supports the coexistence of different cultures is possible and has positive effects as demonstrated by the peaceful rule of the Moors over Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Cultural tolerance appears to be an essential component of maintaining a peaceful functional society composed of multiple peripheries.

Conclusion

In order to understand how and why the Spanish have developed into the people they are today it's critical to examine the history of Spain. Previous research conducted on Spanish nationalism and the World Values Survey provides insight into the events and experiences that have shaped Spanish society. The majority of research conducted on Spain is from the late 20th century and the primary objective of my study is to learn more about contemporary Spain and Spanish values. Researchers' findings and the World Values Survey indicate that Modernization

is occurring in Spain. However, further in-depth research is required to determine the shift in citizen attitudes, beliefs, and values. The research conducted and discussed throughout this paper yields two primary hypotheses. The first hypothesis is that Spanish society has shifted from a parochial political culture to a civic culture. The second hypothesis is that conservative-traditionalist nationalism has diminished, and the introduction of constitutional patriotism has created a secular pathway.

Hypothesis

The research conducted on Spanish nationalism and the World Values Survey data leads me to hypothesize that a greater tolerance towards immigration and cultural diversity will continue to grow and develop in Spain. Consequently, the Spanish will show a preference towards constitutional patriotism and secular values over previous types of nationalism historically present in Spain. The societal shift from a parochial political culture to a civic culture has created an environment that supports the coexistence of the Spanish, Basque, and Catalonian culture as one nation. A combination of the diminishment of significant cultural conflict that existed in Spain and the change in political culture has allowed the Spanish to focus on an overall attitude of tolerance toward immigration and cultural diversity.

Methodology

This methodology is designed to build upon the research conducted by the World Values Survey data and information from the literature review. The methodology will contain a survey and interview questions to be given to the participants. The questions created are inspired by the World Values Survey information and literature review. In the survey and interviews, Spanish views and preferences on various topics regarding immigration, nationalism, personal identity, and values will be evaluated. The responses will be evaluated using Inglehart and Welzel's system based on preferences toward traditional or secular values and survival vs self-expression values.

Data Gathering

The objective of the interviews and surveys will be to gather in-depth information about the contemporary Spanish mindset regarding immigration, personal identity, nationalism, and values. A survey containing basic questions centered around immigration, nationalism, personal

identity, and values will be given to individuals with the purpose of gathering mass information. A random demographically diverse sample of individuals will be selected to be asked in-depth interview questions about their survey responses. The intended data to be gathered will target individuals from the 17 autonomous regions in Spain, varying age ranges, genders, sexuality, educational backgrounds, etc… Survey questions are listed in Appendix A. Interview questions are listed in Appendix B.

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The Inglehart-Welzel World Cultural Map - World Values Survey 7 (1996).

The Inglehart-Welzel World Cultural Map - World Values Survey 7 (2023).

Appendix A: Survey Questions

Following is a questionnaire intended to identify individuals' perceptions and opinions on various topics including immigration, nationalism, personal identity, and values.

- Rank order of importance of identity: European, Spanish, Autonomous Community

- Rank order value of importance: Religion, Laws, Constitution

Please tell me for each of the following statements whether you think it can always be justified, never be justified, or something in between. Rankings are numbers 1-10.

Never Justifiable (1) – Always Justifiable (10)

- Abortion

- Divorce

- Euthanasia

- Suicide

- Homosexuality

- Prostitution

- Government action to promote environmental protections

- Government action to promote immigration

- Government action to promote gender equality[1]

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[1] Questions obtained from Inglehart-Welzel World Values Survey

Appendix B: Interview Questions

- Why did you list the importance of identity as follows? (Refer to survey answers)

- Do you identify more with traditional values or secular values? Or both?

- How would you describe the overall political culture in Spain now?

- Do you believe Spain is pursuing a more secular path? What might be the obstacles to this change?

- What does citizenship mean to you?

- Do you think tolerance toward diversity and immigration has grown?

- Do you see immigration changing Spanish culture currently or in the future?

- How do you believe immigration impacts the political culture of a nation?

- Do you think immigration affects the sense of national identity and belonging within a country's population?

- In your opinion, to what extent does national identity shape an individual's sense of self?

- What role does language play in shaping and expressing one's national or cultural identity?

- To what extent do historical events shape national identities?

- How does the interpretation of history influence the formation of a national narrative?

- Do you believe that strong national identities are essential for social cohesion, or can they lead to exclusion and conflict?

- How do you define your personal identity?

- What factors have influenced your personal identity development over time?

- To what extent does national identity shape an individual's sense of self?

- How would you define nationalism?