

THE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS OF SPAIN



Paul Heywood

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*For Mary –
who deserves much better, but
without whom this would have
been much worse*

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PAUL HEYWOOD

Glossary of Spanish Words

<i>abertzale</i>	left-leaning Basque nationalist
<i>administración</i>	provincial administration, prior to establishment of Autonomous Communities
<i>periférica</i>	
<i>aperturista</i>	Francoist in favour of ‘opening up’ the regime to reform (hence <i>aperturismo</i>)
<i>ayuntamiento</i>	town council/town hall
<i>beautiful, los</i>	‘beautiful people’, an interconnected group of wealthy individuals, mostly associated with the Socialist Party in office, who became the focus of media attention in the late 1980s
<i>búnker</i>	Francoist members of the extreme right, mainly within the military, wholly opposed to reform
<i>cacique</i>	local political boss
<i>caciquismo</i>	the practice of political clientelism, especially electoral fixing
<i>caja de ahorros</i>	savings bank
<i>cesantes, los</i>	suspended civil servants in the era of political appointments to the public administration
<i>Comunidades</i>	Autonomous Communities, Spain’s seventeen regional governments
<i>Autónomas</i>	
<i>Congreso de los</i>	Congress of Deputies (parliamentary lower house)
<i>Diputados</i>	
<i>consignas</i>	instructions or orders
<i>Cortes [Generales]</i>	Spanish parliament
<i>Cortes Constituyentes</i>	constituent assembly
<i>cuerpos</i>	specialised corps within the public administration
<i>cultura del pelotazo</i>	‘sleaze culture’, a term used to describe the political atmosphere of the scandal-ridden 1990s [from the term ‘ <i>cogerse un pelotazo</i> ’, meaning to get drunk or high, and intended to convey a get-rich-quick attitude, high-living and corruption]

<i>Defensor del Pueblo</i>	Ombudsman
<i>desencanto</i>	disenchantment, disillusion – a term used in the press to describe attitudes to the political system in the late 1970s and early 1980s
<i>desgobierno</i>	lack of government
<i>Diputación</i>	Council
<i>estado de derecho</i>	state of law, in the sense of the state being legally established and accountable
<i>etarra/s</i>	members of the Basque separatist organisation, E.T.A.
<i>Euskera</i>	the Basque language
<i>felipistas</i>	supporters of Felipe González, first elected prime minister of Spain in October 1982
<i>fontaneros</i>	plumbers, a term used to describe Adolfo Suárez's inner circle of advisers
<i>fueros</i>	ancient code of laws in Basque Country and Navarra
<i>Galega</i>	the Galician language
<i>Generalitat</i>	the Catalan regional parliamentary assembly
<i>golpe</i>	military coup
<i>golpismo</i>	the practice of plotting coups against the government
<i>guerristas</i>	supporters of Alfonso Guerra, deputy prime minister in the Socialist administrations, 1982-91
<i>Hispanidad</i>	the essence of Spanish identity (literally, 'Spanishness')
<i>la lucha</i>	'the struggle', in the sense of Communist opposition to Franco regime
<i>maketos</i>	a Basque term of abuse to denote Spaniards
<i>movida, la</i>	Madrid nightlife in the 1980s, associated with the city's post-Franco renaissance
<i>Movimiento</i>	the Franco regime's institutional framework
<i>oposiciones</i>	competitive examinations for public sector posts
<i>patria</i>	fatherland
<i>patria chica</i>	home town or local area
<i>pistoleroismo</i>	gun-law
<i>pluriempleo</i>	the practice of holding down several jobs at one time
<i>poderes fácticos</i>	centres of power with major political influence, such as the army, banks, Catholic Church, etc.
<i>ponencia</i>	a report, or the committee which draws it up

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<i>procurador/es</i>	a member of the Francoist <i>Cortes</i>
<i>pronunciamiento</i>	military insurrection
<i>Renaixença</i>	Catalan cultural renaissance in the late nineteenth century
<i>renovadores</i>	members of the Socialist Party in the late 1980s and early 1990s in favour of market-led policies
<i>revistas de corazón</i>	glossy society magazines, such as <i>¡Hola!</i>
<i>Rexurdimento</i>	Galician cultural renaissance, similar to <i>Renaixença</i>
<i>sector crítico</i>	leftist opponents of the Socialist Party's abandonment of Marxism
<i>Senado</i>	Senate, the upper house in the <i>Cortes Generales</i>
<i>Tejerazo</i>	the attempted coup of 23 February 1981 led by Lieutenant-Colonel Antonio Tejero
<i>tertulia</i>	a gathering of friends to discuss issues of mutual interest
<i>una, grande y libre</i>	'one, great and free', a shibboleth of the Franco regime to describe the Spanish state
<i>Xunta</i>	the Galician regional parliamentary assembly

List of Abbreviations

AEB	<i>Asociación Española de Banca Privada</i> (Spanish Banking Association)
AES	<i>Acuerdo Económico y Social</i> (Economic and Social Agreement) – tripartite pact between government, employers and unions
AGM	<i>Academia General Militar</i> (General Military Academy)
AMI	<i>Acuerdo Marco Interconfederal</i> – agreement between employers and unions on framework for collective bargaining
AP	<i>Alianza Popular</i> (Popular Alliance)
ARE	<i>Assemblée des Régions Européennes</i> (Assembly of European Regions)
BNG	<i>Bloque Nacionalista Galego</i> (Galician Nationalist Bloc) – established in 1986 following split in CG
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CC.AA.	<i>Comunidades Autónomas</i> (Autonomous Communities) – Spain's 17 regional governments
CC.OO.	<i>Comisiones Obreras</i> (Workers' Commissions) – trade union federation with historic links to Communist Party
CDC	<i>Convergència Democràtica de Catalunya</i> – component part of the CiU
CDS	<i>Centro Democrático y Social</i> (Social and Democratic Centre Party) – founded by Adolfo Suárez in 1982
CEIM	<i>Confederación Empresarial Independiente de Madrid</i> (Madrid-based employers' group, affiliated to CEOE)
CEM	Council of European Municipalities
CEOE	<i>Confederación Española de Organizaciones Empresariales</i> (Spanish employers' organisation)
CEPYME	<i>Confederación Española de la Pequeña y Mediana Empresa</i> (Spanish employers' organisation of small and medium-sized firms)

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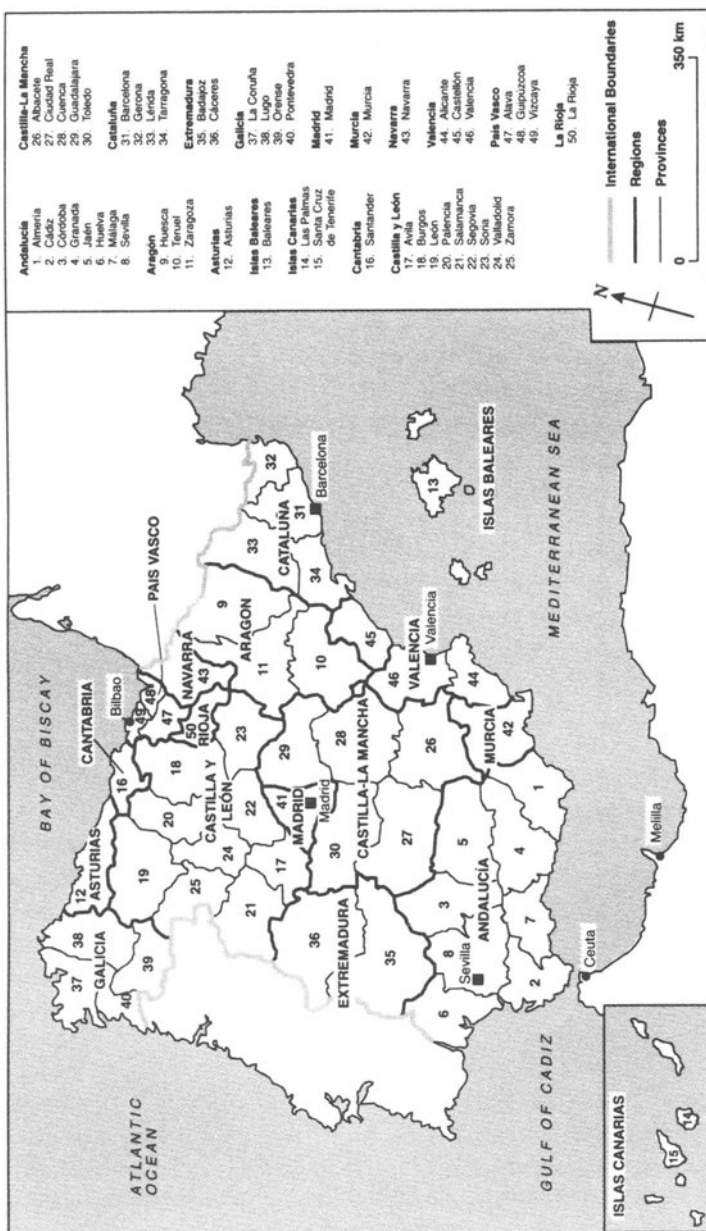
CES	<i>Consejo Económico y Social</i> (Social and Economic Council) – a non-governmental agency established in the early 1990s
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CG	<i>Coalición Galega</i> – Galician nationalist party
CGPJ	<i>Consejo General del Poder Judicial</i> (General Council of the Judiciary)
GiU	<i>Convergència i Unió</i> (Convergence and Union) – right-leaning Catalan nationalist party
CNC	<i>Confederación Nacional de la Construcción</i> – construction industry employers' organisation, affiliated to CEOE
CNT	<i>Confederación Nacional del Trabajo</i> (National Workers' Alliance) – historic anarchist organisation
CONFEMETAL	<i>Confederación de Organizaciones Empresariales de Metal</i> – metal industry employers' organisation, affiliated to CEOE
COPE	<i>Cadena de Ondas Populares Españolas</i> – radio station owned by the Catholic Church
CSCE	Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe
CSIF	<i>Confederación de Sindicatos Independientes de Funcionarios</i> (independent union for government employees)
DGPE	<i>Dirección General del Patrimonio de Estado</i> – state holding company
EA	<i>Eusko Ta Alkartasuna</i> – Basque nationalist party formed in 1986 as breakaway from PNV
EAGGF	European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund
EC	European Community
ECB	European Central Bank
EDF	European Development Fund
EE	<i>Euzkadiko Ezkerra</i> (Basque Left) – Basque nationalist party, absorbed by PSE-PSOE in 1993
EEC	European Economic Community
EFA	European Fighter Aircraft
ELA–STV	<i>Eusko Langileen Alkartasuna–Solidaridad de Trabajadores Vascos</i> – left-leaning Basque union federation
EMS	European Monetary System
EMU	Economic and Monetary Union
ERC	<i>Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya</i> (Catalan Republican Left) – radical nationalist party, founded in 1931
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ERM	Exchange Rate Mechanism

ESCB	European System of Central Banks
ESF	European Social Fund
ETA	<i>Euskadi Ta Askatasuna</i> (Basque Homeland and Liberty) – radical nationalist separatist organisation
EU	European Union
FII	<i>Fuerzas de Intervención Inmediata</i> – armoured mobile units
FLN	<i>Front de Libération Nationale</i> (National Liberation Front) [Algeria]
FLP	<i>Frente de Liberación Popular</i> (Peoples' Liberation Front) – anti-Franco opposition group
FTN	<i>Fomento del Trabajo Nacional</i> – Catalan-based employers' group, affiliated to CEOE
GAL	<i>Grupos Antiterroristas de Liberación</i> (Anti-terrorist liberation groups) – engaged in 'dirty war' with ETA between 1983 and 1987
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GDR	German Democratic Republic
GIL	<i>Grupo Independiente Liberal</i> – political party established by Jesús Gil
GNP	Gross National Product
HB	<i>Herri Batasuna</i> – radical Basque nationalist party, seen as political wing of ETA
HOAC	<i>Hermanidad Obrera de Acción Católica</i> (Workers' Brotherhood of Catholic Action)
IFA	<i>Instituto de Fomento de Andalucía</i> – body established to promote the economic development of Andalucía
IGSAP	<i>Inspección General de Servicios de la Administración Pública</i> – non-governmental agency which evaluates public administration
INE	<i>Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas</i> (National Institute of Statistics)
INEM	<i>Instituto Nacional de Empleo</i> (National Employment Institute)
INH	<i>Instituto Nacional de Hidrocarburos</i> – state holding company
INI	<i>Instituto Nacional de Industria</i> – state holding company
INTG	<i>Intersindical Galega</i> – moderate Galician union federation
IU	<i>Izquierda Unida</i> (United Left)
JOC	<i>Juventud Obrera Católica</i> (Catholic Workers' Youth Movement)

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JUJEM	<i>Junta de Jefes de Estado Mayor</i> (Joint Chiefs of Staff)
LOAPA	<i>Ley Orgánica de Armonización del Proceso Autonómico</i> (Organic Law on the Harmonisation of the Autonomy Process)
LODE	<i>Ley Orgánica del Derecho a la Educación</i> (Organic Law on the Right to Education)
LOGSE	<i>Ley de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo</i> (Law on the General Organisation of the Education System)
LOPJ	<i>Ley Orgánica del Poder Judicial</i> (Organic Law on the Judiciary)
MERCOSUR	Free Trade organisation involving Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay
META	<i>Plan de Modernización del Ejército de Tierra</i> (Plan to Modernise the Army)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ONUCA	United Nations Observation Group in Central America
ONUSAL	United Nations Observation Group in El Salvador
OPEC	Organisation of Petroleum-Exporting Countries
ORGA	<i>Organización Republicana Gallega Autónoma</i> – Galician political organisation in the 2nd Republic
OSI	Operational Services Inspection [<i>Inspección Operativa de Servicios</i> , IOS]
PAD	<i>Partido de Acción Democrática</i> – short-lived christian democratic party
PCE	<i>Partido Comunista de España</i> (Communist Party)
PDL	<i>Partido Democrático Liberal</i> – short-lived liberal party
PDP	<i>Partido Democrático Popular</i> – conservative christian democratic party set up in 1982
PNV	<i>Partido Nacionalista Vasco</i> (Basque Nationalist Party)
PP	<i>Partido Popular</i> (Popular Party)
PRD	<i>Partido Reformista Democrático</i> – short-lived centrist party set up by Miquel Roca in 1983
PSC-PSOE	<i>Partit del Socialistes de Catalunya</i> (Catalan branch of the PSOE)
PSE-PSOE	<i>Partido Socialista de Euskadi</i> (Basque branch of the PSOE)
PSOE	<i>Partido Socialista Obrero Español</i> (Socialist Party)

PSP	<i>Partido Socialista Popular</i> – small socialist group led by Enrique Tierno Galván
PSUC	<i>Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya</i> (Catalan Communist Party)
Pta	Peseta
RTVE	<i>Radio-Televisión Española</i> – state-owned television and radio network
SEA	Single European Act
SPP	<i>Sindicato</i> [formerly <i>Asociación</i>] <i>Profesional de Policía</i> – police trade union
TSJ	<i>Tribunal Superior de Justicia</i> (Higher Court of Justice) – regional court
UCD	<i>Unión de Centro Democrático</i> (Democratic Centre Union) – a right-wing coalition which governed Spain between 1977 and 1982
UDC	<i>Unió Democràtica de Catalunya</i> – component part of the CiU
UGT	<i>Unión General de Trabajadores</i> (General Workers' Union) – historically associated with the Socialist Party
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
USO	<i>Unión Sindical Obrera</i> – small scale trade union
USP	<i>Unión Sindical de Policías</i> – police trade union
VAT	Value-added tax [<i>Impuesto Sobre el Valor Añadido</i> , IVA]
WEU	Western European Union



Introduction: Analysing Spanish Politics

On 26 July 1992, with a massive police escort and amid considerable controversy, Pablo Picasso's *Guernica* was moved from the Casón del Buen Retiro at Madrid's Prado Museum to the city's newly-opened modern art gallery, the Centro de Arte Reina Sofía. At Picasso's behest, *Guernica* – a searing condemnation of the Civil War atrocity in which Nazi aeroplanes, on behalf of General Franco, bombed the undefended Basque market town to destruction – had come to Spain only after the restoration of democracy. Picasso, who died in 1973, never saw his wish fulfilled; Franco outlived him by two years, and not until 1981 was *Guernica* finally shipped from New York's Museum of Modern Art (where it had remained on extended loan since 1939) to be displayed in its own special gallery at the Prado.

The painting's subsequent relocation within Madrid was symbolic in a double sense. At one level, it signified a coming to terms with the terrible tragedy represented by the Civil War: rather than emphasise the conflict's continued capacity to divide Spaniards more than fifty years after its end by exhibiting *Guernica* in a unique setting, the painting now took its place amidst other works which formed part of Spain's cultural heritage. *Guernica* could henceforth be appreciated in both its historic and artistic context, much as Goya's powerful works document an earlier period of Spanish history. At another level, however, the fact that the relocation of *Guernica* not only aroused impassioned feelings, but also that the painting remains behind bullet-proof glass to protect it from right-wing extremists – as it has done ever since it arrived in Spain – is indicative of the continued weight of the country's past in contemporary Spain.

To understand the politics of democratic Spain, it is necessary to know something of the country's history. Spain's current constitutional arrangements have been profoundly conditioned by its

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historical legacy – most notably the experience of civil war and dictatorship during the twentieth century, in turn the product of deep social divisions. Yet, the country's longer-term historical experience has also helped shape contemporary aspirations: Spain's determination to play a central role in the construction of an integrated Europe reflects a desire to avoid experiencing ever again the political marginalisation which had followed the loss of empire. Between Spain's imperial heyday in the sixteenth century and the 1930s' conflicts which led to civil war, the country was relegated in political terms to the status of a European backwater. Thereafter, the Franco dictatorship (1939-75) ensured that Spain would remain a marginal force in democratic Europe. Only with the post-Franco transition to democracy did Spain begin to re-establish a significant international presence.

From Empire to Isolation

That Spain should have experienced such an extended period of political isolation was remarkable for a country which had been at the very heart of Europe's expansionist hegemony in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. 1492 – a date familiar to all Spanish school-children – marked the beginning of imperial dominance. Granada, the last Muslim kingdom on the Iberian peninsula, fell that year to the 'Catholic kings', Ferdinand and Isabella, whilst the great voyage of Columbus laid the foundations for Spain's maritime empire. Under the Habsburg monarchy, particularly Philip II (1556–98), Spain not only became the staunchest defender of the Catholic Church against Protestant reformers, but also extended her European possessions. Yet paradoxically, in spite of its imperial reach, the Spanish state remained poorly integrated and weakly developed. By the time Philip II's great-grandson bequeathed his throne to the house of Bourbon in 1700, Habsburg grandeur was fading fast. Territorial losses in Europe and the revolt of both the Portuguese and the Catalans in 1640 had severely weakened the Spanish throne, further evidenced by the Treaty of Utrecht (1713), which ceded Gibraltar to the British. Under the Bourbons, Spain underwent a process of long-term decline, and the old regime finally crumbled before Napoleon's invading armies (1807-8). Although the French Revolution had some impact in the peninsula – notably in the 1812 'liberal' *Cortes* of Cádiz – when

the monarchy was restored in 1814, Ferdinand VII's absolutist rule ushered in a period of revolts and the loss of the American colonies.

In the early nineteenth century, two antagonistic blocs – which were to dominate Spanish history for well over a century – began to crystallise. Forces of reform, which sought to bring Spain's political structure into line with its evolving social structure, were repeatedly confronted by reactionary elements reliant upon military force to maintain the power balance in their favour. A tradition of *pronunciamientos* (military risings) emerged, which effectively left the choice of government in the hands of the army. Unlike in Britain and France, there was no establishment during the nineteenth century of a relatively democratic polity able to adjust to and absorb new social forces. Instead, the Spanish state maintained the power of the monarchy, the landed nobility and the Catholic Church basically intact until well into the twentieth century. Following the overthrow of the First Republic (1873-4), a 'reactionary coalition' became established between this ruling oligarchy and a politically weak commercial and manufacturing bourgeoisie.

The political system of the 'Restoration Monarchy' (1875-1923), known as the '*turno pacífico*', was designed to maintain the configuration of political power in Spain basically unaltered whilst presenting a façade of parliamentary democracy. Two political parties, the Conservative and the Liberal, alternated in power, keeping their position through the actions of *caciques* – local political bosses who, through a variety of more or less corrupt means, ensured that electoral results approximated to the predetermined outcomes decided upon in Madrid. Challenges to the system did emerge, however, from the burgeoning working-class movement, both socialist and anarchist, and the regional nationalism which was becoming a potent political force in Catalonia and the Basque Country. By 1917 the country was starkly divided between mutually hostile groups.

The counterpoint between the forces of reform and reaction spilled into an escalating spiral of violence between 1917 and 1923, brought to an end only by the dictatorial intervention of General Miguel Primo de Rivera. Primo, though, proved unable to construct a viable replacement for the *turno* system, and he was forced to resign in 1930. The Second Republic, which was proclaimed on 14 April 1931, represented a bold reformist experiment aimed at modernising Spain's political structure by establishing the country's first genuine democracy. During the course of the Republic, however, the divisions

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in Spanish society which had developed over the course of the previous hundred years hardened into a series of bitter confrontations which pitched republicans against monarchists, anti-clericals against the Catholic Church, regionalists against centralists, workers against employers. By 1936, war appeared inevitable. General Franco's uprising on 18 July, and the savage civil war which ensued, represented the ultimate expression of reactionary forces in Spanish politics seeking to crush any threat to their privileged status.

The Franco dictatorship made no attempt at national reconciliation. Instead, the rhetoric of the regime, which emphasised the distinction between victors and vanquished, confirmed the long-term divisions which had marked Spain's troubled history. Through a centralised and heavily bureaucratic political structure, Franco sought to impose his vision of a unified Spain – '*una, grande y libre*' – fashioned in the image of imperial greatness. Although the face of the regime became less repressive over time, with ideological justification drawn from Catholicism rather than the fascism of Franco's sponsors during the civil war, Hitler and Mussolini, all forms of political pluralism remained proscribed. Significant economic growth during the 1960s helped further ameliorate the regime's image, and Franco was able to pose as the avuncular patron of Spain's socio-economic modernisation. Yet, when the regime's opponents (now including sections of the Catholic Church) began to mount increasingly serious challenges to its survival in the late 1960s, Franco reverted to the harsh repression which had marked his early years in power: political executions took place as late as 27 September 1975. The dictator's death two months later, on 20 November 1975, closed one of the darkest chapters in Spain's history, but left the country once more seemingly facing the abyss of irreconcilable political division.

The Transition to Democracy and the Analysis of Spanish Politics

In the event, Franco's death was followed not by bloody conflict, as had been feared by many, but by a remarkably rapid and skilfully engineered transition to democracy. The success of the transition generated a massive outpouring of literature, much of it seeking to explain how the divisions which had characterised Spain's political development for centuries had been kept in check in the aftermath of the Franco regime.¹ Interest in Spain's transition to democracy was

further stimulated by the collapse of communist regimes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union between 1989 and 1991: the Spanish 'model' was seized upon by many academics and politicians as holding the key to the successful construction of democratic states in the post-communist world (Di Palma, 1990: 185; Maxwell, 1991; Huntington, 1991/92: 592; Mainwaring *et al.*, 1992: 5; Cuenca Toribio, 1994). Such analyses tended to overlook crucial differences between the Spanish experience and that of the former communist regimes – not least, the significance of a general desire to avoid re-opening the wounds created by the civil war and its aftermath, as well as the fact that Spain's economy had been integrated into the market-based western capitalist framework long before Franco's death, thereby allowing the embryonic emergence of a pluralist civil society.² Nevertheless, academic interest in contemporary Spain has remained very firmly focused on the success of its political transition from dictatorship to democracy.

Far less attention has been paid to the subsequent development of Spain's democracy. With a few notable exceptions, political scientists have by and large ignored the government and politics of contemporary Spain. Moreover, those political scientists who have devoted extensive attention to Spain – such as Ramón Cotarelo, José Ramón Montero, Lourdes López Nieto, Joan Botella, Richard Gunther and Samuel Barnes – have tended overwhelmingly to concentrate on specific aspects of the Spanish political process, notably parties, electoral behaviour and opinion surveys. The territorial organisation of the post-Franco Spanish state has also been the focus of a number of studies. However, as yet – and in marked contrast to the myriad texts on the politics of other European states like Britain, France, Germany and Italy – there has been no synoptic analytical overview of the government and politics of Spain. Such volumes as do exist on the politics of contemporary Spain have generally been edited collections, often compiled by historians or sociologists (Carcassonne *et al.*, 1979; Abel and Torrents, 1984; Payne, 1986; Giner, 1990; Vidal-Beneyto, 1991a, 1991b; Cotarelo, 1992). Despite their many virtues, these collections face inevitable problems of imbalance in the treatment of different issues, inconsistent approaches, and repetition of basic material.

There are two main reasons for the lack of attention paid to Spain by academics working in departments of political science. First, and most obviously, very few political scientists are Hispanists; secondly, very few Spanish academics are political scientists. Area specialists

working on Europe, notably in the English-speaking world, have understandably tended to focus on the 'major' countries, a community of which Spain did not form part until very recently. In turn, comparativists have often lacked appropriate points of reference for including Spain within wider studies. Meanwhile, the study of politics within Spain has developed within a distinctive European tradition, shaped by its location mainly within faculties of law (*derecho*), which has led it to focus primarily on political theory and constitutional issues. Indeed, the discipline of political science was not specifically recognised in Spanish academe until the University Reform Law of 1984 (Colino Cámara *et al.*, 1994: 527). As a result, Spanish studies of the political system have often been characterised by minute analysis of the 1978 Constitution, rather than its translation into practice³ (Alvarez Conde, 1990; Aparicio, 1988; Baena del Alcázar, 1988; López Pina, 1987; Blas Guerrero, 1983). Other areas, such as core executive decision-making, the impact of institutional arrangements on the political process, policy styles and environments, and the political influence of the judiciary, have barely been identified as key issues.

The present volume seeks to provide a broad overview of government and politics in contemporary Spain. The central theme of the volume is that, for the first time in modern history, the organisation of the Spanish state combines functional efficiency with recognition of the country's social composition. State and civil society are no longer in serious conflict, as they have been so often in Spain's past. The key to the central state's effectiveness has been the provision in the 1978 Constitution of a very high degree of executive power, based on formal mechanisms of accountability (even though, in practice, these have often failed to operate as envisaged by Spain's constitutional architects). However, the existence of a strong executive, which has provided for governmental stability, has been counter-balanced by two developments which are of growing significance in contemporary Spain and which form the sub-themes of this study: the territorial organisation of the state and integration into the European Union (EU).

Spain's system of seventeen regional governments, which enjoy extensive (and increasing) powers in their own right, has acted as a check on the central state. Whilst the relationship between central and regional governments has often been troubled and continues to be the source of political conflict, Spain's current territorial organisation represents the most effective solution to the regional

issue ever attempted. A further constraint on the power of the central state derives from the trend towards European economic integration, as evidenced most obviously in the 1987 Single European Act and the 1992 Maastricht Treaty. Spain's entry into the European Community (EC) in 1986 represented a formal return to Europe's political mainstream, thereby bringing to an end nearly two centuries of international isolation. However, the political process in Spain, particularly in regard to macroeconomic policy, has been profoundly conditioned by the broader demands of European integration. Spain's membership of Europe has resulted in increased influence on the international stage only at the expense of a decreased capacity to shape the broad parameters of domestic policy. In this regard, Spain finds itself in a similar position to that of most of the EU's member states.

It is a central argument of this study that contemporary Spain should be seen as an established European democracy: naturally, Spain's democracy has distinctive elements, but its political structure shares many features in common with various European partners, its political challenges are those which face all European democracies. However, in spite of the remarkable success of its transition to democracy – a success which few observers would have believed possible in 1975 – Spain's political health has increasingly been called into question during the 1990s. Particular concern has been expressed in Spain over such issues as a perceived lack of executive accountability, the ineffectiveness of parliament, the loss of policy autonomy as a result of European integration and the resultant 'democratic deficit', and – most tellingly – the widespread existence of political corruption. These are all real and serious problems which, if not confronted and tackled by the political class as a whole, could undermine the legitimacy of the democratic process. Yet, significantly, these problems mirror similar concerns which exist throughout Europe. This is not to seek to underplay their importance, but rather to suggest that they neither derive exclusively from the organisation of the Spanish state, nor are they open to simple solutions. It is to be hoped that the sense of political responsibility which facilitated the success of the transition to democracy will safeguard its achievements as Spain approaches the next millenium.

The book is divided into three parts. Part 1 looks at how the organisation of the contemporary Spanish state has been conditioned by the country's historical legacy, with particular regard to the regional issue. The changing role and influence of major social

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institutions – such as the military and the Catholic Church – are also discussed, as is the elaboration of the 1978 Constitution. Part 2 of the book analyses the political organisation of the democratic state. Attention is paid to executive, legislative and judicial institutions, as well as to the modernisation of the public sector. Thereafter, a detailed analysis of the structure of Autonomous Communities is followed by a discussion of political parties and the electoral and party systems. Part 3 assesses Spain's emergence as an international power, laying emphasis on its economic transformation since the return of democracy, the evolution of the policy process, and the development of a significant profile on the international stage. Given that several of these issues are dealt with in a systematic manner for the first time in this volume, it is inevitable that there will be errors of fact and interpretation in what follows. Naturally, the responsibility for any such errors is mine alone.

Part I

The Legacy of History

1

Reconciling State and Nation: The Politics of Regional Diversity

Spain is one of the oldest states in Europe, having occupied the same boundaries for some 500 years. Yet, in spite of the political dominance of Castile and the Castilian language, regional differences hold the key to understanding the modern Spanish state (see Exhibit 1.1). Since the nineteenth century, regional demands have constituted one of the central issues in Spanish politics. The few occasions on which they have been answered – such as during the First and Second Republics¹ – have generally been followed by periods of more or less rigid centralism. General Franco, who ruled over Spain from 1939 until his death in 1975, imposed an unbending and repressive policy of state centralism throughout his period in power. Thus, at one level, the emergence of regionalism as a paramount political issue in contemporary Spain is an obvious and direct legacy of the Franco regime insofar as it represents a reaction to his stultifying rule. However, regionalism has much deeper roots, and any attempt to understand its continued significance must consider the context within which Spain became a unified state.

‘Regional Nationalism’ and the Emergence of a Modern State

The dual process of state-building and nation-building has been of fundamental importance to the territorial structure and identity of modern Spain. It has been argued that Spain’s unity was largely

EXHIBIT 1.1
The Spanish Regions

Region^a	Provinces	Capital city	Size (km²)	Population (million)
Andalucía	Almería, Cádiz, Córdoba, Granada, Jaén, Huelva, Málaga, Sevilla	Sevilla	87,268 ²	6.44
Aragón	Huesca, Teruel, Zaragoza	Zaragoza	47,669 ²	1.2
Principado de Asturias	Asturias	Oviedo	10,565 ²	1.13
Islas Baleares	Baleares	Palma	5,014 ²	0.66
Canarias	Las Palmas, Santa Cruz de Tenerife	Las Palmas de Gran Canaria	7,273 ²	1.37
Cantabria	Santander	Santander	5,289 ²	0.51
Castilla y León	Avila, Burgos, León, Palencia, Salamanca, Segovia, Soria, Valladolid, Zamora	Valladolid	94,147 ²	2.54
Castilla-La Mancha	Albacete, Ciudad Real, Cuenca, Guadalajara, Toledo	Toledo	79,226 ²	1.65
Catalunya (Cataluña)	Barcelona, Gerona, Lérida, Tarragona	Barcelona	31,930 ²	5.66
Extremadura	Badajoz, Cáceres	Merida	41,602 ²	1.06
Galiza (Galicia)	La Coruña, Lugo, Orense, Pontevedra	Santiago	29,434 ²	2.81
Comunidad de Madrid	Madrid	Madrid	7,995 ²	4.69
Región de Murcia	Murcia	Murcia	11,317 ²	0.96
Comunidad Foral de Navarra	Navarra	Pamplona	10,421 ²	0.51
Comunidad Valenciana	Alicante, Castellón, Valencia	Valencia	23,305 ²	3.65
Euskadi (País Vasco)	Alava, Guipúzcoa, Vizcaya	Vitoria (Gasteiz)	7,261 ²	2.14
La Rioja	La Rioja	Logroño	5,034 ²	0.25

^a Regions listed by official title, with Spanish equivalent indicated where relevant.

artificial until well into the nineteenth century (Fusi, 1989: 14). According to Juan Linz (1973), Spain became a nation-state – in the Weberian sense of commanding loyal solidarity over and above its claim to a monopoly of the legitimate use of force – only slowly and sporadically.

It was not until the eighteenth century that there emerged the first manifestations of genuine ‘Spanish’ identity, seen through developments such as a concern with the historical sense of the notion of Spain, the creation of national cultural institutions, and the development of governmental projects at national level. Prior to that date, the Spanish state had been composed of a series of distinct kingdoms, united formally through dynastic marriages and military conquest, but with no overall national identity. At the same time as this national identity began to emerge, however, equivalent processes were taking place at regional level. In the Basque Country, for instance, studies were published in the early eighteenth century which sought to codify the national language, and a royal society was established in 1765 to promote indigenous culture. Similar developments took place in Galicia and Asturias, adding emphasis to the fact remarked upon by one observer in 1846 that Spain was the country of the ‘*patria chica*’, made up of various different regions with their own languages, customs, and social traditions (Ford, 1974: 13).

A real sense of popular patriotism became evident only with the Napoleonic invasion of 1808, but even then it was often fragmented and localist in character. The construction of a centralised state was a lengthy process, less the result of political nationalism than of gradual adaptation to the evolving machinery of the state. Until well into the twentieth century, the province remained the primary focus of identity; in the view of José Ortega y Gasset (1931), the Spanish philosopher, the province represented the most authentic social reality in Spain upon which any sense of national identity would have to be constructed. Spanish nationalism was thus very weak as a force for social cohesion. Indeed, social and economic fragmentation remained marked until a cohesive national political and administrative system was finally achieved.

The emergence of such a system was dependent upon developments such as the growth of trade, markets, and population centres, the construction of a communications infrastructure, and the creation of a common educational plan. The major growth in population centres and railways occurred at around the same time, between 1840 and 1860 (Shubert, 1990: 16–19, 43–56). Other important stages along

the road towards national cohesion were the modernisation of the central administration through the adoption in 1823 of a ministerial system of government, the establishment of a uniform system of local government through the reform of provincial administration in 1833, the creation of the Civil Guard in 1844, the development of penal codes in 1848 and 1879, and the adoption of national systems of secondary education in 1845 and 1857. Only through the combined effect of all these developments did a 'national' sense of Spanish identity emerge towards the end of the nineteenth century, capable of acting as a force for social cohesion. A key moment in this process occurred – perhaps paradoxically – with the so-called 'disaster of 1898', when Spain lost Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines, her only significant remaining colonial possessions. The disaster provided a major stimulus to a nascent, but growing, concern amongst Spanish intellectuals to identify the nature of *Hispanidad*, or 'Spanishness'. Leading figures amongst 'the generation of '98', such as Miguel Unamuno and Rafael Altamira, attempted to confront the question of just what it was that constituted the essential nature of Spain.

Their concern derived in part from the lack of cultural homogenisation in Bourbon Spain. In a sense, Spain was out of synchrony with other European states in terms of the development of a distinctive national consciousness. In Britain and France national bonding was fostered in part by colonial aggrandisement, and in Germany and Italy unification in the mid-nineteenth century gave rise to a wave of romantic nationalism. In Spain, however, nationalism was primarily a *local* phenomenon. Thus, the nineteenth century saw not only the extension of an idea of the nation and national sentiments, but also the confirmation of the province as the focus of political identity. Provincial capitals became centres of regional affairs, while *diputaciones* (local councils) – although limited in number – began to consolidate their power bases. During the mid-nineteenth century there began to emerge a clear sense of regional identity in areas such as Andalucía, Catalonia, the Basque Country and the capital, Madrid. One indication of this development was the importance of local, as opposed to national, newspapers – most notably in the emerging industrial centres, Barcelona and Bilbao, where titles such as *La Vanguardia* and *El Liberal* started to exercise political influence.

Moreover, it can hardly be overstressed that the central Spanish state remained weak, being both financially poor and administratively inefficient. This fact helps to explain a development of crucial

significance to the strength of regional nationalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: the appropriation of state functions by *caciques* and local oligarchs. In common with most of Mediterranean Europe where the central state was omnipresent but weak, regional brokers arose – *caciques* in Spain, *mafioso* in Italy, *comatarhis* in Greece – to mediate between centre and periphery. The patron-client relationships upon which the brokerage system rested served as a mechanism of social order. However, once economic modernisation was under way in regions such as Catalonia and the Basque Country, so the network of regional brokerage began to be undermined: the political centre found it ever harder to impose its will on economically more powerful regions, and specific nationalist demands increasingly sought satisfaction from Madrid (Heiberg, 1989: 234ff. ; Gellner and Waterbury, 1975). Yet, the central administrative apparatus remained small, with just eight central ministries by 1900. Furthermore, central state expenditure was overwhelmingly directed towards either military purposes or servicing the national debt, with little devoted to the building of a modern state infrastructure.

Thus, what little industrial development did take place was concentrated in particular regions, most notably Catalonia and the Basque Country. In the former, textile manufacturing served as the motor of economic growth during the nineteenth century, whilst iron ore, metallurgy and ship-building underpinned the latter's slightly later emergence as Spain's leading industrial centre. Although Madrid remained the political centre, economic hegemony shifted decisively to Barcelona and Bilbao, where it would remain until the late twentieth century. Catalonia established close trading links with Cuba, where textiles enjoyed preferential treatment. When Cuba was lost to the United States of America in 1898, the deep structural crisis which resulted within the Catalan economy provoked major social tensions and served as a stimulus to the emergence of militant nationalism. In the Basque Country, economic expansion occurred more rapidly and was linked to northern Europe rather than colonial markets. Here, appalling working conditions, combined with the social stresses related to a vertiginous growth in the population, engendered a distinctive brand of nationalism which married elements of racism with anti-industrialism and fervent Catholicism.

The emergence of Catalan and Basque nationalism as potent political forces represented a crisis for the restored Bourbon state's territorial structure. From the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the national question attained a decisive importance in Spanish

politics and became one of the major dynamics in the country's troubled development. Even before the 1898 'disaster' provoked a wave of anti-Madrid nationalism, pressure had been exerted on the central state to recognise regions in addition to provinces. Reform projects by Segismundo Moret (1884) and Francisco Silvela (1891) created thirteen regions with their own governments and councils which – with the exception of León and Murcia – coincided with the historic kingdoms. Further measures by Antonio Maura in the first decade of the new century paved the way for the creation of the *Mancomunitat Catalana* in 1914, a form of regional government which encompassed the provinces of Barcelona, Gerona, Lérida and Tarragona. Its first president was Enric Prat de la Riba, a leading theorist of conservative Catalan nationalism in the *Lliga Regionalista*, which had been founded in 1901 'to work by all legitimate means for the autonomy of the Catalan people within the Spanish state'. In the Basque Country, meanwhile, nationalists won the 1907 mayorial contest in Bilbao, and took control of the Vizcaya local council in 1917.

Regional nationalism severely challenged the political order established under the Restoration Monarchy. However, the generic term 'regional nationalism' obscures the fact that its various specific manifestations were far from uniform in nature. Catalan and Basque nationalism may have emerged as significant political movements in the same period, but their origins, characteristics and demands were divergent. By the same token, the emergence of nationalist consciousness in regions such as Galicia and Andalucía followed distinctive patterns which reflected their own particular historical logic. None the less, one factor which unites the so-called 'historic regions' of Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia is that each has a separate language, a potent element in the construction of the primordial identities often associated with regional nationalism.² In short, the development of Spain's nationalist movements reflects the interlocking influence of both economic and cultural imperatives, the relative balance of each varying according to the region in question.

Until well into the twentieth century, the Spanish state could be seen as 'weak, yet heavy'. Political power was concentrated in the hands of an oligarchic and labour-repressive 'reactionary coalition' (Moore, 1967: 433–52) comprising the monarchy and landed classes together with religious and military elites; however, the diffuse regional composition of the country generated a network of patron–

client relationships – backed up by the threat (and occasional use) of force – through which the central state sought to impose its rule. The intrusive, yet ineffective, central state in turn inhibited the emergence of a strong civil society which could provide a counter-balance to its centralising tendencies. A combination of weak state and weak civil society provided a fertile soil in which germinated the seeds of division that culminated in the Spanish Civil War (1936-9). Only under the Franco dictatorship did the central state begin to function as an *effective* instrument of political control, albeit at the cost of repressing all manifestations of societal incorporation.

Over time, however, the Franco regime underwent a significant transformation from what might be termed 'Hobbesian domination' during its period of economic autarky (1939-59) towards gradual integration into the western liberal capitalist framework. The consequent internationalisation of Spain's economy undermined the bases upon which the Franco state rested, highlighting the growing contradiction between political repression and the demands of economic liberalisation. The regime's loss of legitimacy was reflected in the growth of popular discontent and organised opposition within Spain, and the hesitant emergence of societal initiatives which would lay the basis for the post-Franco transition to democracy (Pérez-Díaz, 1993). The regional dimension of these initiatives, which derived major impetus from the activity of Basque nationalists in particular, was of inestimable importance.

Nationalism and Cultural Identity

The cultural component of nationalist claims has given rise to powerful myths. In the search for an identity which surpassed mere territoriality, many nationalists were prone to emphasise the supposed individuality of their regions – a tendency which was lent added weight by the widespread practice of cultural stereotyping. The two most obvious examples of this phenomenon concern Catalonia and the Basque Country: both regions have seen various nationalist attempts to construct theories of racial or genetic uniqueness. Yet, Galicia too has increasingly emphasised its cultural distinctiveness, a pattern which has been mirrored in many of Spain's regions since the post-Franco restoration of democracy.