Changing Structures, Changing Identities: A Rational Choice Examination of Basque National Identity

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by

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of changes in political structures on the articulation of national identity by Basque elites in Spain. Rational choice variants of constructivist theories of identity suggest that elites create identities according to rational calculations, as they attempt to maintain or elevate their group’s status vis-à-vis other groups, as well as their own status within the in-group. Changes in the structures within which elites operate, however, will alter the available choices for the pursuit of goals and rearrange elite preferences. With the introduction of new opportunity structures in the political environment, nationalist elites can be expected to exploit these variables to their advantage. Using primary school textbooks, this investigation traces the articulation of Basque identity from the Franco regime through the democratic transition and Spain’s accession into the European Union in order to demonstrate the changes that have taken place over time. These changes correspond to structural breaks that resulted in an altered political environment. Thus, it is argued that the observed changes in the articulation of Basque national identity are a result of reordered nationalist preferences.
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I did not realize it at the time, but this research began in many small ways when I was an undergraduate at Lebanon Valley College in Annville, PA. It was there, in the Spanish classes that I took with Professor Iglesias, where I first learned about the Basques. Professor Iglesias believed in teaching more than just vocabulary and grammar; her courses were an immersive experience in food, literature, dance and yes, language. She made Spain seem like the most fascinating country in the world and for me, the Basques were a major source of that fascination. It should have been no surprise to me, then, that when I wrote my very first paper in graduate school at Northeastern University, that I opted to research the Basques. That small spark which started in rural Pennsylvania followed me to Boston, Massachusetts and finally, to Madrid, San Sebastian and Bilbao, Spain.

A dissertation is a daunting thing. I was fortunate to have been shepherded through this process by my incredibly dedicated committee. My sincerest thanks must first go to my advisor, Professor Amilcar Barreto. Not only has he been instrumental in shaping my thoughts on nations and national identity, he was a significant source of moral and emotional support throughout this trying process. He believed in me when I found it difficult to believe in myself. I am not sure that even he realizes the dramatic impact that he has on the lives of his graduate students, but I am certain that this work
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At an institution as large as Northeastern, it is rare that administrators are able to connect directly with students; a small number, however, go out of their way to do so. I was fortunate to have had wonderful interactions with a number of administrators who were instrumental in providing support and guidance throughout my time at Northeastern. Amy Killeen, the Director of Graduate Studies for the College of Social Sciences and Humanities, is by far one of the most dedicated administrators with whom I have ever had the pleasure of working. She was not only helpful, she was also incredibly kind. Logan Wangsgard, the Administrative Coordinator of Graduate Programs, wrote an egregious number of emails on my behalf and stayed on top of details that many lesser
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Basque, Spaniard, European

Social scientists across disciplines have explored the meanings contained in national identities, examining precisely how individuals come to understand and adopt them, linking themselves with untold numbers of strangers by virtue of common characteristics such as language or religion. At times these identities complete and clash with one another; at other times individuals nest them in a different order. From these inquiries emerged two competing paradigms: primordialism and constructivism. Primordialism views national identities as both ancient and naturally embedded in individuals from birth, impervious to change via any means of socialization. For primordialism, what it means to be Basque or Spanish or European is the same for each individual, and remains the same through time. Constructivism, on the other hand, views national identities as artificial constructs. There is no natural version of identity, only the one that has become hegemonic, and no one is born knowing that they are Basque or Spanish, but are taught to adopt those labels via a variety of forms of socialization. Constructivism then, views identities as capable of being altered or manipulated.

Primordialism is attractive to social scientists because it is a parsimonious theory. It simplifies national identity to an easily measurable entity and reduces it to a mutually exclusive check box on a survey. For nationalists, the primordial view of identity is
attractive because it feeds and reinforces the romantic narrative of the nation. We were born to feel the emotional pull of our national anthem, to feel a kinship with individuals we can never know, to fight and die to protect our group. In fact, nationalists will often frame national identity in just this way.

Observations, of course, refute this view of identity. Children born into one identity group, but raised by another identity group will not exhibit attachments to their birth group unless taught to do so. Markers of identity, long extolled by groups as proof of their ancientness or authenticity, have been demonstrated to be relatively recent inventions or co-opted from other groups. We can also observe the evolution of identities over time, as the markers used to delineate the boundary between the in-group and the out-group shift.

It is these instances of identity change with which this investigation is particularly interested. The Basque identity, for example, was first articulated by Sabino de Arana y Goiri in the late nineteenth century. The Aranist articulation embraced two main qualities as the defining aspects of Basqueness: race and religion. Basques were the oldest and purest race in Europe and the most devout Catholics. As a result, membership in the group was determined by surname and by morality: Basques had Basque surnames and possessed a pious devotion to God. Moreover, the Basque identity was articulated by Arana as an exclusive one: ‘Basqueness’ was never compatible with ‘Spanishness’ or any
other type of national identity. Thus, in the Aranist conception, one could be Basque, but they could not also feel as though they were Spanish.

The articulation of Basque identity developed by Sabino Arana endured until the dictatorship of General Francisco Franco. At that point, moderate and radical Basque nationalist groups proffered new articulations of Basque identity. Neither group defined Basqueness in racial terms; they chose, instead to emphasize cultural markers. Euskara, the Basque language, took a particularly important role. The prominence lent to the Basque language in these newer articulations of Basque identity was a fundamental departure from previous ones; previously, Euskara was looked upon with scorn as a peasant language. That it would be held as a defining symbol of Basqueness less than a century after Arana’s death is remarkable. However, the exclusive nature of Basque identity remained a common thread connecting Sabino Arana’s original articulation to the Franco-era revisions.

While the Basque case certainly lends credence to the constructivist perspective of identities as artificial constructs, it also forces us to confront further questions in the quest to better understand national identities. First, if identities are constructed, then what determines the content of those identities? Specifically, what determines which symbols are selected as boundary markers? And when those selected symbols change, as they have in the case of the Basque identity, what is the catalyst?
These questions will form the central questions of this study. It will be argued that symbol selection is a result of the rational calculations of elites, whose interests include differentiating the in-group and the out-group, maintaining or elevating the status of the in-group vis-à-vis the out-group and also securing their own status within the in-group. Changes in symbol selection are then attributable to a change in the calculations, which in turn, are a result of some change in the environment within which these elites are operating. In other words, something shifted the Basque nationalist calculation over the five decades between the Aranist articulation of Basque national identity and more modern articulations. One shift, occurring in the mid-twentieth century, can be linked to the Franco dictatorship. This study argues that a second shift has occurred as a response to Spain’s accession to the European Union, as Basque elites faced an altered political environment that encouraged them to revise their version of Basque identity.

The Spanish case is an attractive choice for this study for a number of reasons. First, the Basque identity has formed the basis of a sustained independence movement that continued long after similar separatist movements abandoned their struggle. This characteristic alone has drawn a great deal of scholarly interest from academics grounded in a wide variety of disciplines. Their interest stems not only from the novelty of a sustained violent separatist movement in twenty-first century Western Europe, but also the very idea of an identity powerful enough to sustain such a movement in a relatively inhospitable environment. At the same time, this fascination with an unusual feature of
the movement has resulted in assertions that the case is unique and incomparable. One of the goals of this research is to dispel this myth.

Second, the Spanish case features multiple sets of elites who are articulating identities that are in direct opposition to one another, as each group attempts to capture the loyalty of an overlapping citizenry. This situation puts each elite in direct opposition to another, which increases the likelihood that the identities will be rearticulated in response to the competing elite. Though this particular investigation will focus on the Basque elites, who are competing with Spanish national elites to have individuals adopt the particular identity that they are selling, some discussion of Spanish national identity articulation will be warranted. Moreover, the presence of multiple elites provides numerous avenues for fruitful research in the future.

Finally, this case features a major environmental shift — Spanish accession to the European Union — that has the potential to create a change in elite preferences. Supranational organizations like the EU can provide an alternative route for sub-state nationalist elites to pursue their aims vis-à-vis the state. As the organization increases the depth and breadth of its involvement in areas previously controlled entirely by the state, it only increases the likelihood that sub-state nationalists, like the Basques, will alter their strategy. Moreover, the EU’s potential as a solidarity-forming unit for the citizenry positions it to be exploited as part of an identity articulation.
The importance of this study stems from its potential contributions to the theoretical literature on national identity, as well as the area studies literature focused upon Spain. It will help further the understanding of the nature of identities and identity change, particularly in regard to how they change and adapt to their environment. Specifically, it will lend supporting evidence to the view of identities as constructed and contingent. In regard to area studies, it will expand our knowledge of the Basque national identity, and how the identity interacts not only with the Spanish identity but also other types or levels of identity. Moreover, it will challenge the underlying sense of uniqueness often evident in literature on the Basques by situating the case in a larger theoretical framework that would be applicable to cases elsewhere. It also promises to aid in gauging the impact of the European Union on the articulation of identities within its member countries. In this regard, it promises to challenge the notion that the EU has failed as an identity-forming entity. Finally, there are also potential implications for policymakers, since identities can be a powerful rallying point or a devastating, divisive force within a country. Understanding the dynamics of their creation can aid in the prevention or diffusion of violent independence movements.

The next chapter of this work will focus on the scholarly debates surrounding national identity construction. Here the concept of a national identity will be defined more specifically and closer examination will be given to the paradigms that have been used to study it. In particular, the Culturalist/Primordialist, Structuralist, and Rational
Choice approaches will each be explored in regard to how they have been used to explain identity genesis and change. The final area of literature that will be examined in Chapter 2 surrounds the European Union and its impact on national identity among its member states and those aspiring to membership. Here, this discussion will cover both theoretical discussions of the EU as a potential solidarity-forming unit, as well as the empirical evidence surrounding the emergence of an EU identity. The final sections will lay out the theoretical and methodological framework for this investigation.

The third chapter presents an historical overview of the Spanish case with specific attention given to the Spanish-Basque relationship. The timeline begins with the Spanish Reconquest of the Iberian Peninsula from the Moors in the 8th century. This very early history is noteworthy, as it will set the nascent Spanish state on a particular historical trajectory that will have far-reaching impacts on its relationship with the Basques. Most important, what is now the Spanish state did not undertake the process of centralization until very late, particularly as compared to its Western European neighbors; rather, it remained a collection of separate kingdoms and principalities. This delay provided a great deal of space for separate identities to emerge. These identities were then nurtured by the existing territorial and political structures; in the Basque case, concepts of universal nobility and the fueros will prove to be particularly salient. When the state finally did attempt to consolidate its control over the entirety of the territory, it created a sense of competition and antagonism that permeates many interactions even today. Later,
these sentiments will be exacerbated by the twentieth-century dictatorships of Miguel Primo de Rivera and General Francisco Franco. The relationship deteriorated so severely during the Franco dictatorship in particular, that it spawned ETA, the Basque militant nationalist group that carried out attacks for over fifty years. At the same time, Basques themselves were divided between more moderate and more radical variants of nationalism, each espousing different goals for the nationalist project. Finally, Spain’s integration into the European institutions and the state’s accession to the EU provided hope to all sides: Basque nationalists celebrate the EU’s potential to erode the power of the state, while the central government uses it as a tool to diffuse regional demands and to combat ETA violence.

The fourth chapter provides a brief overview of the area studies literature surrounding the Spanish case. Again, particular attention is given to literature that focuses upon the Basques, though literature discussing Spanish national identity will also be introduced. This review of the area studies literature will demonstrate two related undercurrents running through this pool of literature. The first is a sense that the Basque case is somehow singular and thus, incomparable. As it will be shown, this sense stems from certain characteristics of the Basque case and is, in some ways, an understandable conclusion to draw. At the same time, one of the fundamental goals of this research is to demonstrate that this is not the case. The second undercurrent is a tendency to examine the Basque identity in isolation. Though partly derived from the belief that Basques are
somehow incomparable to other cases of national identity, this approach fails to recognize that no identity, including the Basque identity, is formed in a vacuum. This investigation seeks to offer an alternative approach.

Chapters 5 and 6 are analytical chapters. At their core, both trace Basque identity articulations over time, beginning with Sabino Arana’s articulation in the late 19th century, continuing through the Franco era, the transition to democracy and to the post-EU present. The aim of these chapters is to demonstrate that at each point in time, Basque nationalist elites were articulating Basque national identity according to their interests. Moreover, each chapter will argue that there was a significant structural shift that triggered a re-ordering of elite preferences and a subsequent rearticulation of identity according to those new preferences. Chapter 5 argues that the Basque nationalist elites responded to the Franco regime’s repression of cultural diversity and articulation of homogenous Spanish identity, attempting to reestablish the boundary between the in-group and out-group in order to preserve the legitimacy of their claims for autonomy. The resulting rearticulation of Basque identity, emphasizing language, remained hegemonic through the transition to democracy and the period that followed it. Chapter 6 examines the Spanish-Basque relationship in the 1990s, characterizing the political context as one of antagonism and stalemate. It argues that Spanish accession to the European Union constituted yet another structural break, constraining elite choices and opening new paths for pursuing elite goals. These changes triggered yet another rearticulation of Basque
national identity such that it is compatible with the idea of ‘Europeanness’. Here, it is argued that support for the European Union and rearticulation of Basque national identity so that it is compatible with European identity is an entirely strategic calculation.

Chapter 7 contains concluding comments. It will reinforce the arguments made in the previous chapters and situate this discussion into the larger context of studies on nations and national identity, the area studies literature and the literature on the European Union. Finally, it shall offer some possible avenues for fruitful future research.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Nationalism and National Identity

This investigation examines competing articulations of Basque and Spanish national identity in the context of a major structural shift — regional integration — via a combination of rational choice and structuralist approaches. The argument for this perspective is derived from a constructivist approach to identity and by focusing on elites, allows for the examination of the decision-making process which results in the articulation and re-articulation of national identities. This approach is particularly useful when investigating why some cultural markers are selected for objectification over others and how elites might be inspired to shift or manipulate those articulations.

The questions asked within this study seek to fill multiple gaps in the literature. Within the literature on national identities, this study demonstrates the usefulness of the rational choice framework, which is often neglected in favor of culturalist or structuralist approaches. Within the literature on the European Union and studies of the impact of regional integration more broadly, it delves deeper into the ways in which these structures and processes may impact national-level identities. Within the Spanish area studies literature, it augments the comparatively small number of studies of Spanish nationalism in general and of post-Franco national identity in particular. Finally, within the Basque area studies literature where Basque identity is often examined in isolation, it
demonstrates that Basque and Spanish identities are not only related, but that each also responds to changes in the other. Moreover, situating the Basque identity in a comparative framework combats a pervasive sense of exceptionalism in the Basque literature and ensures that the findings of this study can be extended to instances of identity articulation elsewhere.

Thus, this investigation is situated at the juncture of three disparate bodies of literature and this review examines each of these groupings in turn. Chapter 2 undertakes a review of the literature concerning the study of national identity. It is particularly interested in sketching the differing approaches to the concept within the literature as well as how those approaches have informed the study undertaken here. Chapter 2 will also examine the literature concerned with the impacts of globalization and regional integration on identity, with particular interest paid to the European Union. Chapter 4 provides an overview of the area studies literature pertaining to the Spanish and Basque cases. The purpose of this particular section is to discuss general trends within the area studies literature, highlighting those that relate most closely to this study, rather than to provide a comprehensive survey.

National identities consist of identifications with a particular type of human collectivity known as a nation. The concept of a nation has been defined in a number of
ways within the scholarly literature.\(^1\) The most parsimonious definitions of a nation begin and end with members’ self-identifications: nations exist when individuals view themselves as belonging to a national group (Seton-Watson 1977). Renan’s (1996 [1882]: 53) definition also hinges upon self-identification as the most important factor in the creation and continuation of nations, as he views the nation as a “daily plebescite” in which affirmation of national membership is akin to consenting to living a common life. In both of these definitions, a nation must emanate from within. It cannot be conceived or imposed from without. While this definition does highlight the fact that national membership is partially self-defined, it does not do much for our understanding of what separates nations from other types of solidarity groups. Perhaps most famously, nations have been described as “imagined communities” which are both limited and sovereign (Anderson 1983). Yet, Anderson’s description is deceptively parsimonious, as it reveals nations to be complex social, political and even territorially-bounded entities; omitting just one of these dimensions transforms the concept into something else entirely.

First and foremost, nations are social phenomena in which groups of individuals share some sense of identification or commonality.\(^2\) There are three components that are crucial for creating and reinforcing this sense of commonality: a shared culture\(^3\) and a highly elaborated collective history anchored by a myth of common ancestry. The first two components foster the necessary identifications with fellow group members, while at the same time, setting the group apart from others; they serve the function of creating a finite ‘us’ and consequently, a ‘them’.\(^4\) Finally, the pivotal myth of common ancestry serves to link the most otherwise disparate social groups within the community in question: the elites and commoners. This is crucial, particularly in cases where the

\(^2\) Both Connor (1994) and Gellner (1983) define the nation in completely social terms. For Gellner, a shared culture is the pivotal component, while for Connor it is a belief in a myth of common ancestry.

\(^3\) The definition of culture adopted here is based upon Gellner’s (1983: 7) definition of culture as a “system of ideas and signs and associations and ways of behaving and communicating.” This allows for the possibility of not only ethnic nations, based upon a shared trait like language or customs, but also civic nations based upon a common set of ideals.

\(^4\) This function is invoked by Anderson’s (1983) description of the imagined community as limited. It recognizes the fact that there is no global nation and that all nations are created by boundaries between in- and out-groups. The order in which these groups are defined and created, however, is up for debate. Danforth (1995), for instance, argues that the other must come before national self. In this way, nations know who they are not before they know who they are.
cultural characteristics of the elite — the high culture — are markedly different from the traits shared by the rest of the community.

However, without a political dimension, there is nothing to distinguish a nation from an ethnic group. Nations are distinct from ethnic groups and other types of collectivities because they are politicized (Danforth 1995). Each nation invokes the right to self-governance, a claim that is both fueled and reinforced by social dimension of the nation, as the uniqueness of the group is used to legitimize the group’s demands for autonomy. Obviously, demands for autonomy exist on a continuum; on one extreme, a nation may only seek to have some control over some policy areas (usually cultural or education policies), while on the other extreme, a nation may seek complete independence, or put another way, the establishment of a nation-state. In a world where nation-states are incredibly rare, the politicized nature of nations is the basis for a great deal of conflict.\(^5\) This is only further complicated by the fact that nationalist movements — those charged with seeking out and securing the demands of the nation — tend to spawn counter-nationalist movements (ibid.).

Finally, it follows from the political nature of nations that they must be territorially grounded (Danforth 1995). A demand for self-governance implicitly requires

\(^5\) It is interesting to note the disconnect between the relative rarity of true nation-states in the world and the assertions made by nationalist leaders (Danforth 1995).
a group to delimit the territory over which they would have autonomy. Thus, nations must have a homeland or lay claim to a specific territory. Michael Hechter (2000) not only views territoriality as the defining feature of a nation, he pushes the dimension a bit further. He argues that the ethnic groups that make up nations must be territorially concentrated, rather than dispersed. Within the realm of scholarship on nationalism and nationalist movements, this additional requirement of territorial proximity for the group in addition to a specific territorial claim is noteworthy. First, it is relatively rare as a definitional requirement of the nation. The vast majority of definitions require only a claim to a territory that the group views as a homeland. They do not require that the group necessarily inhabits that territory (or any part of it) currently or that the group even has inhabited the claimed territory at any point in the past. An additional requirement that the group is itself territorially concentrated is unusual. Second, the implications of this addition are far-reaching. At minimum, it calls into question whether diasporas, or group members who have dispersed away from the main body of the group can be considered as part of a nation. Taken further, it calls into question whether any group could be correctly labeled a nation any longer, as barriers to movement have been lowered and migration has increased both within states and between them. These are not insignificant questions and ultimately, a complete treatment of this dispute falls beyond the scope of

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6 As Tölolyan (1996) explains, the term diaspora was originally coined to describe the dispersion of Jews, but has come to embody terms like immigrant, expatriate, guest-worker and overseas community.
this particular investigation. That said, for the purposes of this discussion, Hechter’s maximal requirement of territorial proximity will not be employed in favor of the more minimal requirement of a specific territorial claim.

If scholars cannot agree upon an accepted definition of the concept of a nation, then it should come as no surprise that there is also very little agreement on their origin and on their age. Are nations and their constituent identities natural, innate and ancient? Or are they constructed and modern? Within the academic literature, there are two major schools of thought: primordialism and constructivism.

Primordialism views nations as naturally occurring collectivities and their constituent identities as ancient bonds, present across both temporal and territorial space (Kohn 1944; Huntington 1993). Some scholars within this school of thought have attempted to link genetics and nationalism, viewing nations and nationalism as efforts to protect genetic pools by kinship groups (Van den Berghe 1979). Most scholars who fall under the primordialist umbrella, however, have tended to view nations as the inevitable consequence of cultural diversity, wherein cultural markers trigger cooperation among those individuals who share the same markers, while triggering competition and conflict with those individuals who do not (Geertz 1973). In other words, nations generate

7 An example of this type of thinking about nations is Samuel Huntington’s (1993) assertion that the world is organically broken up into civilizations on the basis of cultural
nationalism, or put another way, the human bond precedes the politicization of that bond. Moreover, the supposed fundamental nature of these identities, their innateness, results in an assumption that these identities are imperious to change and to socialization. As a result, nationalism is viewed as a natural and primordial urge ingrained in our genetic makeup.

However, primordialism goes a bit astray when it assumes that cultural markers are fixed and that the categories created by these markers are exclusive when in fact, they are quite fluid. This is evident on both the individual and the group level. Individuals have been demonstrated as emphasizing or adopting different cultural markers in order to inhabit different ethnic/national categories (Waters 1990). They can also be socialized into an entirely different group identity than the one that they were born into, something that would not be possible if national identities were indeed innate; adopted children, for instance, will identify with the group into which they have been socialized. Finally, at the group level, the cultural markers that serve as group signifiers — those basic ties that are supposed to be the driving force behind the primal urge of nationalism — have been known to change over time. Primordialism has not been successful in answering these challenges to its tenets.

and religious markers, the dividing lines of which will constitute the lines of future conflicts.
The second main school of thought, known as constructivism, addresses the criticisms of primordialism. Constructivism argues that national identities are not natural or innate, but that they are artificial creations which emerged as a result of a specific set of circumstances during a specific historical period (Anderson 1983; Connor 1994; Danforth 1995; Geary 2002; Massad 2001). Thus, constructivists are diametrically opposed to primordialists, viewing the nation as a European invention of the 17th and 18th centuries.\(^8\) Constructivists argue that certain combinations of factors and structural conditions present only in modernity made identification with the nation not only possible, but necessary. Without such identifications and the cultural homogeneity that they fostered, industrial capitalist societies could not function; thus, genuine nation-states needed to be created (Anderson 1983; Gellner 1994; Hechter 2000). Technological advances, like print media, made these acts of imagination possible, as they connected strangers with one another and with the nation (Anderson 1983). Thus, according to constructivists, nations cannot be ancient. It is nationalism that creates nations, as the political necessity precedes the social bond (Hobsbawm 1992).

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\(^8\) Patrick J. Geary (2002) points out that even during the Middle Ages, elites identified with a number of different identities — religion, kinship, lordship, social stratum — but identification with the nation was not the most important; instances where the nation would supersede other social identities would not occur until much later. Further, he argues, the pivotal myth of common ancestry — the essential link between elites and masses that must be present for a national identity to exist — did not emerge until after the French Revolution. Up to that point, elites separated themselves from commoners through a number of tactics.
Yet, this view of nations and national identities leaves some important questions unanswered, precisely because it does not take their existence for granted. If they are not natural, then how are they constructed? Specifically, from where do they emerge and by what processes?

Constructivist scholars have largely focused upon elites as the most important figures driving the creation and articulation of national identities. Though this group certainly includes the economic elite, it can also be more broadly conceived to include ecclesiastics, academics and members of the intelligentsia; those that Gramsci (1971) termed ‘the intellectuals’. The functions that intellectuals perform in identity articulation are both reflective and productive. In one respect, intellectuals are ‘thinkers’ who contemplate and comment upon the world around them. At the same time, however, they have the potential to shape and reinvent that world (Kennedy and Suny 1999). Seymour Martin Lipset (1963: 333) echoes this sentiment by describing intellectuals as those who “create, distribute and apply culture”. This productive capability, and the resulting emphasis placed on intellectuals by constructivist scholars, is rooted in certain advantages that intellectuals have over other groups in not just producing possible identities, but also in disseminating them (Hardin 2002).

At the most basic level, intellectuals have the faculties and intellect required to craft a message, either due to sheer natural ability or higher levels of formal education. It
is no easy task to articulate an identity when one considers how complex that process is: disparate cultural markers must be linked in a coherent way, common group experiences must be given meaning, history must be framed in a way that is congruent with the narrative and any inconvenient inconsistencies must be suppressed or forgotten (Kennedy and Suny 1999: 2). This process is as necessary as it is complicated. Without a coherent, attractive identity and narrative in place, there is nothing around which to rally a group. Intellectuals serve this function.

However, an ideology, philosophy or identity is nothing more than a possibility until it is disseminated and adopted by large groups of people. This is a crucial characteristic of intellectuals as they are considered here and sets them apart from mere ‘thinkers’: intellectuals serve a public function and create for a decidedly public end (Said 1994). Toward this end, they control a number of the most crucial resources in society — everything from money to the means of production — and have access to a wide array of communications both by virtue of their domination of these societal resources and by virtue of their aforementioned higher levels of formal education. In short, they are the only group capable of selling an idea, an image, on a wide enough scale for it to gain general acceptance by a community. Just as important is the perceived importance of all things associated with societal elites; everything from ideas, to

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9 A much more in-depth discussion of this process is undertaken further in this chapter.
language, to fashion is automatically elevated when it is associated with elites. Thus, not only will these ideas travel further and more quickly, they will also be lent a certain amount of credibility due to the status of their origins. Thus, the mobilization of ethnic groups necessary for the genesis of a national movement is made possible by intellectuals (Rudé 1995: 4).

The construction of a national identity begins with the demarcation of an in-group (‘us’) and an out-group (‘them’). Obviously, these two conceptions are linked — who ‘we’ are depends upon who ‘we’ are not and vice versa. To be sure, it is often that “people know who they are not before they know who they are” (Danforth 1995: 56). This demarcation can be achieved through the invocation of a number of different concepts or markers via a process called objectification (Handler 1984). It is these markers, used alone or in combination, that create the boundaries between one group and another — between the ‘us’ and the ‘them’ — by highlighting the traits that confirm the contrast between religion, race and common cultural traditions (Barreto 2001; Dragojevic 2005). This boundary, once articulated, can then be reinforced by a variety of actions, from the framing of citizenship laws that determine who can be part of the nation and who is excluded to the outright manipulation of literature and history (Trevor-Roper 1983; Massad 2001).
In another direct contradiction to the primordialist assertion that identities are fixed and unchangeable, constructivist scholars have noted that markers chosen to define a national identity can and do change over time (Barth 1969). In these cases, identities that were previously articulated through the objectification of one set of markers are rearticulated by making use of alternative markers. Thus, identities that were created through an emphasis on religion may, over time, come to emphasize language instead (Dragojevic 2005).

Beyond this overarching debate over the nature of nations and national identities, there are disagreements regarding which specific factors are most important for driving their emergence and evolution over time. Some scholars isolate cultural factors as the most important for explaining national identity, while others point to economic factors. Broadly, these factors shall be categorized and discussed according to the three comparative political frameworks: culture, structure and choice. These frameworks not only point us to the important explanatory variables, they also condition the types of questions that scholars ask as well as the types of methods that they employ.

Cultural approaches to studies of national phenomena examine the formative role of culture and cultural markers, such as language or religion in the development of national identities. This paradigm conceptualizes culture as a system of meaning that individuals use to manage their daily worlds. It forms the basis of social and political
identities which impact how individuals interact (Ross 1997). Here, the link between culture and nationalism is very straightforward: cultural markers unite and divide human populations, leading to cooperation among those who are culturally similar and conflict between those who are not. Some scholars view nations and national identities as a result of an evolutionary imperative to survive, where natural selection favored individuals who were able to cooperate and pool resources with others. Those whose genes were passed on were those who were able to develop strong social bonds; those bonds were most easily forged with individuals who were closely related. If we accept this view, then national identities, which are merely politicized versions of these ancient, ethnic/kin bonds, are hardwired into human biology. This is very much the position of primordialism, to which culturalist studies are inextricably linked; through the lens of culturalism, just as in primordialism, identities are ancient, immutable and exclusive. Thus, Samuel Huntington’s thesis of the Clash of Civilizations is not only an example of primordialism, it is also an example of culturalist scholarship (1993).

Of course, this overlap between the way in which scholars view the nature of nations and the factors which they choose to isolate as explanatory variables leaves culturalist studies open to the same criticisms leveled at primordialism. By viewing identities as immutable and exclusive, culturalism cannot explain instances when individuals shed one identity in order to adopt a different one. More important for this
particular investigation, they cannot explain when the cultural markers that create the boundary between groups change.

Another challenge for cultural studies of national identity is the vagueness inherent in the concept of culture and the difficulties posed to scholars as they try to observe it (Ross 1997). For instance Samuel Huntington’s civilizations are based upon both particular cultural markers — language, religion, history, etc. — and self-identification. However, even Huntington admits that the boundaries of these supposed fundamental units are not clear and that it is difficult to determine where one civilization ends and another begins.

Finally, culture does not hold a great deal of explanatory power for the Basque case. Such an approach cannot explain why the cultural markers used to delineate the boundary between Basques and non-Basques changed over time. According to culturalist/primordialist views of identity, this should not happen because identities are immutable. Second, culturalism also cannot explain why Basque nationalism emerged in Spain. If it is true that cultural markers unite and divide groups, then it should follow that groups sharing identical cultural markers should demonstrate similar behaviors. However, French Basques did not develop the same type of nationalist movement that Spanish Basques did, despite sharing identical cultural markers with Spanish Basques and experiencing the same type of divisions with the majority culture of their country.
The second major theoretical framework is structuralism. This school of thought draws heavily from Weber and Marx, looking to institutional environments or underlying economic conditions as explanatory variables.

Early structural theories of nationalism drew heavily from the Weberian-inspired modernization school of thought, crudely dividing the world into modern societies and traditional ones. With an explicitly Western liberal democratic bias, modern societies were characterized as those whose governmental structures featured centralized political authorities, devolution of political power to adult citizens and a move away from more traditional sources of power, such as clerics and the aristocracy (Eisenstadt 1964). Furthermore, modernization theory viewed ethnic attachments — and thus, the national identities that were built upon them — as characteristic of traditional societies. “Nationalism — and all that goes with it in terms of human sentiment and public policy — is a hangover from the world of traditional societies” (Rustow 1990: 5). As societies underwent the process of modernization/Westernization, modernization theory assumed that these traditional attachments would fall away and those attachments would shift to the state. Thus, modernization theory predicted the eventual endpoint of sub-state nationalism; when all states were ‘modernized’, ethnic attachments would give way to attachments to the newly created sovereign states which were prevalent in the post-World War II era. Of course, this was not the case. Not only did ethnic attachments in former colonial states fail to shift to newly-created sovereign states, nationalist movements
emerged in already advanced, industrial states. Modernization theory was unable to explain these events and its popularity waned.

Marx also predicted the end of nationalism, as ethnic attachments were one of the identities that the proletariat was expected to discard as its class consciousness was raised and the working classes shook off the oppression of the bourgeoisie. Despite this challenge, Marxist-inspired theories gained traction within the nationalist literature. One variant, known as internal colonialism, put a Marxist spin on earlier theories of uneven development. In these earlier theories, territorial cleavages created by the capitalist economy produced feelings of frustration and resentment on the part of inhabitants of both underdeveloped and overdeveloped regions; these negative feelings spawned group attachments and thus, nationalist claims (Bookman 1991). Theories of internal colonialism view the state as integral to this process. Here, the state creates and sustains regional economic discrepancies in order to exploit peripheral regions for the benefit of the dominant region, usually near the capital (Hechter 1975). In both variants of the Marxist theories, territorially bounded national groupings behave as classes would in classical Marxist theory, such that class conflict takes on a nationalist flavor.

However, these Marxist theories have been challenged by the difficulty inherent in conclusively identifying regions as either over-developed or under-developed. Moreover, the theories are challenged by the emergence and endurance of nationalist
movements in both over-developed and under-developed regions. For instance, Cataluña and the Basque Country were both relatively over-developed regions in comparison with the whole of Spain, while Scotland and Wales were comparatively under-developed. Elsewhere, Québécois nationalism exists in a region that is neither particularly over-developed nor under-developed, while Flemish nationalism emerged in relative poverty, but endured as the region increased its wealth in relation to the whole of Belgium. Thus, theories of internal colonialism cannot account for similar outcomes in such varying circumstances. It is possible then, that while economic tensions may make existing ethnic tensions worse, they do not spawn them in the first place (Barreto 2009: 24).

More recent structural theories of sub-state nationalism have centered upon the impact of globalization (Keating and McGarry 2001). Early theories assumed that globalization would have a homogenizing effect on states, thereby diluting cultural diversity. More recently, however, scholars have posited that the hallmarks of globalization — free trade, regional integration and technological interconnectedness — will weaken the state and loosen its ties to citizens (Scholte 2001). This situation has provided an opening for regions to take steps to protect their cultural and economic interests, leading to claims for greater political power and in some cases, secession.

However, most scholars who bring globalization into their work do not view it as replacing other cultural, structural or political factors. Rather, globalization merely
exacerbates forces that are already at work. Indeed, globalization cannot account for early sub-state nationalism, nor can it explain why Spanish Basques fostered a strong nationalist movement, while French Basques did not. However, Manuel Castells has argued that technological advancements provide sub-state nationalist groups with greater opportunities to promote their identities; in his work, Castells (2000) focuses on the Basques in particular.

Moreover, studies of globalization recognize that changes to the state have the potential to transform sub-state nationalisms. If globalization transforms the state, then this transformation has the potential to change the dynamics of sub-state national groups. This is particularly illuminating if moves toward regional integration, like the European Union, are conceptualized as part of the globalization process. Efforts toward regional integration, which go far beyond simply economic considerations, can change the role of the state, its capabilities and its relationship with its territory. This has the potential to filter down to the state’s relationship with sub-state national groups. A fuller discussion of this process will be undertaken shortly.

Of the three comparative frameworks, rationalism is by far the least often employed in studies of national identities. Some scholars, like Eric Hobsbawm (1990: 8), automatically reject it as inappropriate for the study of nationalism. Others view nationalism and thus, national identities, as fundamentally irrational because of the
inconsistencies inherent in the ways that cultural markers are used to objectify group boundaries, but cannot actually maintain them (Edwards 1985: 37). Area scholars and those oriented toward more historical-descriptive approaches are particularly unreceptive to this approach. To some degree, the dearth of rational choice studies is somewhat misleading, as it is common for authors to include rational choice assumptions implicitly. Theories employing political explanations for nationalism, where elites play a central role in imbuing objective cultural characteristics with subjective meaning and politicizing identities, do tend to bring in interests, arguing that elites will tend to define group interests in terms of their own (Brass 1991). However, these studies present nationalism as an almost unintended consequence of elite power struggles, where elites may adopt the language of nationalism in order to out-compete political opponents.

Yet, the relatively small number of truly rationalist studies should be viewed more as an opportunity for further exploration rather than any real indication of the appropriateness of the framework for studies of national identity. In fact, it will be

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10 For instance, Lecours (2006) studies the emergence of Basque nationalism in the context of the historical progression of the Spanish state. He presents his work as a historical institutional approach, in which the various forms of the Spanish state represented critical junctures for Basque nationalism, as they narrowed the developmental pathway of Basque politics. However, this path dependent approach hinges upon the interests of the Basque elite; the different forms of the state and Spanish nationalism forced elites to reevaluate their interests and not only found a nationalist movement, but also perpetuate it. Despite the fact that Lecours is not self-consciously employing a rational approach, its assumptions drive his thesis.
demonstrated that the rational choice framework complements constructivist scholarship and is particularly appropriate for studies of identity articulation because of its focus on decision-making processes. Such an approach, which is related to more politically-oriented approaches, views elites as ethnic entrepreneurs who strategically manipulate identities in order to gain or maintain political power. Thus, the articulation of the national identity is accomplished through the conscious selection of specific markers which maximize elite interests (Barreto 2001). It is this approach that will provide the basis for this study.

The rational choice perspective focuses on micro-level phenomena; specifically, the decision-making processes of individuals. A core assumption of this approach is that the actors are rational or that there is “an optimal correspondence between ends and means” (Tsebelis 1990: 18). A rational actor will always select the highest ranked course of action from a range of alternatives that the actor has ordered transitively according to their satisfaction of his or her interests (Downs 1957). In this utilitarian view of rationality, individuals seek to maximize their expected utility (Tsebelis 1990). Utility, as defined by Bentham’s ‘principle of utility,’ is the maximization of pleasure and the minimization of pain (Bentham 1988). Thus, individuals select courses of action that maximize the things and situations that bring pleasure to them, while minimizing those that are painful.
When social scientists first began borrowing rational choice concepts from economists and adapting them to their own studies, they tended toward an almost exclusive focus on monetary and material ends. Individuals were expected to make choices that would maximize their profits and minimize their losses. However, even Bentham understood sources of pleasure and pain more broadly than the strictly material. Today, rational choice scholars draw on an expanded repertoire of conceivable interests that include some that are non-economic and non-material in nature (Levi 1997). For instance, Anthony Downs famously characterized political parties as vote-maximizers seeking to win elections. For Downs’s (1957) vote-maximizers, the desired end was elected office. The challenge in applying the principle of utility to social interests is that they cannot be quantified in the same way that material interests can. As a result, we cannot know the exact distance between preferred social outcomes in the same way that we can gauge the difference in preference between an outcome that would result in a $10,000 gain versus a $1,000 gain for a materially oriented individual. Yet, we can still analyze the crucial ordinal preferences that guide individual action.

Despite its explicit focus on individuals, rational choice approaches can be used to study groups — in this case, an elite — when the preferences of the group are shared; essentially, it operates like a unitary rational actor (Straffin 1993). For nationalist-minded elites then, outcomes are ranked according to a desire to maintain their status — a desire that is two-fold. Not only do they seek to maintain or enhance their status within the in-
group, but they also seek to elevate the status of their group vis-à-vis other groups (Barreto 2001). Thus, the method underlying the objectification of certain traits (and the corresponding exclusion of others) is linked to the effect that those markers will have on their status. The objectification of certain markers benefits certain elites, so with a finite number of cultural traits available, elites will select those which serve the purpose of differentiating the group from outsiders while maintaining their privilege within the in-group (Barreto 2001). The most effective markers will maximize the disparity between the in-group and the out-group, effectively marking the boundary with a stark contrast that demonstrates the in-group to be either equal to or (preferably) better than the out-group. Moreover, the trait must minimize within-group differences and maintain elite privilege within the group while linking elites and masses together (Barreto 2001). Thus, the particular articulation of a national identity can be viewed as the culmination of a set of strategic choices made by elites.

The advantage of adopting a rational choice approach for this investigation is that the clear conditions set forth in the model spawn testable theories regarding when we might expect a change in the articulation of a national identity. In the model, actors with certain goals, whether they are material, social or some combination of the two, select from a range of alternatives that which maximizes their utility. Tinkering with the two main inputs — actors, their goals or both — is likely to result in a different outcome. For instance, goals dictate the ordering of means or alternative courses of action, such that
altering the goals of an actor will result in a corresponding change in their course of action. Furthermore, goals are determined by the actors in the model such that changing the actors is likely to affect the goals used in the model, which in turn, will alter the outcome.

In the case of national identity articulation, the nationalist-minded elites are the actors of interest and the goal toward which they are oriented is the maintenance/elevation of status within the in-group and vis-à-vis out-groups. The alternative courses of action or strategies from which they choose are the possible combinations of markers that may be objectified in order to create the boundary between the in-group and the out-group. In this particular incarnation, changing the actors in the model would be akin to changing the composition of the elite that is articulating a particular version of identity. Recall that the objectification of certain markers privileges certain elites at the expense of others such that different markers will distribute status differently. Changing the composition of the elite means that the strategies that elites use to reach their status-driven goals — the markers that they choose to objectify — may change if the markers currently used to delineate the boundary between in-group and out-group do not maximize the status of the new elite.

Yet, to this point, we are left with a model that is very sanitary and unrealistically tidy. One complication is that though the rational choice framework is methodologically
individualist, it actually focuses on the aggregation of individual choices (Levi 1997). This focus reorients our attention to the fact that decision-makers are not operating in a vacuum; rather, their selections are impacted by the decisions made by others and vice versa such that actors respond to the decisions of other actors (Ibid.). This logic carries over to national identities. Recall that the goals of nationalist minded elites include the two-fold maintenance of status — their own status within their in-group and their in-group’s status vis-à-vis the out-group. Limited, exclusive and now in direct competition with one another, the preferences of nationalist elites are likely to be responsive to the decisions made by a competing elite, particularly when they are competing for the ‘hearts and minds’ of identical or overlapping populations. Thus, this would be the case not only for rival in-group elites articulating a competing version of a single identity — an ethnic versus a civic conception, for instance — but also for rival elites of out-groups competing to elevate the status of their own respective in-group. Thus, when the strategies of those competing elites change and alter their selected course of action, it is likely to impact the strategies and course of action of any rival elites.

Moreover, it is not only that elites compete with one another, but that sometimes their goals and preferences compete, as well. Sometimes, elites must balance their pursuit of goals, foregoing the maximization of one goal and accepting what might appear to be a sub-optimal outcome in order to pursue a different goal simultaneously. Such a situation was captured by Tsebelis’s (1990) Nested Games approach. Tsebelis used this model to
explain why party elites in Belgium at times appeared to act against their electoral interest by opting to cooperate with parties across the socioreligious divide. As Tsebelis pointed out, the voting public would prefer noncooperation to cooperation. If Belgian political parties were true vote maximizers as Downes (1957) argues they are, they would pursue a strategy of noncooperation in parliament. However, pursuing this strategy would always result in parliamentary deadlock, where nothing would be able to get done. Thus, political elites balance their desire to maximize votes with the desire to pass key legislation and therefore, realize payoffs in the parliamentary arena. Tsebelis’s model demonstrates the necessity of acknowledging that elites operate in multiple arenas and thus, may have multiple goals that they must balance.

A final possible source of change in the rational choice model is drawn from an alternative comparative political perspective — structuralism. Structuralists, in contrast to the micro-focus of rational choice scholars, focus on macro-phenomena — large-scale processes like modernization, significant social relationships, formal organizations in governments and underlying economic circumstances (Lichbach and Zuckerman 1997). Structuralists resist the inherent reductionism of a strict rational choice approach where little to no consideration may be given to the constraints placed upon individual choice by structure, when it is these structures that create the environment within which agents choose (Katznelson 1997).
The problem with this rhetoric is that it suggests that the two paradigms are somehow mutually exclusive. However, they can be combined in order to effectively understand changes in actor strategies. In a rational choice model, the options available to actors are not infinite. They are constrained both by scarcity and the structures within which actors operate (Levi 1997). Since structures impact the available courses of action, altering structures is likely to alter the availability of certain options or alter actors’ perceptions of their interests in such a way that changes the way in which options are ranked. Thus, to overlook changes in the structures within which actors operate is to overlook a major source of change in actor goals and strategies. To be sure, rational choice scholars have paid increasing attention to the context within which elites operate and the effects that it may have on decision-making (Tsebelis 1990; Levi 1997).

Such a rational choice-structuralist approach was adopted by Elisabeth Jean Wood (2000) in her study of democratization in El Salvador and South Africa. In both countries, elites who had previously opposed any kind of liberalization negotiated an end to authoritarian rule. A rational choice orientation would suggest that the goals of these elites changed and thus, altered their strategies accordingly. However, the overarching goal of elites remained the preservation of their privileges (both material and social) in society. What then, explains the shift in strategy, from supporting the maintenance of the authoritarian regime to support for a transition to democracy?
Wood argues that a sustained insurgency by the lower classes reshaped the interests and altered the opportunities of economic elites in such a way that made a transition to democracy preferable to the continuation of the resistance. In El Salvador, economic elites who had sustained an export-based agricultural economy with coercive labor practices found that sector declining in favor of commercial and service sectors as the civil war dragged on; as the need for the provision of coercive labor institutions by the authoritarian regime declined, there was a corresponding dampening in economic elite support for authoritarianism that left room for eventual democratization. In South Africa, the uncertainty brought on by the sustained insurgency led to declining investment and cast doubt upon the durability of the apartheid regime. In both cases, economic elites wished to maintain their privileges, but the increasing costs of a resistance that appeared to be able to continue indefinitely provided a catalyst for elites to reexamine and reassess their support for authoritarian regimes.

Yet, while the insurgency provided the catalyst for elites to reexamine their options regarding support for a particular type of regime, other structural changes played key roles in the eventual transition to democracy by both constraining elite choices and by reassuring economic elites that they could retain their existing privileges even in a more liberal environment. One of the most crucial of these changes was the end of the Cold War and the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe, which had a two-fold effect. As democratization swept over these countries, continued elite opposition to democratization
was far less tenable. At the same time, the demise of socialism and growing dominance of neoliberal economic policies meant that policies requiring major redistribution of assets were also less tenable, making a transition to democracy less likely to threaten the assets of the economic elite. Thus, while the insurgency provided the catalyst for the reexamination of elite courses of action regarding regime type, the fundamental changes in the international structures within which these elites were operating introduced new variables that not only served to constrain their options, but also to make certain options more attractive; as a result, alternative courses of action were re-ranked in such a way that made democracy preferable to continued authoritarianism.

For scholars who are interested in studying how structural changes impact decision-making processes, Wood’s research also suggests that it may be useful to pay close attention to the nature of structural changes, as they may be more or less relevant for elite goals and strategies. The types of structural changes that affected elites in El Salvador and South Africa were highly relevant for their material orientation, having both direct (increasing costs of insurgency) and indirect (dominance of neoliberal economic policies) economic implications. This congruence suggests that structural changes may be most likely to impact elite decision-making when the changes that occur are highly relevant to elite interests and strategies.
The integration of the rational choice and structuralist frameworks in *Forging Democracy from Below* provides a sound foundation for studying how elite decision-making processes change in response to fundamental changes in political structures. Thus, even though Wood’s study is not directly related to studies of national identity, it can be useful for studying situations in which elites objectifying markers of identity find themselves in a landscape that has been structurally altered. In such cases, we would expect that the change in structure — particularly when the nature of the changes are relevant to elite goals — would make available new options, remove others and that these new variables would spurred nationalist elites to shuffle the ordering of their preferred courses of action. The culmination of these events would be a rearticulation of identity.

In order to understand why a structural change like accession into the European Union might be expected to cause a shift in identity articulation, it is important to delve into the literature on globalization, international regimes and regional integration. In this section, though more general comments will be made, specific attention will be paid to the literature focused on the European Union. Not only will we examine the impacts that the aforementioned processes will have on identity, we will also examine the impact that the EU is having on state and sub-state nationalism.

Within the literature, there are three major perspectives on the possible impacts that globalization and regional integration will have on national identities. At the
beginnings of integration, many Western scholars and policymakers believed that growing interconnectedness and integration would render nationalism obsolete. These expectations found support in modernization theory, which predicted that nationalism would decline as result of socioeconomic development (Csergo and Goldgeier 2004). Obviously, nationalism did not fall away as organizations like NATO, and the European Union emerged and expanded. In fact, in many cases, nationalist movements strengthened and even emerged where they did not previously exist.

A second view of the impact of these integrative processes expects them to be divisive forces. These scholars point to the fact that intensified contact among populations sharpens the sense of differences among groups of people because they are confronted with a concrete image of ‘them’. Since we know who we are not before we know who we are, these scholars posit that increased interdependence has actually entrenched existing national identities and even spurred new ones rather than creating some kind of macro-regional or even global identity (Marden 1997; Herb 1999).

The third view is that, while these forces might be disruptive in the short run, they will eventually result in the development of supranational identities and the transfer of some measure of loyalty to that supranational body (Risse 2005). Theoretically, this

\[\text{\textsuperscript{11}}\text{In fact, for some scholars, this transfer of loyalty is one measure of the degree of integration and thus necessary for integration to occur; though, it is important to note that it is not necessarily viewed as a pre-condition for the initial stages of integration (Deutsch}\]
view draws upon a conceptualization of political units as solidarity-forming entities, where political units create attachments to the unit itself as well as bonds between individuals who are part of or who are affected by that particular political unit (Olsen 1996). Historically, the state monopolized these bonds, but that dominance is increasingly challenged by sub-state and regional entities (Allardt 1994: 96). In regard to the European Union, this view suggests that, as the bloc expands its competences and as its presence in the everyday lives of its citizens becomes more noticeable, attachment to the EU and to fellow EU citizens will form. For instance, developments such as the issuance of EU passports and the adoption of regulations that permit EU citizens to exercise defined citizenship rights throughout the union are encouraging people to think about Europe as a significant political-territorial entity that has real meaning for their lives (see Séché 1988).

The empirical evidence, in the form of national surveys, is mixed on this point. On one hand, very few individuals identify themselves as “European” rather than some state or sub-state identity. In the most recent Eurobarometer survey, the EU average of

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*et al.* 1957; Haas 1958; Adler and Barnett 1998). In particular, Haas (1958) implicitly assumes that there is a kind of positive feedback loop where instrumental interests lead to initial integration (and a transfer of authority to a new body), which then leads to increasing identification with that new body, resulting in further integration.

12 In addition to numerous quantitative studies on this topic (see, e.g. Menéndez-Alarcón 2000; Hooghe and Marks 2004; Opp 2005), the Eurobarometer surveys offer excellent cross-national, longitudinal measures of European identity formation. The questions that
national respondents who replied that they felt primarily European was 3%, while national-level responses ranged from over 11% in Luxembourg to only 1% in Sweden (European Commission 2013). These types of survey responses, with such low levels of responses reporting a European identity lead to assertions that there is no such thing as a European identity.

However, this reaction is based on a number of erroneous assumptions and interpretations. First, it assumes that identity is a zero-sum game, where a European identity cannot coexist with other identities. This is an unfortunate tendency for studies of European identity (Ruggie 1993). It is assumed that attachments to Europe must override other identities in order to be real. Thus, if an individual does not feel wholly or mostly European, this seemingly does not count as a European identity. Moreover as a zero sum game, if individuals report a feeling of Europeanness, this must automatically mean that they feel less Spanish or Basque (Murphy 1999). However, the empirical data do not seem to support this view. If we examine the Eurobarometer data further, we see that responses claiming a European identity alongside of a state or sub-state identity are

have been used as the most direct measures of identity include: “In the near future, do you see yourself as… (nationality) only, (nationality) first and European, European first and (nationality) or European only?” “Do you feel like a citizen of the European Union?” Some studies also employ the use of other questions, such as support for further integration and positive/negative evaluations of the European Union as proxies for EU identification (European Commission, 2014).
sizable. Around half of the national respondents predict that they will first identify with their state or sub-state identity and second, with a European one (European Commission 2013). Thus, it certainly cannot be said that a European identity does not exist at all. Moreover, it cannot be said that an individual cannot identify with Europe as well as some other national group.

There are scholars who argue against this zero sum view of identity (Hass 1958; Risse 2005). Along the same lines, Thomas Risse (2005) argues that both the nation and Europe are ‘imagined communities’ and that people can feel a part of both communities without having to choose some sort of primary identification. Risse conceptualizes two different models for these multiple identities; regardless of which of these two views one adopts, the key point for the purposes of this study is that identities are not mutually exclusive. First, they can be nested, one identity inside of another, like “concentric circles or Russian Matruska dolls” (ibid: 295). This conception suggests that there is a kind of hierarchy among people’s loyalties, where ‘Europe’ forms the outer boundary and the national identity (be it state or sub-state) forms the core. This view finds some support in the Eurobarometer results, where individuals who do hold multiple identifications rank their national identification higher than their pan-regional one.

The second conceptualization is what Risse (2005) terms the ‘marble cake’ model. Here, components of identity do not remain neatly separated, but instead blend
into one another, such that ‘Basque’ cannot really be separated from ‘European’. Such a conception of identity not only allows for multiple identities, it also allows for non-hierarchical identities (Murphy 1999). One corollary of this model is that European identity might have different meanings for different people, since European identity will interact with other identities in different ways. This may explain why Portuguese nationalists are more likely to support the EU than British nationalists; the notion of being Portuguese already contains some attachment to Europe, while this is not the case for Britishness. Thus, there may not be a homogenous European identity, but a flexible and contingent one (Marcussen et al 1999; Diez Medrano 2003).

The second problem with interpreting survey data to conclude that a European identity does not exist is that it is ignoring a basic tenet of identity formation: elites are the most important formulators and disseminators of identity, while the public will be more skeptical (Risse 2005). The elite must articulate the identity and sell it to the populace before the populace will adopt it. Thus, while it is possible that the survey data is revealing that the public has rejected a European identity, it is also possible that they are still internalizing it, particularly when for most, the impact that the EU has on their day-to-day lives is still somewhat ‘fuzzy’ (Risse 2005). There are a number of studies which support the idea that there is an elite consensus and amenability to the EU and European identity that vastly outpaces that of the general public (Spence 1998;
Menéndez-Alarcón 2000). Thus, it is likely that some elites are not only articulating a European identity, but that they are doing so alongside national identities.

However, the overall orientation that this discussion takes toward identity construction conceptualizes it as an interest-driven enterprise. Thus, in order for elites to construct a European identity, it must be in their interest to do so. In other words, elites must see some kind of instrumental value in articulating and disseminating a sense of ‘Europeanness’ either in place of or in addition to existing national identities. At heart is the overall thesis of this work: that regional and global integrative processes change domestic and international opportunity structures for nationalist elites.

For Basque nationalists, and other nationalist elites seeking maximal autonomy within the confines of a state, this value is two-fold. First, the EU represents an erosion of sovereignty and a vehicle for the transformation of the state, as it increases its policy-making and enforcement capabilities among its member states (Keating 2000). The process of integration has undermined social solidarity, weakened the ability to states to manage their economies, and as the EU extends its policy competences into areas such as security and human rights, it has challenged member states’ autonomy over affairs within their own borders. As Keating points out, by creating a new layer of political authority, the EU irreparably weakens the doctrine of absolute sovereignty (Ibid.: 30).
Second, at the same time that it is weakening the sovereignty of the state, the EU provides an alternative political arena for the very nationalists who are, by definition, challenging the sovereignty of the state. This allows nationalists to remove the state from the equation, leapfrogging it to pursue their goals on the EU level. There is considerable literature on the ability of regions to circumvent the state by operating on the EU level (Petschen 1993; Jones and Keating 1995). On one hand, it offers ample opportunities to influence policy through multiple channels. For example, the EU enables regions to pursue transnational networks with other regions that can serve to provide leverage for the region vis-à-vis the state (Whitehead 1996). On another hand, it offers an arena where nationalist groups can advance their claims without coming into a catastrophic conflict with the state (Keating 2000). It is possible, however, that regions will not remain content to simply pursue political goals within the bodies of the European Union and instead, will be encouraged to pursue secessionist policies. For instance, the Scottish National Party has, over time, come to view the EU as a vehicle to make statehood a viable option due to the fact that the EU has a common market that would allow continued access to the English market. In the 1970s, the loss of that market access was a significant deterrent to seeking independence; the costs were simply too high (Csergo and Goldgeier 2004).\footnote{The 2014 referendum on Scottish independence is particularly instructive here. Though the referendum was eventually unsuccessful by a margin of nearly 10 percentage points, the discourse leading up to the vote featured very similar logic. Supporters countered fears about independence by arguing that an independent Scotland would receive as many}
In regard to the Basque case, overseas contacts and connections have historically been an important part of the Basque region. For instance, Basque industrialists had extensive overseas connections with England while the autonomous Basque government under the Second Republic actively sought support abroad and sustained these contacts through their years of exile (Ugalde 1996). This desire to maintain transnational ties led the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) to be very supportive of European integration and by 1949, its platform called for national autonomy within a federal Europe (Partido Nacionalista Vasco 1995). Thus, the autonomous Basque government has “played the European card very strongly” and the ultimate goal of the PNV remains national independence within the EU, even if this is expressed more as a long-term goal (Keating 2000: 36).  

It should not be surprising that both the Basque and Catalan governments had very strong reactions to the Scottish referendum. On the day of the referendum, the President of the Basque Autonomous Communities, Íñigo Urkullu, stated that securing a similar referendum in Spain would be a major goal of the Basque Government (El País 2014). The President of the Generalitat of Catalonia hailed the vote as a model for a future vote in Catalonia (Gyldenkerne 2014a). Moreover, the Catalanian parliament voted to hold a “popular consultation” on Catalan independence in November of this year. The Spanish government has vowed to block such a vote (Gyldenkerne 2014b).
This study approaches identity as constructed by elites attempting to delineate and elevate their group in addition to maintaining their status within that group. At the same time, it recognizes and takes into account contextual changes that may alter the preferences of elites. In this study, the introduction of the “European variable” is one such change. Thus, this investigation argues that the insertion of the European Union into the surrounding political context altered the opportunity structures of Basque elites who viewed it as a viable and attractive option for the continued pursuit of their political aims vis-à-vis the Spanish state. The attractiveness of these qualities would only increase as the EU became a stronger supranational entity, capable not only of drawing citizen attachments, but also of subverting the sovereignty of its member states. In turn, this change in the context triggers a rearticulation of identity that results in “Europeanness” being embraced alongside “Basqueness.” The acceptance of a European component to Basque identity represents a fundamental shift; previously, the Basque identity was never articulated in such a way that was compatible with any alternative identity.

This study will examine these shifts by studying an important agent in identity dissemination—the school system. In particular, it will focus on the textbooks and pedagogy of the schools in the Basque Autonomous region. However, before delving into the more specific methodological plan of this investigation, it is important to discuss identity dissemination more broadly and examine the role of the educational system in identity formation.
Up to this point, identity articulation has been treated as though it were all that was necessary for the creation of a national identity. However, it is important to acknowledge that the creation of the content of the identity—the selection of markers, the framing of history and where necessary, the invention and omission of it, etc.—is merely the beginning of a much longer, more complicated process. The second step is the dissemination of the identity. It is equally as important, as an identity is merely an abstract concept unless individuals adopt and internalize it. Thus, elites must not only sell their idea to the masses, they must also take steps to ensure that their conception of identity becomes so entrenched in society that it becomes common sense or hegemonic (Gramsci 1971). This serves three purposes. First, it means that elites do not have to constantly coerce the populace. Second, it ensures their longevity; if the identities are merely dominant, they will remain only so long as those who defend them remain. Finally, successful creation of a hegemonic identity can also help to preserve the identity even when the chosen markers are removed or lost over time (Barth 1969). As a result, Basque elites are not only creating conceptions of identity that contradict and compete with Spanish conceptions, but they are also competing to entrench their particular identity upon particular sectors of the population that partially overlap.

To this end, elites have a variety of tools at their disposal, which only serves to underscore their importance in this process of identity creation. The various trappings of the state—museums, monuments and public schools—are particularly important for this
purpose, because they present a specific (and often simplified/sanitized) version of the state and its history for a wide audience. These institutions and the narratives that they privilege perform as integrators; they tell the story of group origins and destiny, define group values and behaviors (Boyd 1997). This function is crucial to national identity construction, where the ‘imagined community’ hinges upon members’ embracing a common past, present and future (Ibid.).

This is not to say, of course, that these institutions and narratives are never contested. Rather, they often act as battlegrounds where groups fight over which version of history is presented or which values are taught. At their core, these disagreements all

15 For instance, Timothy Luke (2002) describes a controversy over an exhibit displaying the *Enola Gay* at the U.S. National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C. The disagreement did not center upon whether the *Enola Gay* — the plane that dropped the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and consequently, ushered in the nuclear age — should be displayed, but over how. When museum curators wanted to display the Japanese victims in juxtaposition with American soldiers, the purveyors of the official national identity balked because this version of history — one that called into question American heroism — did not coincide with their goals of glorifying the nation. Portraying the victims ran afoul of the “patriotic orthodoxy” (ibid.: 36). As a result, the *Enola Gay* was displayed in the manner in which elites saw fit.

Similarly, there are ongoing battles in public school districts across the United States regarding what should or should not be taught as part of official school curricula. One prominent example is the question of whether schools should be able (or be required) to present intelligent design as an alternative to or critique of the theory of evolution (see Slevin 2005). This cuts to the heart of questions of the content of American national identity and how important Christian values should be within it.
mask a larger battle over which version of identity is deemed official as well as over which group gets to define it and transmit it (Boyd 1997). As a result, these ideological struggles are much more pronounced in areas where a single version of identity has failed to become entrenched — either because the articulated identity is still very new or because multiple articulations are competing for hegemony—or where education systems are weak or decentralized (Boyd 1997). In these cases, the ‘hearts and minds’ are still up for grabs.

Of the various institutions useful for identity dissemination and inculcation, the public school system is one of the most powerful. In fact, some scholars have noted that the public school system is capable of eclipsing all other institutions in the dissemination and reinforcement of identities (Starrett 1998). This partially explains why many Western societies expanded their public education systems during the latter half of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century: mass primary education not only increased the productivity of the labor force, it also helped instill a collective sense of history and identity (Boyd 1997). These effects are particularly powerful where schooling is compulsory, since all children under a certain age will be learning the same material, thereby amplifying and reproducing the ‘imagined community’. As Kaplan (2006:10) explains: “The national community is embodied metonymically in the classroom: all members of the polity are characterized as fraternal citizens bound with the same language, culture and ideals.” Moreover, the fact that schooling tends to begin at a very young and thus, formative, age increases the
chance that children will internalize the state-sanctioned version of identity. The benefit for elites is two-fold: not only are children well-versed in the identity from a young age, it is also likely that they will carry it home to earlier generations. The public school system practically provides the state with a captive audience for its nationalist ideals.

To this end, the public school system serves to inculcate nationalist values through teaching methods, curricula and textbooks. Teaching methods and classroom management styles set behavioral standards and expectations for children that establish patterns expected to carry over into adulthood (Boyd 1997). These approaches and activities are meant to turn children into members of a particular society by teaching them the behaviors necessary for becoming part of that group.

Curricula and textbooks work together in order to introduce a particular view of state history, promoting certain values, privileging certain narratives and glorifying the state or national group (Zerubavel 1995; Boyd 1997; Kaplan 2006). Textbooks are particularly powerful purveyors of identity and national history in modern schools, as they are typically charged with transmitting the official curricula; thus, their content and format shape students’ understanding of the material and their application of that material to real world issues (Boyd 1997). Their effectiveness lies in a number of their characteristics. In addition to being used by a captive audience, they are widely distributed. Second, they are anointed with official approval, which helps to legitimate
the information contained within them. Thus, they allow very little room for challenging their contents and in fact, young students seldom question them (Kaplan 2006). Further, as mechanical tools, textbooks also serve to make the text, rather than the instructor, the authority; this facilitates their use by interchangeable non-experts (Starrett 1998). Thus, those elites who control the textbooks that are used are able to choose those which present a particularly favorable view of the identity that they have created along with a history that supports it in a neat, authoritative package. The examination of primary school textbooks can reveal a great deal about what elites want children to know and to believe (Starrett 1998).

The decentralization of the Spanish school system will allow us to investigate how Basque elites select textbooks to support their particular version of identity, as the Autonomous Communities have increasingly been given the power to determine the curricula and textbooks used in Basque public schools. This decentralization has occurred incrementally. Pauli Davila Balsera (2005) notes three stages: the centralist period up to the Second Republic (1931-39), the comprehensive period during the Second Republic and the decentralized period of the Autonomous communities following the 1978 Constitution. During the centralist period, the education system was centralized and under the control of the central government, as the Spanish state attempted to consolidate a sense of ‘Spanishness’. During the time of the 2nd Republic, however, statutes of autonomy were granted to Catalonia and to the Basque country. At this time, control over
education was relinquished to the two communities, as they were allowed to determine the curricula and classroom materials used in those schools.

However, the devolution of education policy was short-lived, as Franco’s regime began to reassert control over all aspects of life in Spain (Davila Balsera 2005). This topic will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5, but it is important to note here that the impact of the Francoist period on primary education in particular was somewhat paradoxical. On one hand, the regime certainly attempted to impose uniform standards in the classroom that were ultimately supportive of the regime and its vision of ‘Spanishness’ (Davila Balsera 2005). On the other hand, these reforms had uneven results. Some very poor schools in more remote areas of the country continued using the more progressive materials of the pre-Franco era, simply because they had precious few resources with which to purchase all new textbooks (Boyd 1997). Moreover, Francoist repression did not prevent and in fact, encouraged, the emergence of clandestine ikastolas or Basque-medium schools during the 1960s (Lopez-Goni 2005). Thus, while it is certainly true that Francoism represents a much more centralized period of state control in Spanish education and that the regime exercised considerable control over what happened in Spanish classrooms during that time period, it is also true that there were pockets of rebellion just out of the reach of the regime.
The Constitution of 1978 did represent a significant shift away from state control of education to a devolved system (Davila Balsera 2005). The Autonomous Communities were permitted to take on any of the powers enshrined in the statutes granting their autonomy, except those that were specifically reserved for the central government. Control over education was devolved incrementally until the process was complete by January 2000 (Davila Balsera 2005). Yet, this process of decentralization has not meant the end of conflict regarding the implementation of the laws designed to turn authority regarding educational functions over to the autonomous communities. For instance, the central government is still granted latitude in dictating basic norms and in designing the parameters of the education system (Davila Balsera 2005; Mercator 2005). Specifically, the central government controls the way grades or years are divided, the duration of compulsory education, basic subject offerings and, as a compromise with minority languages, it sets the minimum amount of Spanish-language instruction that is allowable (Mercator 2005).

Despite the central government’s continued involvement in some aspects of schooling, the remaining decisions regarding the curriculum and schooling are left to the regional government. In particular, the selection of textbooks has been completely devolved to the regional governments, who are charged with determining which
textbooks are acceptable for use in both public and private schools. As a result, it is local elites who have control over which textbooks children will use in Basque public schools. By extension, they also control what those children learn about what it means to be Basque and how they learn about the European Union. These textbooks will provide the main source of data for this investigation. The following section will explain how those textbooks were selected and examined.

In summation, this investigation conceptualizes national identities as constructed by elites who have both the means and motivation to articulate them in addition to the

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16 Traditionally, schools in most countries have been categorized as either public schools, which are under the direct purview (to varying degrees) of the state and private schools, which operate more or less independently. Since the late 1970s, the Basque Autonomous Community has recognized a third: ikastolas (Mercator 2005). At their founding, ikastolas were underground Basque-medium schools, which operated as a way to subvert Francoist repression and preserve Basque culture. Following the democratic transition, they remained a separate sector, though legally they were considered to be private schools. They defined themselves as somewhat ‘Basque-er’ schools, emphasizing the Basque language and Basque culture to a greater degree than the other types of institutions (Gardner 2002). However, as more and more schools responded to parental demand for Basque medium education, the niche filled by ikastolas disappeared. By 1993, the separate ikastola network was abolished, forcing them to decide whether they would like to enter the public or private sector; more than half opted to remain private schools (Gardner and Zalbide 2005). Moreover, it is important to note that despite the usual distinctions between sectors, both public and private schools in the BAC are all partly or fully funded by the Basque Government, including teacher and staff salaries, operational costs and maintenance (Mercator 2002). Prior to abolishing the ikastola network and folding the majority of them into the private school sector, most private schools were run by religious orders of the Roman Catholic Church (ibid.).
power to disseminate them. It seeks to investigate the process of identity construction through the under-utilized lens of rational choice theory to examine the decision-making of Basque elites as they articulate an identity in opposition to a Spanish national identity. At the same time, it augments the classic rational choice perspective by taking into account structural changes in the political environment within which these decisions are occurring, viewing the Spanish ascension into the European Union as a fundamental change capable of reordering Basque elite preferences. In order to study these changes in identity articulation, it will focus upon one of the most important tools nationalist elites have for dissemination of the identities that they create: the school system. Analyzing the textbooks used in schools provides a reasonably reliable method of examining the ideas and images that political and cultural elites wish to inculcate in children (Boyd 1997).

**Methodology**

The focus of this research is on primary school pedagogy; in particular, it is interested in textbooks. In the Spanish system, primary education takes place over the course of six years, grouped into three cycles of two years each (Mercator 2005: 14). This corresponds to grades 1-6 in the U.S. system, or schooling from ages 6 through 12, approximately. As set out in the law governing the modern education system in Spain, primary schooling has four main functions. The first is to ensure that children acquire an
understanding of basic cultural elements and practices. Second, schooling should develop listening and reading skills that allow children to receive and understand information. Third, it should develop writing, oral and mathematical skills. Finally, schooling should instill a sense of autonomy within the child.¹⁷

This investigation seeks to focus specifically on primary school years for a number of reasons. First, they are compulsory within the Spanish system and thus, involve a large swath of the population. Second, the information presented to children regarding national identities, cultural markers and national history tends to be simplified and free of nuance. The nation is glorified and information that might contradict that vision is generally left out where it may be introduced in later grades, if at all. Thus, the vision of the nation presented to young children contains the most basic distillation of national identity.

The textbooks used for the analysis were selected from three major time periods: the Franco era, the democratic era and the EU era. Due to the fact that this investigation is situated within political science and not history, the delineations are not tied to specific years so much as they are rooted in particular political contexts and institutions. This design allows us to track changes in the identities presented in textbooks not only over time, but to also link them to changes in the political context.

¹⁷ See Chapter 2 of the Ley de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo.
The Franco era represents a much more centralized Spanish state, where the central government sought and achieved greater control over the primary school curriculum and the materials used in the classroom. During this era, the regime consciously and publicly sought to disseminate a particular version of Spanish identity through the school system; moreover, they were more or less able to impose those materials on school children. While it would be enough to say that this era is included because it provides a fascinating example of education being used to serve the state, the more important justification is the fact that it is the Franco era that triggers the Basque nationalist reaction in the democratic era. Thus, it provides context for the Basque-focused analysis. Moreover, the fact that Francoist efforts at disseminating a particular version of Spanish identity are well-documented within the literature offered an opportunity to test how well textbooks might represent identity articulations in later time periods.

The democratic era chronologically follows the Franco era; it commences following the ratification of the new Spanish Constitution in 1978 and largely centers upon the mid-1980s to mid-1990s. This period was characterized by increased devolution of educational policy-making to the regional governments, which began to control the curriculum taught in schools and to determine which textbooks would be approved for use in regional schools. At the same time, the European Union was not yet playing a significant role in the day-to-day affairs of its member states.
The final time period encompasses the most recently published textbooks. Here, Basque elites control textbooks as they did in the democratic era. The major difference is that the EU plays a much more significant role not only in the affairs of member states, but also that this intervention is much more palpable for its citizens.

Lists of approved textbooks are available from the Spanish Ministry of Education and from the Department of Education in the Basque Autonomous Communities. In the case of the Spanish Ministry of Education, these lists are available even prior to the Franco era. These lists were used to determine which textbooks were approved by the government during the eras under question. Texts on the subjects of history, social studies language and in lower primary grades, conocimientos,\(^\text{18}\) were of particular interest, as these subjects are most likely to contain discussions of identity and the nation. Texts from all levels of primary schooling were included. The overall goal for each time period was to examine as many of the approved texts as possible (or, in the earlier time periods, as many as were still available for examination). Additionally, every effort was made to determine how widely a text was used. This was obviously much easier for more recent time periods, as publishers track this data. For earlier time periods, however, the

\(^{18}\) The term translates to “general knowledge,” which is an accurate representation of the content of these books. They contain basic knowledge of a wide variety of subjects including, social studies, language and science to prepare young students for later grades.
task was much more difficult and imprecise. In order to mitigate this imprecision, every effort was made to examine as many textbooks as possible.

The texts were evaluated for thematic elements that reveal articulations of identity. The first element was how the in-group and out-group were defined. Specifically, what markers were used for delineating the boundary between ‘us’ and ‘them’? Those markers are important because they determine not only what kind of identity is being articulated (civic or ethnic), but also who is part of the group and who could potentially become a part of it. A second element involved how the in-group was situated vis-à-vis other groups. In the Franco era, this involved examining how the Spanish texts discussed the Basques, while in the later eras, it involved how the Basque texts discussed Spaniards. This second theme includes the examination of alternative identities, particularly European identity.
Chapter 3: Historical Overview

The area of the world known as the Basque Country is generally understood to coincide with the areas, centered in northern Spain, along the Bay of Biscay, where the Basque language, Euskara,\(^\text{19}\) is spoken. This geographical delineation straddles the Pyrenees and includes parts of both Spain and France: the provinces of Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa, Álava and Navarra in Spain and the French departments of: Labourd, Basse-Navarre and Soule.\(^\text{20}\) Though some modern Basque nationalists have at times asserted that Euskara was spoken in a much larger area — as far south as Zaragoza and as far west as Santander — the seven provinces represent the maximalist vision of a united Basque territory as well as the commonly accepted boundaries of the País Vasco (Payne 1975: 9). Despite such neat delineations, it is important to recognize that the area is not as unified as it might at first seem. It is politically divided between Spain and France, as well as

\(^{19}\) Euskara is the accepted spelling for the name of the Basque language, according to the Basque Language Academy. There is a variant, Euskera, common in Guipúzcoa, which is often used interchangeably. The spelling of this and other Basque words will follow the official orthography of standard Basque.

\(^{20}\) Each province has multiple names, depending on the language of rendering. Thus, the Spanish provinces have names in both Castilian Spanish and Euskara, while the French departments have names in French and Basque (and in the case of Basse-Navarre, in Spanish as well). Each reference within this work, unless part of a direct quotation, uses the standard Spanish spelling for the Spanish provinces and the French for the French departments. This selection is one of convenience. Since these names are commonly used on maps of the area, they are more recognizable.
physically divided between the Pyrenees and Cantabrian mountain ranges. The former
adds topographical heft to an international boundary, while the latter has separated
Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya from Álava and Navarra. Over time, these divisions have become
more than simply physical; they have also manifested themselves in political
relationships among the provinces, as Álava and particularly, Navarra have tended to go
their own way.

The origins of the Basques are mysterious, though references by Roman historians
and Greek geographers to ‘Vasconians’ surface as early as 7 C.E. (Conversi 1997: 44). It
is possible that the Basques are an amalgam of groups who were living in the area west of
the Pyrenees. Though the Basques were certainly not completely isolated from the groups
which migrated through the area, it is also apparent that they were neither conquered nor
completely absorbed by the Romans, Visigoths, Muslims, Franks or Normans (Payne
1975: 9; Conversi 1997: 44). This history has been heavily drawn upon and to some
degree, embellished, by nationalist myth-makers to demonstrate the purity of the Basque
race.

These mythic origins are lent weight by the fact that anthropologists have noted
several physical peculiarities that set Basques apart from other groups. For instance, in
the 19th century, Basque skulls drew interest as researchers insisted that they were “not
built like other men” (quoted in Kurlansky 1999: 21). Various studies have determined
them to be related to Turks, Tatars, Magyars, Germans, Laplanders or Berbers (Kurlansky 1999: 21). Likewise, blood types are distributed differently in Basques than in the general population; type-O blood is much more common, whereas A and B types are extraordinarily rare. Moreover, the rhesus factor, commonly used to categorize blood as either Rh-positive or Rh-negative further sets Basques apart, because they have the highest incidence of Rh-negative blood of any group in the world. This trait is much more common in Basques than in other areas of Europe, or even in neighboring areas of Spain or France (Goti Iturriago 1962: 39-65; Kurlansky 1999: 19-21).

The Basque mystery is augmented further by Euskara, which does not appear to be related to any existing language, though theories have posited connections to the languages of the Caucuses, Aquitane, or a pre-Christian era language called Iberian (Lecours 2007: 28). However, all of these theories are disputed, and as a result, Euskara retains a special status as the only remaining non-Indo European language in existence (Urla 2012: 1). Potentially, this also makes it the oldest living European language (Kurlansky 1999: 23).

The language is incredibly complex, boasting difficult syntax and morphology. The verbs are complicated, there are a dozen cases and no prepositions or articles (Kurlansky 1999: 21). A wide variety of dialects exist and many are mutually

21 For more information on these theories, see Jacobsen 2000.
unintelligible. As a result, it is difficult to learn Euskara as a second language. The challenge posed by this language serves as a useful, though paradoxical boundary. In one respect, Euskara’s complexity is a source of immense pride. One well-known anecdote tells the story of the devil, who arrived in the Basque Country to learn the language. When he could get no further in his efforts than to learn the words for ‘yes’ (bai) and ‘no’ (ez), he was forced to abandon the endeavor and leave the Basque Country entirely (Gallop 1970: 80). In a second respect, however, Euskara’s complexity only exacerbates the scarcity of fluent speakers. In fact, the most recent data indicate that just over 700,000 individuals of the 2.5 million living the Basque Country speak Euskara fluently, while another 300,000 can speak it with difficulty (Vice Ministry for Language Policy 2011: 9).

Finally, elements of Basque culture further distinguish the group. First, maritime elements figure more prominently in Basque culture than in surrounding groups. Basques were expert seamen who built thriving whaling and shipbuilding industries. In fact, there is a case to be made that Basques made it to North America before the more famous European explorers (Lecours 2007: 28). Basque sport and gaming traditions are also unique. One example of pelota, a type of court game, uses a hand, racket, wooden bat or basket to hit a ball against a wall or to a face-to-face opponent. A variation of this game is known in the United States as jai alai (Kurlansky 1999: 13). Other popular sports are derived from rural chores: rowing regattas, which are also linked to maritime traditions, stone lifting and wood-chopping (Collins 1986: 5).
These objective differences between Basques and other groups — physical, linguistic, cultural and in some ways, historical — have been used to lay the foundation for the formation of a distinct group identity and have fueled a long-lasting nationalist movement. First, they have provided Basque nationalist elites with ready-made boundary markers delineating the Basque in-group from the (mostly Spaniard) out-group. Second, these elements, when woven into the nationalist myth, have been used to create a narrative that highlights the ancientness and indomitability of the Basque group. In turn, nationalists use this narrative to justify their claims that Basques deserve a special status; though it has varied over time, the special status demanded by nationalists has centered either on some degree of autonomy or full independence.

While there are objective differences between Basques and Spaniards that encouraged the formation of separate identities, the circumstances surrounding the formation of modern Spain served to exacerbate and further entrench the differences. Compared to other European countries, the Spanish state came into existence relatively late and took much longer to consolidate its power over the entirety of its territory. Thus, it provided space for the formation of non-Spanish regional identities; Basques were just one example, alongside Catalans, Galicians and others. When the Spanish government finally did try to impose a single national identity on the entirety of its territory in the twentieth-century, the entrenched sub-state identities provided significant barriers to this centralization. The process placed the identities in direct confrontation with one another
as Spanish elites attempted to entrench their vision of Spain and Spanish identity throughout the country, while Basque elites resisted any efforts at assimilation. As a result, the post-consolidation period had been tumultuous, particularly for the Basque-Spanish relationship; over time, it has swung between cautious accommodation to outright antagonism and back again. Throughout this entire history, the competing identities have remained in place, though modifications to the individual articulations have occurred.

The territory that we recognize as modern Spain has its roots in the Middle Ages, with the Reconquista (Reconquest) — a nearly-eight century campaign by the disparate principalities of Iberia to shake off Islamic domination and return the peninsula to Christendom (Fletcher 2000: 63).. The impact of the Reconquista is paradoxical as it is significant. On one hand, it signifies the very beginning of what would become a long process of Iberian unification. On the other hand, the very nature of the Reconquista hindered that process and drew it out. The battles that occurred as part of the campaign did not occur simultaneously and attacks were largely uncoordinated. Moreover, some areas, like the Basque principalities, had never really been under Moorish control (Lecours 2007: 29). The unevenness of the campaign resulted in the creation of multiple independent kingdoms, which employed a series of political arrangements that guaranteed their integrity. These arrangements have left a lasting legacy. First, the territorial structures that were fostered first by the Reconquista and later solidified by
these political arrangements are still visible on the peninsula. Second, they fostered traditions of autonomy and exceptionalism, both within the Basque country and beyond it; in fact, it is only in nationalist myth that the Basque provinces have ever formed a homogenous unit. Even the Reconquista and its after-effects did not succeed in uniting the provinces.

The forces of autonomy unleashed by the Reconquista would prove to be even more significant when augmented by three other factors: the *fueros*, the concept of universal nobility and an absence of a unified royal administration. Following the Reconquista, the kingdoms of Aragón and Castile were the most prominent. Both kingdoms united with and absorbed other kingdoms through a series of dynastic unions. Castile, which united with León in 1230, was the most important to the Basque principalities, as it incorporated Guipúzcoa (1200), Álava (1332) and Vizcaya (1379) (Lecours 2007: 31). There is some dispute over the terms of these unions, particularly whether or not they could be spoken of as conquests. It is likely that the circumstances varied by province and are perhaps not easily reducible to a dichotomous result: either conquered or not (García Venero 1968: 61-62). The crucial aspect of the Castilian relationship with the three Spanish Basque provinces under its administration is the granting of local rights and privileges through the codification of *fueros*. The *fueros* were local laws and customs, coupled with special economic and political immunities that were guaranteed by the kings of Castile and later, by Spain as rewards or incentives for
political allegiance (Heiberg 1989: 20). In fact, they operated very much like constitutions, because they formalized the relationship between the Crown and local authorities (Lecours 2007: 31).

The Basque fueros were elaborate, though the concept of the fueros was not unique to the Basques or even to Spain. The practice was actually common throughout medieval Europe. Moreover, it would be a mistake to assume that the fueros politically united the Basque principalities at this juncture; rather, they established each principality as a separate entity, though they shared many of the same features across those entities (Heiberg 1989: 20). Despite this reality, nationalist mythmakers will draw upon the fueros as a justification for unified Basque self-determination centuries later.

Though they were not unique and though they did not result in the unification of the Basque principalities, the Basque fueros were exceptional for two reasons. First, they were established on the basis of much larger political units than elsewhere. Whereas foral agreements were usually conferred on towns or villages in most of Castile, Aragón and Portugal, they operated on the provincial level in the Basque areas. Furthermore, Basques retained their fueros much longer than any other region in Spain; most regions lost their fueros in the early 18th century, while those in the Basque country and Navarra remained intact. As a result, the fueros not only fostered broader regional identities in the Basque areas which were not present elsewhere in Spain, they also had a great deal longer to
solidify (Payne 1975: 17). Most important, the fueros served to maintain a certain distance between the Basques and the Spanish state (Lecours 2007: 34).

The second factor contributing to the development of separate identities in Spain is the practice of conferring collective nobility. This practice had few parallels elsewhere in Western Europe, as it consisted in granting to anyone able to prove Basque descent the status of noble person. Like the fueros, the concept of collective nobility was used to secure Basque loyalty to the Crown and ensure their compliance in guarding the northeastern territories from foreign incursions (Lecours 2007: 33-35). However, it also served to solidify the distance between Basques and any central authority, further establishing their special status. The concept of collective nobility was used to justify the maintenance and expansion of the fueros, while continuing to nurture a sense of exceptionalism in the Basque population (Heiberg 1989: 32-34). Collective nobility, then, had two effects. It drew Basques closer together because of its linkage to descent, while simultaneously separating Basques further from other groups. Together, the fueros and collective nobility reinforced separate and to some degree, incompatible identities.

Though the Basque provinces were disproportionately impacted by the institutionalization of the fueros and by the granting of collective nobility, the fact that it took centuries for a unified royal administration to emerge impacted the entire peninsula. Most of present-day Spain was consolidated under a single political rule in 1469 with the
marriage of Isabel and Ferdinand, the heirs of the kingdoms of Castile and Aragón. Despite this union, most of the old structures and practices — including the fueros and collective nobility — remained intact, rather than leading to a centralized government (Lecours 2007: 32). This situation would remain largely unchanged through the Habsburg dynasty, as the governing philosophy of the Habsburgs was to maintain the status quo (Bigelow Merriman 1934: 409-422). Incremental efforts toward centralization did occur during the Habsburg rule of the seventeenth century. This control was sought largely for material reasons, rather than some desire to create a Spanish nation. The Spanish state was experiencing financial difficulties and a dearth of soldiers as a result of several costly wars and imperial expansion; the state turned to its peninsular territories in order to raise the needed revenue and increase its pool of soldiers. These efforts triggered rebellions, both in Cataluña and Vizcaya. The state was eventually able to levy the new taxes, but the fueros remained intact. Moreover, the rebellions presaged what would happen if

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22 An irony of the Reconquista is that, not long after the successful conclusion of the campaign to drive out what were considered foreign invaders, Spain’s monarchy was transferred from an Iberian ruling family to an Austrian one—the Habsburgs. At the same time, it is crucial to recognize that the modern concept of a nation descended from a common ancestry was still centuries away; thus, the fact that the Habsburgs did not share their subjects’ ethnicity was not problematic for that time. What the Habsburgs did share with Spain was a common religion, which at the time was much more important (Payne 2008: 104). This might explain, at least partially, why the Habsburgs were not particularly inclined to adopt stringent cultural assimilation policies.
further efforts toward centralization were to occur (Lecours 2007: 35). Habsburg Spain, then, resembled a confederal-like system of semi-autonomous territories (Ibid., 32).

While the rest of Western Europe was deep in the process of centralization, efforts to consolidate more control over the territories of Spain did not begin until the rise of the Bourbon dynasty in the early eighteenth century. In contrast to the Habsburgs, the Bourbons were much less willing to govern a patchwork of autonomous territories and more desirous of a tightly integrated state (Heiberg 1989: 2-3). To this end, Philip V, the first Bourbon monarch, abolished most of the fueros between 1706 and 1716, including Cataluña’s. Where the fueros were abolished, the existing Cortes was disbanded and the territories were brought under the laws of Castile, now the government of Spain (Herr 2000: 176). The major exceptions to this effort toward centralization were the Basque provinces and Navarra — they retained their fueros as a reward for their support of the Bourbon claims during the War of Succession (1700-1713) (Heiberg 1989: 3). Over time, however, the Bourbon monarchs would experience the same demands that the Habsburgs did; financial strain would make it less desirable to allow some parts of the territory to remain on the margins and the monarchs would become less and less receptive to any special statuses.

The turning point came in the early eighteenth century, with two external events that for many, heralded the need for a new governing philosophy. First, Spain’s decline
as a world power became complete with the loss of its American colonies. By this time, Spain had already ceased to be a significant power within Europe; the loss of its colonies simply made the collapse of its empire complete. Then, in 1808, French troops invaded Spain as part of the Napoleonic campaigns. The occupation would last for six years and would simply underscore a growing sentiment within the country: Spain was weak. For many, this weakness stemmed from the lack of centralization and government’s inability to control its own territory. The only solution was a radical departure from the decentralized form of governance that had been practiced on the peninsula since the Reconquista (Lecours 2007: 42).

Thus, the fall of the empire and the French occupation spur the development of a competing vision of the political future of Spain: a liberal-secular view inspired by the Jacobin model imposed during the French occupation. It sought a unified Spain ruled by a constitutional monarchy that protected individual rights — including religious freedom. The competing view was traditionalist-Catholic in nature and sought to maintain traditional political, religious and social institutions: preserving the status of the Catholic Church, along with territorial autonomy and local privileges. Similar traditionalist resistance to state centralization and secularization were common elsewhere in Western Europe. In Spain, the movement became known as Carlism (Lecours 2007: 45-48). The movement was particularly strong in the Basque provinces, largely because liberalism was viewed as an onslaught against the institutions, values and way of life of local
society (Payne 1975: 43). The competition between these two visions is significant for not only the historical trajectory of modern Spain, but also for the relationship between Basques, Spain and the interplay of their identities. These visions become the foundation of future conflicts on the Peninsula and more important, become the basis of conflicts between the Basques and the Spanish government.

The liberal-secularist vision of Spain enjoyed a brief victory following the Napoleonic Wars and the ensuing French occupation. In 1811, the Old Regime was formally dismantled and all special privileges were abolished as the territories were incorporated under a single, unified Spain. The following year, the Cádiz constitution established a constitutional monarchy where power was shared between the crown and an assembly known as the Cortes Generales. One of the centerpieces is the nation, which is mentioned in many of the early articles. For instance, Spain is defined as a Catholic nation, comprised of all Spaniards. In addition, the constitution makes it the responsibility of all incorporated territories to contribute to the treasury. However, this constitution was only lasted three years; at the end of the French Occupation, Ferdinand VII returned to the throne in 1814, at the end of the French Occupation, returning the country to absolutism and reinstituting the previous political and territorial structures (Lecours 2007: 43).
The failure of liberalism in 1814 would not end the conflict between traditionalists and liberals. Instead, it would continue to unfold over the course of five decades and result in two bloody civil wars. The first of these battles began in 1833, after the death of King Ferdinand VII; on the surface, this war was fought over the proper line of succession. Ferdinand had expressed his wish for this three-year old daughter Isabel to ascend the throne, with her mother, Maria Cristina acting as regent until the child came of age (Carr 2000: 205-206). According to the rules of Bourbon succession, established by Philip V, women were barred from the line of succession; this would have made Don Carlos, the king’s youngest brother and Isabel’s uncle, the rightful heir. The problem was that the ban on female succession was technically revoked by the Cortes of 1789, but Charles IV had not published it. Ferdinand did so during his wife’s pregnancy, which would have invalidated Don Carlos’s claim. Don Carlos, however, claimed that the revocation was invalid. To prepare for what he saw as the ensuing struggle, Ferdinand began to modify the government in order to attract support for his daughter’s claim to the throne, granting amnesty to political prisoners and allowing exiles to return to Spain (Herr 2000: 204).

The conflict divided the peninsula. Traditionalists and the Church supported Don Carlos (and thus, were called Carlists), while liberals, the army and foreign powers supported Isabel. However, this war was not merely about succession. It was as much a war over the two visions of Spain, as Ferdinand and Maria Cristina had begun
restructuring Spain along a more liberal, decentralized structure. In fact, in 1833, the monarch carved out 51 provinces which would be administered from Madrid via a governor; this was the first major territorial restructuring since the Reconquista (Lecours 2007: 49). Thus, the First Carlist War was fought as much over the traditionalist and liberal visions of Spain, over foral autonomy and monarchy versus centralization and constitutional monarchy (Payne 1975: 40).

The Carlists were defeated in 1839 and Ferdinand’s daughter became Queen Isabella II. While social and economic reforms were enacted following her ascension, the fueros remained as part of the war settlement, after having been briefly abolished in 1834 (Payne 1975: 44-47). However, these were not the same fueros, as they were now somewhat limited. Article 2 of the Law of 1839, which confirmed the Treaty of Vergara ending the First Carlist War, reads: “The Fueros of the Basque provinces and Navarre are reaffirmed, unless they are prejudicial to the constitutional unity of the monarchy” (quoted in Heiberg 1989: 38). All legislative and executive powers were transferred from the provincial government to the Spanish central government. Obligatory military service was also instituted (Heiberg 1989: 38). Thus, foral continuity only existed in theory.

Carlism was reinvigorated thirty years later, as Spain embarked on a progressively more radical program of liberalization. In 1868, Isabella II was removed by a pronunciamiento (a type of officer’s revolt), ushering in a second constitutional
monarchy (Conversi 1997: 12). This document shared many similarities with the Cádiz constitution from fifty years earlier: it created a constitutional monarchy based on popular sovereignty, instituted universal suffrage for males and established individual rights. In regard to religion, it specified that while Catholicism would be protected, other faiths would also be allowed. On this point, Carlists were particularly opposed, though they also objected to the level of centralization that the constitution instituted. Carlism, however, was not directly responsible for the demise of the constitution in 1873 (Lecours 2007: 49).

This second failure opened the door for another group that had been dissatisfied with the 1869 constitution: republicans. As a group, the republicans were not unified; they were split between unitarists and federalists, an internal schism that made it difficult for them to gain traction. Even at the height of their support, their view was never necessarily more popular than the view of the constitutional monarchists. Where the republicans were very successful, though, is in convincing the public that after two failed constitutional monarchies, republicanism was the last remaining liberal alternative to Carlism (Dorronsoro et. al. 2000: 97). Thus, in 1873, the First Republic was established, setting off the Second Carlist War (Carr 2000: 220).

The Carlist objections to the First Republic had less to do with specific political structures — the Republic was established as a federal system and thus, was
decentralized — and more to do with what was perceived as a direct attack on traditional ways of life. Specifically, Carlists objected to an undercurrent of anti-clericalism in the document (Lecours 2007: 49). Once again, the traditional and liberal visions of Spain were clashing. Moreover, support for Carlism had declined throughout much of Spain, but had remained steady in the Basque provinces and Navarra (Lecours 2007: 50). As a result, the Second Carlist War was perceived as a conflict not between Carlists and liberals, but between Basques and the Spanish government. This perception heightened a sense of suspicion regarding the Spanish state and ushered in a much more combative relationship between the two groups.

The outcome of the conflict did not aid in repairing the strain — the Carlists lost the Second Carlist War and in 1876, the fueros were abolished. This was a watershed moment, as the fueros had constituted the framework for the Basque relationship with the Spanish state for the entire duration of its existence. Further, from this moment forward, the restoration of the fueros would become a significant part of Basque politics and in particular, the Basque nationalist movement (Lecours 2007: 50).

The Basque provinces did retain *conciertos económicos* — special economic privileges that allowed for protective tariffs, new economic regulations and decreased taxes. These privileges, coupled with rapid growth in foreign capital investment fueled growth in the iron and steel industries, as well as in mining, shipbuilding and railroad
construction. The impact on the Basque provinces was two-fold: first, rapid modernization, fueled in part by the conciertos económicos and resulting capital investment, began to erode the traditional Basque lifestyle and replaced it with a more modern lifestyle. Second, at the end of the 19th century, this situation proved attractive for laborers, who left southern and western Spain, as well as the surrounding rural Basque-speaking areas, for the urban areas of Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya. Together, these two factors accelerated and magnified a process that had already been well underway, particularly in the larger cities: the decline of Basque culture, especially the language (Heiberg 1989: 41-49).

By the time industrialization was sweeping through the Basque provinces at the end of the nineteenth century, Euskara was already in decline. Its use was confined to the hilly rural parts of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, parts of Navarra and was nearly extinct in Álava. In Bilbao, one of the larger cities, the language had already been a rarity since the beginning of the nineteenth century. This was due to at least three factors: the lack of literary production in Euskara, the establishment of primary schools and the difficulty in using Euskara in a modern industrial context. First, Euskara was mainly an oral language and relatively few literary items were produced using it. The first book written in Euskara was published in 1545. Yet, over the next 350 years, only 111 more books were published — most of which were pamphlets or religious tracts (Payne 1975: 168). Newspapers and magazines existed largely in Spanish and so, the educated did not read
in Euskara. Second, in the early nineteenth century, children were not being educated in Euskara. Primary schools were established following the Second Carlist War; the language of instruction in these schools was Spanish (Heiberg 1989: 46). Finally, Euskara lacked words and expressions for modern situations. This resulted in a heavy reliance on Spanish words, if not the Spanish language in its entirety. This situation was particularly pronounced in the urban areas and even more so among the urban middle class (Ibid., 47).

Underscoring these three factors is a pervasive sense that the language was inferior. It was thought to be a barbaric tongue, and Basque intellectuals believed it to be “better suited to the stable” (Douglass and Da Silva 1971: 156). In fact, none of the three Basque literary giants of this time — Ramiro de Maetzu, Miguel de Unamuno, and Pío Baroja — wrote in Euskara. Given the dearth of Basque literature, this is not surprising. The language was largely relegated to the vernacular used by the lower classes, especially in rural areas (Heiberg 1989: 47).

Thus, at the end of the nineteenth century, the Basque language — a significant component of Basque culture — was in decline throughout the Basque provinces and in some areas, was practically extinct. Industrialization was in full swing and modernization swept away more traditional ways of life. Meanwhile, rapid economic growth enticed
immigrants from all over Spain to relocate to the Basque provinces. It is within this context of cultural decline and dilution that Basque nationalism is born.

The most important figure in early Basque nationalism is Sabino de Arana y Goiri. Although it is clear that his articulation of Basque identity was not the only one present at this time, his would become the hegemonic conception of Basque-ness until, at least, the mid-twentieth century (Ben-Ami 1991). Arana was born in 1865, the son of a prosperous shipbuilder in Abando, a small village that would later be engulfed by the growing city of Bilbao. His upbringing was heavily imbued with both religion and Carlist values. His father, Santiago, was devoted to the Carlist cause and donated much of his fortune to fund the failed war efforts. Not only was that money lost, but improvements in maritime technology meant that modern, iron-clad hulls were replacing wooden ones, further threatening Santiago’s livelihood. The collapse of Carlism was a significant blow to Santiago. Arana’s father fell into a deep depression that at times bordered on psychosis and never really recovered. His traditionalist/Carlist upbringing, coupled with the challenges posed to his family by industrialization, would come to influence Arana’s political platform. He decried what he saw as Vizcaya’s advanced state of moral and cultural decay, asserting that Basque traditional values were threatened by capitalism and industrialization, while Catholicism was under attack from Liberalism. Arana blamed Spain, not only for his father’s ill-health, but also for Vizcaya’s decline; the only
solution, the only way to save Vizcaya, was complete separation from Spain (Heiberg 1989: 50).

Aside from the Basques, few nationalist movements can be traced to an individual founder who can be credited with single-handedly designing the nationalist program. Yet, Arana is generally considered to be the father of Basque nationalism because he created most of the institutional and symbolic foundations of the nationalist movement. He designed the red and green flag — modeled after the Union Jack — which became the official flag of the Basque Country in 1936. He composed the official Basque anthem, “Gora ta Gora.” He coined the term Euzkadi, which refers to the Basque Country. He founded the Partido Nacionalista Vasco (PNV) — the Basque Nationalist Party. There is even a Basque national holiday, Aberri Eguna, celebrated on Easter Sunday, which commemorates Arana’s conversion to nationalism (Conversi 1997: 54).

Perhaps even more significant than creating the trappings of a national group, Arana conceptualized the Basque nation, defined what it meant to be Basque (and consequently, who could and could not be a part of that group) and supplied a narrative for the nation. In his book Bizkaya por su independencia, Arana laid out the nationalist framework. He geographically defined the Basque national territory, Euzkadi, as consisting of seven provinces: the four Spanish provinces, Álava, Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa, and Navarra, plus the three French departments of Labourd, Basse-Navarre and Soule.
This territorial delineation was captured by the motto “Zazpiak-bat” and in the formula “4+3=1”23 (Conversi 1997: 53-54). Though it represents the most extreme or maximalist vision of a Basque homeland, the desire to ultimately unite these seven provinces has remained a consistent theme within the Basque nationalist discourse since Arana’s time.

Arana then defined Basqueness and explained what nationalists were fighting to protect with the slogan ‘Juangoikoa eta Lagi-zara’ (God and the Old Laws). This slogan is deceptively simple, in that it seems to suggest that Basqueness and the nationalist cause are based solely upon religion and the restoration of the fueros. While these two components are crucial to understanding the Aranist program, it is important to acknowledge that Lagi-zara is a much broader concept. More accurately, it can be interpreted as a reference to the ‘old ways’: the Basque traits and traditions that Arana perceived as being threatened by the processes of industrialization and immigration. Thus, Lagi-zara weaves together race24, history and culture with religion to form the basis

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23 A similar motto exists among Irish nationalists: “26+6=1”. It refers to a united Irish state consisting of the 26 counties of Ireland and the six counties of Northern Ireland, which are currently part of the United Kingdom (Thompson 2001: xii).

24 Arana’s use of race as a significant marker of Basque identity has led to numerous accusations of racism. On the surface, these allegations are not entirely unfounded; as will be seen later in this discussion, Arana did assert that the inherent traits of the Basque race were superior to those of the Spanish race. At the same time, such views often fail to acknowledge that Arana’s ideas about race were in line with the general discourse on race occurring in Europe at that time. As Douglass writes, “In situating Arana within fin-de-siècle Europe the issue was not who was racist, the rarity was the non-racialist” (2002:
for the Basque identity and consequently, the Basque nationalist movement (Heiberg 1989: 50-57).

It is race which provides the necessary linkage that draws together all of the other components and provides the basic justification for the movement. For Arana, race was a primordial and exclusive category. Individuals were born into their race and could neither change it nor belong to more than one. Thus, a Basque could not become a Spaniard, just as a Spaniard could not become a Basque. The main marker of race membership, according to Arana, was surname. A person with a Basque surname belonged to the Basque race and a person with a Spanish surname belonged to the Spanish race (Heiberg 1989: 51-53). Arana supported this view of Basque racial distinctiveness by referencing the aforementioned anthropological and linguistic evidence; to him, this evidence

96). Moreover, such views of race were common during this period among other nationalist intellectuals even outside of Europe, as they turned historically entrenched power relationships on their heads in order to empower their in-groups with nationalist pride. For instance, in his pamphlet *La Raza Cósmica*, Mexican intellectual José Vasconcelos took aim at U.S. and European colonizers and the existing discourse of Anglo exceptionalism coupled with Latin/Iberian inferiority (1997). His rhetoric claimed that history was marching toward a new civilization, Universopolis, which would be characterized by the mixing of all races and as a result, true brotherhood. He then used the *mestizaje* phenomenon – the mixing of Europeans with the native peoples of Indo-America – to argue that Latins were uniquely equipped to bring about this new civilization because the Latin race was already one of mixed blood. The subtext, of course, was the assertion of the superiority of the mixed Latin race vis-à-vis the unmixed White race; a tactic that is identical to Arana’s.
demonstrated that the Basques were the purest and most ancient race in Europe (Heiberg 1975: 178).

As a result, the Basque race was not only distinct from the Spanish race, it was also physically, mentally and morally superior.

The physiognomy of the Bizkaian is intelligent and noble; that of the Spaniard is inexpressive and gloomy. The Bizkaian walks upright and manly; the Spaniard has a feminine air. The Bizkaian is energetic and agile; the Spaniard lax and dull…the Bizkaian’s character degenerates through contact with the outsider; the Spaniard needs from time to time a foreign invasion to civilize him. (quoted in Granja Sainz 2002: 61-95).

Consequently, Arana prescribed various safeguards in order to protect the integrity of the Basque race. For instance, he vehemently opposed any kind of intermarriage and even advocated for the sequestration of Basque juvenile prisoners, lest they be tainted by Spanish prisoners (Heiberg 1989: 51-53).

Thus, Arana’s use of race as a marker served multiple purposes. It not only delineated Basques from Spaniards, but also elevated Basques vis-à-vis Spaniards. Moreover, it provided a justification for the demands put forth by the nationalist program, as well as an implicit argument for its necessity. If one could accept that Basques were racially differentiated from Spaniards, then it perhaps would not be so difficult to accept
that they should not be governed by them. Arana underscored this argument by appealing to Basque history, using the myths of racial purity and historical resistance to conquest in conjunction with the fueros and the concept of universal nobility to confer the concept of original sovereignty. Since Basques had always governed themselves, they possessed a right to self-determination; it was an inherent part of the Basque condition. Additionally, Arana’s conceptualization of the Basque race as not only pure, but superior explained why the nationalist movement was needed; the Basques needed protection to ensure that outsiders would not subvert or dilute their special qualities.

The importance of religion in Arana’s articulation of Basque identity, and indeed, its influence on his worldview, is captured in the concept of Juangoikua and evident in his repeated use of religious terminology. In fact, Arana described his adoption of nationalism as a conversion (Basaldúa 1977: 44). The concept of Juangoikoa — the Basque word for God25 and the source of all sacred authority in the Basque Country — is in some ways a natural extension of Arana’s thinking on race. He did not recognize a unified community of Catholics bound together by their common faith. On a very abstract level, Arana conceded that Catholics were all connected to the Pope in Rome. Yet, Catholicism still served as a boundary marker, as Arana asserted that non-Basque

25 Literally translated, Juangoikoa means “Lord on high”.

Catholics did not pray with Basques. Thus, the concept conveys a sense of exclusivity: Juangoikua is the Basque God, not the Catholic God (Heiberg 1989: 54).

Basque religiosity was inextricably connected with race: the Basque race was a Catholic race. “I proclaim Catholicism for my nation because its tradition and its political and social character is, essentially, Catholic. If it was not, I would still proclaim it, but if my people were to resist, I would disown my race” (quoted in Basaldúa 1977: 69). This statement suggests the fervor with which Arana embraced the Catholic faith and its importance to the nationalist program, while at the same time demonstrating the malleability of identity.

Furthermore, Arana used religion in much the same way that he used race: to differentiate and elevate the Basques vis-à-vis the Spaniards, as well as to justify the nationalist program. Thus, he declared that Basques were the purest of Catholics and that this pious morality was under siege by outsiders. In the Discurso de Larrazábal, a speech delivered on June 3, 1883, Arana claimed that Basque salvation was at stake:

It is thus indisputable that the Basque people and society cannot, but with great difficulty, fulfill their destiny, nor can our race be saved, as long as we remain subjects of Spain. Bizkaya, if dependent on Spain, cannot address God, cannot, in practice, be Catholic. (quoted in Diez-Medrano 1995: 1)
Thus, the only solution, the only way to achieve salvation, was independence from Spain.

Arana’s relationship to Euskara and his treatment of it within the nationalist program is much more complex. Like most urban residents (and indeed, most of the early nationalist leaders), Arana did not speak Euskara. He did make a serious effort to learn, even publishing a portion of a Basque grammar book and entering a competition for a chair of Basque language at the Secondary Institute of Vizcaya (Heiberg 1989: 50). He also embarked upon a process of linguistic engineering, attempting to purge the language of all of the Hispanicisms that it had absorbed over time (Conversi 1997: 64). However, Arana never became fluent.

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26 As Geoffrey Lewis points out, linguistic engineering, the purging of foreign words and substituting native words for them, is a common practice among nationalists who are seeking to instill national pride and to strengthen the boundary between the in-group and the out-group (1999: 1-2). Lewis focuses on the “catastrophic success” of Turkish language reform, particularly the efforts by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Like Arana’s efforts to eradicate hispanicisms from Euskara, Atatürk removed the Arabic and Persian words from Turkish. However, the Turkish efforts to purify the language went a bit further by also shifting the alphabet of the language from Arabic to Latin. While the changes were aimed in some respect at increasing literacy and fostering domestic communication, thereby strengthening the ties among in-group members, they also redefined the group identity as well as the boundaries among the in-group and other out-groups. In particular, the Turkish language engineering efforts aided in breaking ties with the Islamic East, making the language of the Koran less accessible (and thus, contributing to the process of secularization) while at the same time facilitating communication with the West (Ibid., 27). The irony of language engineering efforts, such as those undertaken by Arana and Atatürk, is that they often result in a language that is unrecognizable to native speakers, hindering in-group communication (Conversi 1997: 64).
Similarly, Arana’s treatment of Euskara in his articulation of Basque identity is somewhat contradictory. On one hand, Arana did include Euskara in his formulation of Lagi-zara as an important component of Basqueness; given his efforts toward learning Euskara, it is not difficult to imagine that Arana valued the language as a component of Basque culture. However, given that most individuals, including nationalist leaders like Arana, were unable to speak Euskara fluently – if at all – he ran the risk of alienating a wide swath of potential in-group members by declaring Euskara the boundary marker between Basques and Spaniards. This tension is manifested within his writings. In one respect, Arana writes fondly of Euskara as a vehicle for the virtues of the Basque race. ‘Euskara cannot be considered merely as a beautiful language, worthy of being cultivated in literature: it is the support of our race and the buttress of the religiosity and morality of our people’ (1965b: 432); ‘the preservation of our language is a great help for also preserving religiosity and morality in our country’ (1965d: 297). In other writings, however, the importance of Euskara itself to the nation is downplayed, while the importance of language as a tool of exclusion is underscored:

If we had to choose between a Bizkaya populated by maketos who spoke only Euskara and a Bizkaya populated by bizkainos who spoke only Spanish, without doubt we could select the latter...Bizkainos are as obliged to speak their national language as they are not to teach it to the maketos or Spaniards. Speaking one language or another is not important. Rather,
the difference between languages is the means of preserving us from the contagion of Spaniards and avoiding the mixing of the two races. If our invaders learnt Euskara, we would have to abandon it, carefully storing away the grammar and dictionary, and dedicate ourselves to speaking Russian, Norwegian or some other language unknown to them. (1965c: 404)

What is the national language, considered by itself, except as a simple sign by which members of a nation communicate their ideas and emotions? If it is repressed and replaced by another, the nation will continue exactly as before. (1965a: 1327)

Underscoring this point is the fact that Arana coined a new term to replace the traditional words for the Basque territory and the Basque people. Previously, they were referred to by the terms Euskalherria (meaning ‘the country of the people who speak Euskara’) and Euskaldun (meaning ‘possessor for Euskara’). The use of these terms in the nationalist program would have precluded most of the early nationalists, as well as huge swaths of the Basque population, as legitimate members of the Basque group. So, in 1901, Arana solved the problem by taking the stem euzko, which Arana believed to mean
the Basque race and adding the suffix –di, which meant locality. Thus, he coined the term Euzkadi to mean ‘the place of the Basque race’ (Conversi 1997: 65-66).

Thus, knowledge of Basque was not a requirement for membership in the Basque nation. As Heiberg argues, language was “more a symbol of the nationalist cause than a fundamental issue” (1982: 358). Rather, the symbols of Basque nationalism were selected for instrumental reasons, drawing together the in-group, while at the same time, delineating the boundary between the in-group and the out-group. Following Barth (1969), it was the boundary that mattered, not the marker itself.

Arana’s nationalist program sought the union of all Basques, who themselves were linked by racial purity and devotion to Catholicism. Though Arana sought separation from Spain, he never appeared to advance violent tactics to achieve those goals (Clark 1979: 46-47). Rather, he desired Basque nationalism to triumph at the ballot box and sought democratic ends for accomplishing those goals. Thus, one of Sabino

27 By coining new words using an existing system of prefixes and suffixes, Arana was following in the path of other language nationalists who were using language engineering in order to articulate national identities. Just a few years earlier, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda sought the creation of a Jewish state and the realization of Hebrew as a vernacular in order to draw together otherwise fragmented Jews. As part of this effort, Ben-Yehuda not only created a dictionary, but he also invented a new word for it: millon (Ben-Yehuda 1993: 37). Millon was derived from the Hebrew millah, meaning ‘word’. It replaced the previous Hebrew word for dictionary, sefer millim, which was translated from the German Wörterbuch, or ‘book of words’.
Arana’s most significant contributions to the Basque nationalist cause was the founding of a Basque nationalist political ‘bureau’, which would eventually become a bona fide political party: the Partido Nacionalista Vasco (PNV). In 1895, Arana and a small group of supporters created this organization with an eye toward contesting local elections and then later, province-wide elections. Though it did not enjoy widespread popular support, the organization made savvy alliances. Within three years, the organization experienced its first political victory when Arana himself was elected to the provincial government in Vizcaya (Clark 1979: 47-48).

However, it was not until after Arana’s death in 1901 that the nationalist movement truly began to gain momentum. The political bureau reconstituted itself into a more formal political party known as the Comunión Nacionalista Vasca (CNV) and scored a major victory when a nationalist was elected mayor of Bilbao in 1906. The CNV continued to gain strength during World War I aided by the economic boom and the wartime propaganda of self-determination; they earned several major electoral victories from 1914-1918. They earned an absolute majority of the seats in the Vizkayan provincial government and steadily increased the number of delegates sent to the Cortes in Madrid. In 1918, of the 20 delegates allotted to the four Basque provinces, the CNV won seven seats (Clark 1979: 48). As the strength of the party grew, delegates began presenting proposals for autonomy, but the Spanish government would not entertain them; neither
would the Allied leaders at Versailles when visited by a small delegation of Basque nationalists (Ibid., 48-49).

The post-WWI environment was not conducive to securing demands for autonomy, as social upheaval spread throughout Spain and elsewhere. Class struggles, violent anarchist movements, a worldwide depression and a fear of communism sparked by the Russian Revolution not only drew needed support away from nationalist groups, but also shook the very foundations of Spanish liberal monarchy. By 1920, The CNV managed to send only one delegate to the Cortes (Clark 1979: 48-49). That same year, the CNV split as a result of disagreements among members regarding the possibility of coalitions with right-wing parties. This cleavage spawned the Partido Nacionalista Vasco (PNV), which remains the Basque nationalist political party today (Ibid., 49).

The social upheaval unleashed at the end of WWI reached a critical mass in 1923 when King Alfonso XIII asked General Miguel Primo de Rivera to form a new government, abolishing the Constitution of 1876 and suspending its guarantees (Clark 1979: 49). The coup was presented as a short-term solution to the ongoing instability and it was actually welcome in large sectors of the population who were anxious for the restoration of law and order (Lecours 2007: 63). While the army was certainly capable of fulfilling this role, the coup also brought to power the only actor that was particularly interested in pushing Spanish nationalism and which viewed regional separatism as
treasonous. This situation would have serious consequences for the sub-state nationalist movements, particularly the Basques (Clark 1979: 49).

Though Primo de Rivera had come to power espousing some sympathy for Catalan nationalists, it was quickly over-ridden by his admiration for fascism, which provided a means for creating a coherent Spanish identity and nation. The regime outlawed any act that might undermine national unity, stressing Catholicism and a notion of shared cultural, historical and linguistic values known as *hispanidad* as the ties binding all of the national groups together (Holguín 2002: 5, 44-45). To this end, all flags, except for the Spanish flag were banned and Spanish was declared as the sole national language (Clark 1979: 49). The Basque nationalist political parties, the CNV and the PNV, were forced underground (Lecours 2007: 64).

On the surface, these policies were geared toward stamping out dissent and maintaining social order, the ostensible goal of the coup. Yet, they were also defended as necessary for the survival of the state, a nod to the regime’s fascist leanings. At the same time, the Rivera regime was quite different from the distinctly fascist Franco dictatorship that would come. It never embarked upon the same kind of massive repression of the sub-state national groups that would characterize Franco’s rule. Moreover, Rivera allowed for some expressions of cultural diversity, though these were largely non-political and
innocuous tourist attractions: crafts, dances, and folklore (Carr 1966: 568). Thus, Basque cultural expression actually flourished under the Rivera regime.

Nevertheless, the political repression seemed to increase the strength and popularity of Basque nationalism. When the Second Republic was declared after the fall of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship in 1930, the PNV, running a slate with the Carlist party, won more than half of the seats allocated for Álava, Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa and Navarra (Lecours 2007: 64). Soon after, the PNV absorbed the CNV, creating a single Basque nationalist political party. It was the PNV that was able to dictate the terms of the merger, which resulted in a party doctrine that was based largely on Sabino Arana’s ideas from thirty years earlier. Catholicism was declared as the only true religion and the guiding principle of action in the seven provinces of Euzkadi, which was declared the homeland of the Basques. It also professed a right to Basque self-determination on the basis of natural and historical rights, setting out the following goals for the nationalist movement: sustain the Basque race, language and customs, while protecting them from outside influences (Granja Sainz 1990: 36).

Under the Second Republic, there was an effort to continue the Spanish nation-building project that had begun under the dictatorship. They attempted to continue with cultural unification, sending groups on Castilianization missions to areas that were deemed isolated from the capital by virtue of distance, terrain, economics (core/periphery
relations), or political distance born of relations with Madrid. Ironically, the missionaries did not spend very much time in the Basque Country, possibly because it was already one of the most industrialized parts of Spain and thus, already assumed to have undergone the process of Castilianization. When they did visit the region, they focused on the mountainous areas that were inaccessible by major roadways or railroads. These areas were also sparsely populated, meaning that the Castilianization project did not actually reach many individuals in the Basque Country (Holguín 2002: 57-73).

At the same time, the Second Republic signaled an openness to regional autonomy, particularly through promises of regional autonomy for Cataluña made in order to get the Catalans on board with the new regime. This effort caught the eye of the PNV, who had been rather reluctant to embrace the new regime (Lecours 2007: 66). They seized this opportunity to draft a Basque Statute of Autonomy in the summer of 1931. The statute established a Basque State which would be autonomous within Spain, while also allowing for individual provinces to administer most of their own affairs. The Statute set aside a number of powers for the Spanish government — including foreign affairs, armed forces, currency, criminal and commercial law — and reserved all others for the Spanish government (Payne 1975: 119). The statute was revised the following summer in order to respond to the new Spanish constitution which referred to Spain as an estado integral (integral state) and established its compatibility with autonomy. The consequent revisions to the Basque Statute included replacing references to the “Basque State” with
Euzkadi and removing some of the powers that had previously been reserved for the regional powers. The document was approved by representatives of all provinces except for Navarre; there, Carlists had become uncomfortable with the centrism inherent in the project. In 1933, the statute was modified to exclude Navarra; it was soon approved by majorities in referenda held in all provinces, though the level of abstentions in Álava was quite high (Lecours 2007: 66).

Approval of the Statute was a major victory for the PNV and was followed by a significant showing in the 1933 elections. The triumph, however, was short-lived as implementation was delayed for two reasons. First, the high number of abstentions during the referendum in Álava proved prescient, as the province began to voice reservations about the statute. Second, the Spanish elections of 1933 produced center-right majorities that were much less open to regional autonomy than the Republican left (Lecours 2007: 66). Three years later, the left was back in power, and on October 1, 1936, the Basque Statute of Autonomy was approved. Again, this was a false victory, as the passage of the statute occurred within the context of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). As a result, a PNV-led Basque government was formed, but it controlled only Vizcaya and parts of Guipúzcoa. Eventually, the forces led by General Francisco Franco took control of these areas and forced the Basque government, led by President José Antonio Aguirre, into exile (Watson 2003: 287).
The Spanish Second Republic left the country divided in the same way that Spain had been divided by the traditional-Catholic and liberal-secular views of the state in the 19th century. Most of the Spanish Right — including the military — found the political structures and culture of the Second Republic to be dangerous for two reasons: First, they viewed the Second Republic as a breeding ground for socialist ideologies. These ideologies were not only a potential source of destabilization — here, the Russian Revolution was instructive — but they also undermined Catholicism, which had functioned as a significant marker of Spanish identity for some time. Thus, the leftist dismissal of religion was viewed as particularly insidious. In sum, the military viewed the left and the leftist-influenced Second Republic as the work of foreign agents, which could only serve to undermine the Spanish state. Second, the army also objected to the statutes of autonomy that had been granted during the Second Republic, as they could only weaken the state. Eventually, the army reasoned, they would result in succession and lead to the demise of the Spanish state. The ideal Spain — a strong Spain — was marked by political centralization and cultural homogeneity. In other words, it would be the antithesis of the Second Republic. Thus, the right wing sensed that they were fighting for Spain’s survival, which explains why the Civil War was fought so fiercely (Lecours 2007: 69).

The story of the Civil War in the Basque Country depends, to some degree, on who is telling it. Nationalists speak of the Civil War as a matter of resistance against an
invader; thus, it was not pitting Spaniards against Spaniards, but Spain against the Basques (Aguilar 1999: 9). The aerial bombardment of the Vizcayan town of Guernica on April 26, 1937 signifies this perception; it is perhaps the most salient collective memory of the Civil War among Basques. The attack resulted in somewhere between 100 and 1000 casualties (Raento and Watson 2000: 714). Though details of the incident are still somewhat fuzzy, convincing arguments have suggested that the attack was carried out by German planes with Franco’s blessing; the regime, however, continually denied any involvement. It is difficult to accept that the regime had absolutely no hand in the attack, as it presented an ideal political target, rather than a strategic one. It is the home of the famous oak tree that served as a meeting place for foral councils and thus, is of great symbolic significance. For contemporary Basque nationalists, Guernica represents nothing short of attempted genocide, providing irrefutable evidence that the Civil War was not a war of ideology, but of nation and identity.

The reality is more complicated, because the Civil War was as divisive among the Basques as it was between the Spanish Left and Right. For instance, though the PNV eventually threw their support behind the Republicans, they did not do so

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28 Pablo Picasso immortalized the bombing in his iconic painting entitled “Guernica”. The painting is currently displayed in the Reina Sophia museum in Madrid. But the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao has sought to acquire it. The ongoing controversy over this painting suggests that significance of the event and underscores the determination of Basques to claim the historical event as their own (Raento and Watson 2000).
enthusiastically. At first, they supported the Republicans because they seemed more likely to eventually grant autonomy. Later, once Franco’s forces had conquered Álava and Navarra, they did so because Franco targeted members of the PNV (Aguilar 1999: 9). Still, not all of the Basque provinces supported the Republicans. Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa did, but much of Álava and Navarra supported Franco. This can be explained at least partially by the fact that Álava was the least nationalist province and Navarra the least Basque. Thus Francoist emphasis on centralism and Spanish national identity was appealing in Álava and its discourse on religion was appealing to the Carlist ideology that was still quite strong in Navarre. This division continued and was even furthered at the end of the Civil War. Álava and Navarra were rewarded for their support of Franco by being allowed to keep their conciertos económicos; Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, as punishment for their betrayal, were stripped of their privileges and branded traitors (Lecours 2007: 70).

Once Franco came to power, the regime began to institute its vision of Spain. For the fascists, Spain was a unified, Catholic nation, built by the historic religious struggle between Christians and Muslims. Culturally, Spain was again defined and united by hispanidad, transforming it into a culturally homogenous state (Preston 1995: 32). Thus, the very existence of Basques and Catalans posed a significant problem because they represented a cultural diversity that could not be tolerated if Spain was going to survive. Moreover, this diversity was more dangerous than even left-wing forces; the dictatorship
feared socialism, but believed Spain was better off “red than broken” (Raetno and Watson 2000: 715). Thus, Basque and Catalan nationalists — symbolic of cultural, and hence national, heterogeneity — became the most dangerous enemies of the state.

This perspective led to policies of cultural repression and forcible assimilation, which were justified as necessary for the protection of the state. Imprisonment, torture and execution were not reserved only for those who had directly and openly opposed the regime, but also for anyone who dared even express support for the Basque Country; even priests were not spared, as they had ‘strayed’ from the Church (Clark 1979: 80-81). Moreover, the regime attempted to eradicate all signs of the Basque language. Euskara was banned in schools, public broadcasting, church services and even in public spaces. Basque names in civil registries and in some cases, on tombstones, were erased and replaced with Spanish ones (Ibid., 81).

When WWII began, the Basques viewed it as an opportunity to depose Franco. To this end, the Basque government in exile supported the Allies in any way that they could, hoping that the defeat of the Axis powers would bring Franco down with it. While the help that the PNV could provide was minimal, they were able to aid allied forces with intelligence gathering. Basque President Aguirre was so confident that the regime would not survive the war, he began speaking of an independent Basque state located between
Spain and France. The PNV had effectively radicalized its program (Granja Sainz 2002: 71).

The end of WWII did not bring about Basque autonomy, despite the PNV’s optimism. The devastation of war rendered Spain’s European neighbors incapable of assisting the Basques in their quest to topple the dictatorship. Moreover, given Franco’s ties with Hitler and Mussolini, Spain was treated as a pariah state on a continent that had been reclaimed for democracy. It was not included in the Marshall Plan or the Treaty of Paris, which would establish the European Coal and Steel Community (Closa and Heywood 2004:7).

Cold War politics and the United States’ Truman Doctrine would essentially put an end to all hopes of achieving Basque autonomy. Beginning in 1947, the foreign policy of the United States was focused on containment — stopping the spread of communism and limiting the influence of the Soviet Union. Within this particular political context, Franco became an important and dependable ally as a result of the regime’s staunch anticommunism. This led the United States to overlook the regime’s support of the Axis powers and accusations of human rights abuses. By 1953, Spain and the U.S. had concluded a bi-lateral treaty. Two years later, Spain was admitted to the United Nations and shortly thereafter, to the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank (Closa and Heywood 2004: 8). American-Spanish relations were normalized and Spain’s
participation in international organizations eliminated its pariah status (Ramírez Jimenez 1996: 50).

At the same time, Spain was not a full participant in the European integration project that had begun in the 1950s. Over the years, Franco became open to fuller economic integration, moving away from more autarkic policies to what was termed ‘economic Europeanism’ (Ramírez Jimenez 1996: 50). At the same time, the European Community considered democratization to be a prerequisite for Spanish integration. As long as Franco was in power, Spain would remain outside of the European project.

With the failure of its strategy to rely on international powers to bring about the fall of the dictatorship, the PNV shifted its strategy. They viewed regime change as the only way to achieve autonomy or independence and as a result, sought to bring about the end of the dictatorship in any way that they could. To this end, they adopted a three-pronged strategy. First, they established links to other anti-Franco forces, as well as other Christian democratic parties in Europe (Clark 1979: 112-114). Second, they attempted to spread nationalist sentiment by promoting Basque culture and language (Lecours 2007: 74). Third, they sought to increase their visibility internationally by publicly condemning Franco whenever they had the opportunity. For instance, Aguirre unsuccessfully wrote to UNESCO in November 1952 to object to Spain’s membership. After having described political and cultural repression in the Basque Country, Aguirre argued that:
If, according to the UNESCO charter, this organization has for objective ‘to contributed to the maintenance of peace and security for the purpose of securing the universal respect of justice, law, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction of race, gender, language or religion’ then we do not believe that the regime of general Franco is qualified for membership in this organization. (reprinted in Beltza 1977: 133-136)

Despite these efforts, the PNV saw very little progress; in particular, their strategies did nothing to improve the day-to-day lives of Basques living under the Franco regime. By the 1950s, with a booming economy in the Basque Country, many lost interest in nationalism (Conversi 1997: 83). The PNV appeared ineffective, an appraisal that was exacerbated by the fact that it also lacked clear leadership when Aguirre died in 1960 (Lecours 2007: 75).

Growing frustration with the PNV and with the direction of Basque nationalism had been festering for some time, particularly among younger Basque nationalists. In 1952, young nationalists formed the group Ekin (To Do) and began meeting to discuss alternate courses of nationalist action. Ekin briefly merged with the PNV’s youth wing Eusko Gaztedi (Basque Youth), but disagreements over objectives and strategies soon caused a split within that organization. One group stayed within the PNV, while one
remained Ekin and founded a separate organization, Euskadi ta Askatasuna (ETA) — Basque Homeland and Freedom, in July 1959 (Lecours 2007: 75).

ETA embraced a good deal of the original Aranaist thinking on Basque nationalism. ETA returned to Arana’s basic narrative on the Basque nation, establishing the Basques as an ancient and unique people, defined by their democratic and egalitarian nature (Jáuregui 2000: 191). Like Arana, ETA railed against anything deemed “Spanish” as a threat to the cultural integrity of the Basque nation. Spain was viewed as an occupying power and only with complete liberation could the Basque nation survive and thrive. Thus, the only solution to the ‘Basque problem’ could not come from the Spanish state or even within the context of the Spanish state; it could only come with complete independence (Jáuregui 2000: 194). Thus, ETA established a much more radical objective than the PNV, where a return to the Statute of Autonomy that had been passed under the Republic was no longer an acceptable solution. They also returned to the maximalist view of the geographic boundaries of this proposed independent state: the three Basque provinces, plus Navarre on the Spanish side and the three French provinces. In other words, they returned to Arana’s formula: 4+3=1 (Lecours 2007: 75).

However, ETA did make some significant departures from Arana’s doctrine. First, it replaced Arana’s emphasis on race with an emphasis on Basque language and culture. Where Arana viewed the loss of Euskara as something that could be overcome as
long as the race survived, ETA viewed the Basque language as essence of the Basque nation; the loss of Euskara threatened the very survival of the group. This shift posed a significant challenge to ETA, since the situation surrounding Euskara had scarcely changed since Arana’s time. It was still the case that a majority of Basques were not fluent in Euskara. To this end, ETA advocated language recovery efforts to support their new articulation of identity (Conversi 1990: 62).

The remaining departures can be traced to the publication of *Vasconia* by Frederico Krutwig in 1963.²⁹ Though Krutwig was never a member of ETA, his writings became the organization’s central inspiration and functioned as a sort of manifesto and guide. *Vasconia* contained a scathing critique of the Roman Catholic Church and its role in undermining Basque national identity. In fact, Krutwig’s view of the Basque relationship with religion did a complete turn from the Aranist view: the Basque was no longer a devout, pious Catholic, but an atheist. “The Basque people…never welcomed with open heart the foreign creed embodied by Roman Catholicism. Even if today, the Basques seem to adhere to the Roman Catholic Church, any serious observer can see that the Basque is closer to paganism” (Sarahilh de Ihartza 1963: 81). Thus, ETA moved away from religion, as a marker of Basque identity, though they never directly targeted

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²⁹ Federico Krutwig was the pseudonym of Fernando Sarrailh de Ihartza.
members of the church or priesthood and no priest has ever been killed by ETA (Lecours 2007: 79).

Krutwig’s book also served to inspire ETA to situate itself alongside other anti-colonial and revolutionary movements that were occurring in Latin America and elsewhere in the developing world. This narrative lined up nicely with ETA’s established perception that Spain was an occupying power. As such, ETA saw very little difference between the Basque struggle against Spain and the struggle of the Algerians or the Vietnamese against the French (Conversi 1993: 256). Furthermore, ETA also identified with the revolutionary struggles in Cuba and China. This led to an adoption of anti-capitalist ideologies such as Marxism and Maoism. In fact, ETA formally adopted an anti-capitalist stance in 1964 (Conversi 1999: 40). ETA’s focus thus became effecting radical change through action. “A national liberation movement can never be conservative…A conservative regime, a conservative ideology, prolongs the status quo. A struggle for national liberation is by definition a revolutionary ideal. From this fact, we must draw the necessary consequences” (Sarailh de Ihartza 1963: 327).  

30 Though the organization did take on a radical left-wing orientation, it is important to note that some members adhered more to the revolutionary ideals than others. In fact, ETA itself was never a completely unified organization. It developed three factions that, at various times, controlled the organization and more important, caused the organization to split into other organizations. The first faction was the cultural nationalists, whose central objective was the liberation of the Basque Country. The second faction, the
Where Krutwig’s writings were perhaps most influential, however, was on the use of violence as a tool and political strategy. This again marks a major departure from Arana and from the PNV, who both advocated non-violent political approaches. While ETA had embraced violent actions before — notably, a failed attempt to derail a train carrying Francoist veterans to a Civil War commemoration in 1961 — it was not until the publication of Vasconia that it was embraced as part of a particular program. In the book, Krutwig laid out a plan of attack, later named the spiral of action-repression-action, for driving the regime from the Basque Country. Instead of using violence to remind the regime and the rest of Spain of the ongoing political conflict in the Basque Country, the strategy sought to mobilize the Basque masses by escalating levels of violence (Sullivan 1988: 42-43). “For him, an action from the enemy must always be met by a stronger response so that he accepts our will; in our case, the end of military occupation” (Saraihl de Ihartza 1963: 339). Under this strategy, any repressive action by the state should be

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revolutionary nationalists, was guided much more by Krutwig’s thinking and viewed the Basque Country as a colonial possession of Spain. This objective was very close to the cultural nationalists. Finally, the third group, the Marxists viewed the Basque plight as part of the larger narrative of class struggle and sought the emancipation of workers. The cultural nationalists controlled ETA in the early 1960s, but were soon overtaken by the Marxists. The conflict between these two would continue for the next decade. The Marxist faction did leave to form a new organization ETA-Berri (New ETA) in 1966, but that did not completely resolve the conflict between the cultural nationalists and the class struggle revolutionaries within ETA. The organization split again along these lines in 1971, but the cultural nationalists eventually prevailed (see Clark 1979 and Sullivan 1988).
met with an equally severe act of violence so that the state’s response would become both more repressive and indiscriminate. The logic is that the strategy would not only elevate and heighten the levels of violence in an upward spiral, but it would also mobilize the Basque population, as they would increasingly become the victims of the regime’s violent reactions. In other words, the strategy sought to incite a mass rebellion through the tactics of guerilla resistance. In 1965, this strategy was formally adopted when José Luis Zalbide presented it to the ETA Fourth Assembly (Woodworth 2001: 42, note 14).31

Within a few years of the adoption of Krutwig’s blueprint for revolution, ETA had undertaken robberies and bombings of statues of Franco, but had yet to really find the necessary catalyst to trigger the desired spiral of violence (Woodworth 2001: 37-38). That spark came in 1968, when Txabi Etxebarrieta killed José Pardines, an officer of the Guarda Civil and was then himself shot and killed by a second officer (Clark 1979: 35). The attack, coming as the officers were checking cars, was unplanned, but it accomplished two important objectives: first and most important, it triggered increasing repression on the part of the Franco regime, which was then answered by ETA with more brazen attacks. Second, it provided ETA with its first martyr and a rallying point for Basques (Sullivan 1988: 71).

31 Curiously, the Franco regime’s reaction to the attempted train derailment in 1961 — indiscriminate imprisonment of hundreds of activists and torture — had demonstrated the theory of action-repression-action before Krutwig had ever elaborated it (Woodworth 2001: 36).
Later that year, ETA assassinated Melitón Manzanas, a police commissioner in Guipúzcoa, who had a reputation as an abuser and torturer of Basque Nationalists (Lecours 2007: 79). The Franco regime responded precisely as the spiral theory predicted: it declared a state of emergency in Guipúzcoa, which removed the few civil rights the regime had conceded to the population and issued the Decree on Military Rebellion, Banditry and Terrorism. The decree equated political opponents with mutineers and punished them as such. Members of opposition groups could face twenty years in prison, while their leadership risked execution (Letamendía 1994: 353). Moreover, the everyday experience of the Basque masses was markedly altered. They were subject to security checkpoints and searches by forces that not regarded them not just suspiciously, but as hostile. Thus, people who were not particularly involved in politics or the nationalist movements were suddenly subject to poor treatment, abuse and indiscriminant arrest\(^\text{32}\) (Letamendía 1994: 332). This meant that ETA could now count on substantial popular support. Not everyone agreed with the use of violence to fight the Francoist regime; the PNV, in particular, objected to the tactics as contrary to the peace-loving nature of the Basque (Garmendia 2000: 143). However, those who denounced ETA’s violent tactics also tended to object to the response of the regime. Further, there

\(^{32}\) While the Basque Country certainly was not the only area suffering indiscriminate repression (Madrid and Catalonia were also victims), it was particularly intense and sustained there. Of eleven states of emergency declared from 1956 to 1975, ten impacted the Basque provinces and nearly half applied to them only (Letamendía 1994: 332)
were some who, while publicly denouncing the group, privately admitted to some degree of respect for ETA as the only group willing to take up arms against the regime (Woodworth 2001: 38).

In 1970, the regime put 16 ETA members on trial before a military tribunal for the murder of Melitón Manzanas. This became a watershed moment for both Basque nationalism and the Franco regime. Known as the Burgos trial, the proceedings drew national and international attention, triggering protests in the Basque Country, Madrid and elsewhere in Western Europe. Suddenly, the Franco regime found itself in the spotlight and subject to harsh scrutiny, as the extensive media coverage gave a voice to ETA’s claims. The coverage drew the attention of leftist intellectuals such as John-Paul Sarte, while the Vatican under Pope Paul VI pleaded for clemency for the accused (Conversi 1997: 100). European countries withdrew their ambassadors in protest and the European Parliament approved a resolution which would stop accession negotiations (Closas and Heywood 2004: 12). In Madrid, dissident lawyers occupied the Palace of Justice, while Catalan luminaries locked themselves in the monastery of the Black Madonna, Cataluña’s patron saint, in Monserrat (Conversi 1997: 100-101; Woodworth 2001: 39). On December 28, 1970, when the tribunal handed down nine death sentences, instead of the six requested by the prosecution, European governments, including France, Germany and the Vatican appealed to the regime, asking that the sentences be commuted. Franco complied, commuting all of the punishments to thirty years in prison (Woodworth
2001: 39). However, the damage had been done. The international exposure had increased the pressure placed upon the regime, not only at home, but abroad as well. In the end, it was a trial of the regime, as much as of ETA (Carr 1982: 733-734).

In 1973, ETA assassinated another official, this time killing Carerro Blanco, Franco’s right hand man and presumed successor. The assassination was not only symbolically significant, but also strategically important. First and foremost, it succeeded in escalating the violence. Second, it stripped the regime of its sense of continuity. This latter victory was particularly important, as Franco’s public appearances were increasingly highlighting his advanced age and the effects of Parkinson’s disease (Woodworth 2001 40). Originally, ETA had planned to kidnap Blanco and ransom him for Basque prisoners. Instead, the group decided to stage a daring bombing, killing him and two of his bodyguards on their way to mass in central Madrid (Woodworth, 40-41). The incident again focused international attention on the Basques and publicly demonstrated the degree to which the regime was crumbling. ETA’s actions finally appeared to be impacting the regime, though not as originally expected. The action-repression-action strategy devised by Krutwig suggested that mass mobilization would be the key to ending the dictatorship. Instead, it seemed as though increased pressure on the regime was enough to accomplish the goal (Lecours 2007: 80). Moreover, ETA’s stock soared, especially among Basque youth. The group had demonstrated that violence was a
powerful and useful weapon, killing over 40 people during the Franco dictatorship (Woodworth 2001: 41).

At this point, pressures with ETA were growing, as lines were drawn over the question of political involvement and how useful it might be to the organization. As a result of the disagreement, ETA split into two factions: ETA-PM (político militar), a group which supported using politics in conjunction with guerilla tactics and ETA-M (militar), which eschewed such activities and supported remaining a strictly military organization (Lecours 2007: 80). These divisions, though disruptive, were not fatal. ETA would go on to outlive the dictatorship. Even when the transition to democracy was complete after Franco’s death in 1975, ETA would not cease its activities. “Since guerilla war is not an end in itself, the population of Vasconia will wish its termination…In such a situation, the worst error that the guerrilleros could make is to accept a solution other than one that recognizes the full independence of the nation” (Sarailh de Ihartza 1963: 337).

General Franco died on November 20, 1975. Two days later, Juan Carlos de Borbón was named King of Spain. Within days, King Juan Carlos declared a general amnesty, releasing 15000 political prisoners and exiles (Conversi 1997: 141). Within two years of the end of the dictatorship, Spain held its first elections. Suárez’s party the Unión del Centro Democrático (UCD) won nationally, with 37% of the vote, compared to 29%
for the newly legalized Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) and a little under 10% for the Partido Comunista de España (PCE) (Lecours 2007: 84-85). In the Basque Country, the PNV established itself as the main Basque party, but still came second to the PSOE (Conversi 1997: 143).

The entire transition to democracy and the resulting Constitution can best be characterized by balance. On one hand, it was important to ensure that forces close to the Franco regime, especially the army, were on board. Thus, it was crucial to give consideration to their fears of decentralization and what regional autonomy could mean for the survival of the state. In other words, a pure federal system was not a likely outcome. On the other hand, some concessions would need to be made to nationalist groups, especially the Basques, or unrest was likely. ETA had not only continued its campaign, it also increased the violence. For most years of its existence, the annual death toll from ETA attacks had never been greater than 20. However, between 1977, two years after Franco’s death, and 1980, there were 240 casualties (Mees 2003: 35). Strategically, the increased violence only strengthened the negotiating position of the Basque nationalists. Ironically, even the moderate PNV benefitted from the fear that ignoring nationalist demands would doom the entire democratic project (Lecours 2007: 85). The strength of the Basque nationalist’s hand, coupled with support for a decentralized system from Catalan nationalists, the PSOE and the PCE, meant that a pure unitary system was also unlikely. The new Constitution reflected this need for compromise. The document
does not characterize Spain as a federal system. Instead, it repeatedly refers to the Spanish state, which derives its power from the Spanish people (Article 1.2). At the same time, it recognizes and legitimizes the process of regionalization in Article 3:

Castilian is the official language of the state. All Spaniards have a duty to know it and a right to use it. The other Spanish languages will also be official in their respective Autonomous Communities according to their own statuses. The richness of the distinct linguistic modalities of Spain represent a patrimony which will be the object of special respect and protection.

Also, while the Constitution does not specifically name the three historical nationalities — groups living in the Basque Country, Cataluña and Galicia — it does acknowledge them with a general reference to the nationalities of Spain and further, guarantees them some degree of autonomy. For instance, in Article 2, it states that “The Constitution is based on the indivisible unity of the Spanish Nation, common and indivisible fatherland of all Spaniards. It acknowledges and guarantees the right to autonomy of the nationalities and regions which form it and the solidarity among them.” Using the concept of diverse nationalities in the context of a unified Spanish state signaled not only a compromise, but a rearticulation of Spanish identity. It moved away from the Francoist
vision of Spain as culturally homogenous and defined by hispanidad by recognizing and even revering the historical nationalities and their cultural heritage.

It is important to note however, that while the Constitution granted these rights and set up a decentralized system, it also took steps to ensure that the decentralization did not spiral out of control. Article 145 forbids the creation of federations between Autonomous Communities as a way to discourage any pan-nationalist sentiments such as those which might seek to reunited the three Basque provinces with Navarra. Moreover, by extending potential autonomy to any region — currently seventeen in total — the Constitution effectively dilutes any sense of special privilege for the three historical nationalities (Conversi 1997: 143-144).

Once an autonomous region had its statute approved by the Cortes, it could potentially assume the following powers (listed in Article 148): social assistance; transportation; the spread of the community’s culture and the teaching of its language; tourism; and public works in the community’s territory, undertaken in its interests. Article 149 establishes the powers reserved for the central government: international relations; defense; labor law; civil law; social security; immigration; and the defense of Spanish culture. In addition to this federal-like division of powers, a constitutional court (tribunal constitutional) is empowered to arbitrate any conflicts between autonomous communities and the state. However, the departure from a true federal system is
significant. First, though the legislatures of the various Autonomous Communities can initiate amendments to the Constitution, the actual passage is through the Cortes and/or public referendum. Unlike in the U.S., where a threshold of states is required for a Constitutional amendment, the Autonomous Communities wield no such control. Second, the Autonomous Communities are not strongly represented in the upper house of the legislature (Lecours 2007: 86).

Despite efforts to please as many parties as possible, the country remained deeply divided over the Constitution. The obvious opponents were the more conservative factions, who remained uncomfortable with the level of decentralization present in the document and the recognition of the nationalities. This faction remained unconvinced that the safeguards employed in the document would be capable of preventing the disintegration of the state (Agranoff 1993: 5). However, they were not the only opponents. The referendum was just as divisive in the Basque Country and served to highlight the ongoing struggle between moderate and radical Basque nationalism. The moderate PNV was dissatisfied with the proposal because it failed to recognize a fundamental right to self-determination for Basques. They called for abstention in the referendum. The newly created political party of radical Basque nationalism, Herri
Batasuna (HB),\textsuperscript{33} took a harder line than the PNV, advocating a ‘no’ vote for the same reason as the PNV. The third Basque nationalist party, Euskadiko Ezkera (EE), made up of members of the disbanded ETA-PM\textsuperscript{34}, specifically pushed for a constitutional article that would recognize a collective right for the Basque population to determine the fate of the Basque Country, independent of Spanish preferences. It also called for a ‘no’ vote. These tensions between the various nationalist factors have endured long after the transition (Lecours 2007: 88)

As a result of these forces, the abstention rate in the 1978 Constitutional referendum was very high in the Basque Country; in Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya, it topped 56\% (Lecours 207: 197, note 14). Moreover, support for the Constitution was much lower in the Basque Country than elsewhere in Spain. Yet, the Basque Country had little impact on the outcome of the referendum, since votes were counted nationwide and there were no regional or provincial thresholds. When the results of the referendum were tallied and the Constitution adopted, it suffered from a lack of legitimacy in the Basque provinces. This situation only fueled negative views of the Spanish state (Moreno, 2004).

\textsuperscript{33} Herri Batasuna was created in 1978 as a way for ETA to participate in the new democratic system. It was a vocal participant in the discourse regarding the Constitution (Gunther et.al. 1988: 342).

\textsuperscript{34} While Euskadiko Ezkera shared leftist views similar to HB, it was not linked to ETA’s violent tactics in the same way that Herri Batasuna was (Lecours 2007: 89).
Democratization in Spain opened the door for further integration with Europe. In 1977, the new Spanish government applied for membership in the European Community. Once the Constitution was adopted, the state became the twentieth member of the Council of Europe. While the economic benefits of a closer relationship with Europe were clear, there was also an important political element. Membership in the European Community was viewed as an anchor for democracy, a safeguard against sliding back into dictatorship and a path toward the restoration of human rights and political liberties. Moreover, individual political actors on all sides could find benefits in membership. Remaining Francoists and members of the upper class viewed the EC as a way to bolster capitalism and protect private property (Pridham 1991). For those who feared dissolution, it was a way to dilute the regional issue and claims for independence. For nationalists, it provided a separate forum for voicing discontent with the state and could eventually erode its power (Moreno Juste 1998: 79).

Having internalized the lessons of World War II, nationalists were not content to rely on international actors to achieve their aims. Basque nationalists quickly began drafting a Statute of Autonomy that created the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country (BAC) which includes Álava, Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya. The statute serves both practical and symbolic functions. At its most fundamental level, the statute establishes the relationship between the Basque Autonomous Community and the Spanish government, defining the jurisdiction of the Basque government. It lays out the basic operations of the
legislative, judicial and executive branches of government. Finally, in a more symbolic vein, it proclaims Euskara the language of the Basque people, establishing it as the co-official language along with Castilian, and adopts the official design of the Basque flag, originally created by Sabino Arana. The statute also stipulates the re-establishment of the conciertos económicos, which allow the Basque country to levy its own taxes within the territory. A portion of those revenues are then transferred to the Spanish government a payment for services that it performs in the Basque Country. This represents a formal acknowledgement of historical rights and the fueros. It is important to note that these arrangements are asymmetrical in the context of all of the Autonomous Communities — they only apply to the BAC and Navarra (Lecours 2007: 89-90).

The Statute of Autonomy garnered much more support in the Basque provinces than the Constitution. Both the PNV and leftist EE supported the statute. More radical Basque nationalists, however, still had objections, largely because there was still no recognized right to Basque self-determination. A second objection stemmed from the fact that the statute also does not represent the geographical boundaries of the Basque community conceptualized by the more radical Basque nationalists — neither Navarra nor the French Basque territories would be covered by the statute as drafted. The radical nationalists, recognizing that the international border separating the French Basque departments from the Spanish ones was a significant hindrance, focused on the omission of Navarra. For them, the inclusion of Navarra under the BAC was non-negotiable. To
complicate matters further, Navarra was itself divided by Basque nationalists who wanted to see Navarra united with the three other provinces and those who viewed it as distinct and thus, supported its establishment as an entirely separate Autonomous Community (MacClancy 1999).

In the end, the statute was ratified by the citizens of Álava, Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya with a large majority voting in favor — 61% voted and of those, 89% voted to adopt. No referendum was held in Navarra to gauge public opinion there (Conversi, 1997: 145). The adoption of the statute was a watershed event. It marked the first time that Álava, Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya were united politically. In addition, the nationalist movement was now buttressed by institutions, rather than voluntary associations. Up to this point, the only time that a Basque government had operated in Spain was for a few months at the end of the Second Republic (Lecours 2007: 91).

However, the impact of the adoption of the Basque Statute of Autonomy extended beyond just the Basque Country because it spurred other regions to demand similar treatment. The slogan “café para todos” (“coffee for everyone”) signaled these increasing claims for more and more autonomy; the argument was that the Spanish government should devolve substantial power to any regional government that was ready to assume it. Further complicating matters were the fears and jealousies of the nationalist groups. For instance, though the Catalans already had a statute of autonomy, they objected to the
special status conferred to the Basque Country. The Basques, of course, feared that other communities would be granted similar privileges, which would in turn dilute their special status (Lecours 2007: 92).

For the Spanish government and for conservatives skeptical of the decentralization process, these cascading claims for more and more autonomy heightened fears that continued decentralization would result in the dissolution of the country. In 1981, these fears came to a head when a small group of Civil Guards led by Colonel Antonio Tejero seized the Spanish parliament. Though the coup attempt was ultimately foiled by an intervention led by King Juan Carlos, the government attempted to slow down the process of decentralization by passing the Ley Orgánica de Armonización del Proceso Autonómico (LOAPA). The law attempted to limit the ability of each autonomous community to create and implement its own policies and thus, level the playing field slightly. The ulterior motive was to limit the power of the BAC and Catalonia by standardizing the political power and representation of each region. When the law was declared unconstitutional in 1983, the Spanish government deliberately slowed the process of transferring power to the autonomous communities, which only served to decrease the legitimacy of the new constitution in the eyes of both moderate and radical Basque nationalists (Conversi 1997: 146).
The Basque nationalist political parties had very different experiences in the post-democratic environment. As might be expected, the PNV remained the strongest political actor in the Basque Country. This is due to two factors. First, their legitimacy was increased as a result of their legacy as the founding part of Basque nationalism. This legitimacy was only enhanced by the fact that they had gained experience as the Basque government-in-exile during the Franco years. Second, the PNV managed to avoid controversial positions on two hot-button issues: the political future of the Basque Country and ETA. In regard to the former, the PNV’s stance was vague. They never explicitly favored independence, but instead advocated self-determination, though it was not quite clear what this would entail. In regard to the latter, the PNV never condemned ETA outright. Instead, they explained ETA’s actions as a result of Spanish repression. By doing so, they distanced themselves from both ETA and the Spanish government (Lecours 2007: 94-95).

The party of radical Basque nationalism, Herri Batasuna struggled to find its footing in the post-democratic landscape. Though the party was securing around 15% of the Basque vote, most likely capitalizing on dissatisfaction with the institutional arrangements contained in the Constitution, it was also treated like a pariah party. Spanish parties linked it with ETA’s violence and the PNV shunned it as a coalition partner. Of course, this situation is partially of HB’s own making: they did not trust the
PNV and viewed the non-Basque political parties as representatives of the enemy (Lecours 2007: 96).

Through the 1980s, ETA continued its campaign, killing between 20 and 50 people annually between 1982 and 1989. These statistics are in line with the numbers during the Franco regime. The difference is that ETA began to experience a greater backlash in response to its actions than in the 1980s. These negative reactions were largely a result of two separate incidents. First, the murder of former member María Dolores Gonzáles Catarain (known as “Yoyes”) was a kind of warning to those who might consider leaving the organization. ETA, however, had miscalculated the likely reaction to the way in which the assassination was carried out: the victim was killed while walking her infant in a public plaza. The circumstances turned public opinion against ETA. In the second incident, ETA bombed a mall in Barcelona, killing many civilians. Up to this point, the organization had largely focused on government officials: politicians, police officers, etc. In fact, the group usually took precautions, such as calling in a bomb threat, to ensure evacuation and minimize injury to innocent bystanders. In this case, ETA claims that it did alert authorities, but that is warnings were not heeded. The mall bombing prompted massive public marches against the continuation of violence. This outcry signals a shift in tolerance for violence throughout Spain, particularly as compared to the 1970s. It is possible for course, that it was the nature of the victims, not the number, that was so objectionable (Lecours 2007: 98).
The Spanish government responded to continued ETA action by supporting a paramilitary organization, Grupos Antiterroristas de Liberación (GAL). The main purpose of the GAL was to track down ETA members in the French Basque Country, since the Spanish government felt that the French were not doing enough to prevent Basque militants from crossing the Pyrenees. The GAL operated officially from 1983-1989. Though it was effective in putting more pressure on the French government, it was not effective in ending ETA violence. In fact, it merely reinforced ETA’s narrative that liberal-democracy in Spain was a sham because fascism had never left (Woodworth 2001).

The 1990s ushered in significant political realignments over the course of the decade. The Partido Popular, a national party that championed a brand of Spanish national identity that deemphasized diversity, began to gain footing in the Basque Country. During the 1980s, the party was never able to break out of single digit electoral support. By the end of the 1990s, the party was garnering 20% (Balfour 1996: 282-283; Lecours 2007: 99).

While the PP gained support, the PNV gradually shifted toward an agenda that sought to establish more sovereignty for the Basque Country (Granja Sainz 2002: 58). First, they signed the Barcelona Declaration with Cataluña’s CIU and the Bloque Nacionalista Galego (BNG) in Galicia, signaling the intent of the signatories to promote
an understanding of Spain as a multinational country. Second, the PNV also began taking greater responsibility for ending ETA’s violence. It was one of the parties to the Declaración de Lizarra, alongside EA, the Basque branch of the IU, HB and other Basque nationalist civil society groups; the agreement set out a framework to put an end to the ongoing conflict between the Spanish government and militant Basque nationalism while at the same time opening a dialogue with the hopes of solving the underlying causes of the conflict. Critics of the agreement, namely the PP, objected to the conditional nature of the laying down of arms—they argued that ETA should abandon its armed struggle without attempting to use peace as leverage to gain acquiescence to their political demands (Lecours 2007: 102).

For its part, ETA agreed to the cease-fire after the signing of the Declaration. This was not the first time that ETA, or some faction of it, had agreed to a cease fire with the Spanish government. The first attempt 1974 was concluded with ETA-PM and was unsuccessful. In 1978, ETA-M put forth conditions for a second agreement known as the KAS alternative, which included amnesty for political prisoners and a statute of autonomy, which would recognize Basque sovereignty. Though Spanish politicians dismissed the plan, most of the elements were eventually included in the Basque Statute of Autonomy (Lecours 2007: 85-86). ETA’s willingness to agree to a third cease fire can

35 However, the organization disbanded in 1981 as part of a deal on partial amnesty for Basque political prisoners (Clark 1990: 113-114).
be attributed to four factors. First, more people feared the organization than in previous decades and ETA actions now resulted in an increasing number of demonstrations and marches (Mees 2003: 99). Second, the precedent set by the Good Friday Agreement in Ireland showed that a protracted, violent nationalist conflict could find a peaceful solution. The weight of this example was increased by the fact that the radical Basque organizations had ties to their Irish counterparts: ETA to the IRA and HB to Sinn Féin (Gillespie 1999: 123-124). Third, the organization could no longer rely on the sanctuary of the French Basque Country, due to crackdowns by the French government. This reduced their capacity to plan and carry out increasingly sophisticated attacks. Finally, the PNV made private promises to ETA that it would take up its political agenda by pursuing three goals: cooperation toward the formation of Euskal Herria; non-cooperation with the Spanish parties; creation of new institutions drawing on representatives from all seven of the Basque provinces in order to move toward political unification. This encouraged ETA to lay down arms, knowing that their agenda would still be pursued (Mees 2001: 813).

Given that the terms of the cease fire hinged on the realization of the maximalist nationalist program, it was not a surprise that it only lasted until December 1999. Indeed, the main catalyst for the retraction of the cease fire was the PNV’s failure to show support for a new Basque parliament which would have drawn representatives from all seven Basque provinces. The defeat of the proposal, as well as the PNV’s role in its
downfall, signaled to ETA a lack of commitment to the maximalist agenda and a violation of the terms of the cease fire. In fact, the PNV received criticism from both sides. While radical Basque nationalists accused the PNV of failing to advance the Basque cause, the Spanish parties accused them of selling out to militant nationalists.

The reality was that the PNV was a scapegoat for the failure of the cease-fire. ETA’s inflexibility on the issue of the three French departments did not bode well for the longevity of any agreement. The Spanish government also failed to use the cease fire as an opportunity to negotiate with ETA. The government only met with ETA once during the cease fire, and during that meeting only succeeded in arresting one of their member-negotiators. Given the results of the 2001 elections, it appears as though the voters had a similar appraisal of the situation; support for the PNV increased that year (Lecours 2007: 105-106).

The PP also enjoyed a strong electoral showing in 2001, gaining a majority of seats in the Cortes. This success empowered the party in two ways. First, they received a country-wide mandate. Second, they were freed from the pressure of having to form coalitions and as a result, they were also freed from compromise; the PP no longer needed to court smaller parties in order to form a government. In this context, the PP embraced a harder line on nationalism, becoming much less amenable to accommodation. Most significantly, the PP shifted from targeting radical Basque nationalism specifically
to adopting policies aimed at eradicating all forms for nationalism. After this shift, the PP-led Spanish government began equating Basque cultural organizations with radical Basque nationalism, accusing them of collaborating with ETA. That ETA would be a target of a PP-led government was not altogether unsurprising. ETA had been murdering the party’s municipal representatives since the late 1990s and the PP had sought to curtail radical Basque nationalism even within its coalitions. Targeting moderate Basque nationalism was a much greater departure from its previous policies. However, it is crucial to note that it is not necessarily a departure from its platform, but rather a logical extension of it; regional nationalisms are inconsistent with the PP’s vision of a unified, centralized Spain. The results of the 2001 elections simply provided circumstances under which these policies could be pursued.

Within the Basque community, the PP’s actions further inflamed anti-Spanish sentiment. In 2003, the PP shut down Egunkaria, a Basque language newspaper. Later that year, they outlawed the radical nationalist party, Herri Batasuna. Both actions were deemed to be government over-reach by Basque nationalists of all kinds. Despite the PP’s justifications, Egunkaria was not tied to ETA or any nationalist group. Moreover, banning HB resulted in radical Basque nationalists losing any semblance of representation in the government, which only reinforced their belief that democracy in Spain was an illusion. The situation was exacerbated by the fact that the PP refused to deal at all with the PNV-led Basque government; José María Aznar, the prime minister,
refused to even speak to his Basque counterpart, Iehendakari Ibarretxe (Lecours 2007: 106).

The PP was also enjoying a higher profile within the European Union and set about using that organization as a tool to fight ETA on the European level. After becoming a member of the Schengen Area in 1990, the Spanish government had sought further improvements in international police cooperation and extradition mechanisms, largely as a way to combat and punish ETA actions. Throughout the 1990s, ETA members had been seeking shelter in EU countries that were particularly sympathetic to asylum seekers. On several of these occasions, the receiving country rejected Spain’s extradition claims, on the grounds that the alleged offenses were politically inspired (Fungairiño 1995: 100).

This led the PP-led government to seek EU-wide reforms of domestic asylum and extradition laws within the context of the European Union. First, in September of 1996, the Council of Europe approved a revised Convention on Extradition, which simplified extradition procedures and most important from the Spanish point of view, reduced the number of instances in which extradition could be refused (Closa and Heywood 2004: 234). Though considered an improvement over the older convention by the Spanish government, there are two unresolved issues which reduce the new conventions effectiveness from their point of view. First, the new convention still allows for a country
to refuse extradition on the basis of legal identity and reciprocal punishments for criminal offenses. This would be a particular barrier to extradition proceedings with Belgium, for instance, where collaboration with terrorists is not a crime. It is unclear how this particular issue will be resolved, as it depends on how the national parliaments interpret the Convention during ratification. Second, the Convention will not come into force until all EU member states ratify it. In order to combat the long delays in enforcement that might result under these circumstances, Spain secured a ‘fast-track’ procedure that would allow immediate application of the convention between two countries that agreed to the procedures. In other words, countries could bi-laterally agree to enforce these rules amongst themselves. By the end of September, Spain had already concluded such an agreement with Belgium (Closa and Heywood 2004: 234-235).

In regard to asylum policies, Spain advanced several concrete proposals. The most significant of these plans proposed to eliminate the right of asylum for EU citizens. The purpose would be two-fold: first, to prevent extradition requests being delayed by a parallel application for asylum; second, to undermine any ETA propaganda arising from asylum claims from its members. Such claims, Spain argued, were an abuse of the right to asylum and would only lead to member states questioning one another’s democratic systems. This proposal caused heated debate among member states and among the NGO community as well. Due to mounting pressure, it was watered down significantly (Closa 1998). However, Spain used its 2002 EU presidency to continue its fight for harmonized
asylum and extradition policies. In particular, they sought to replace extradition with the immediate transfer of subjects. In preparation, Spain concluded bilateral treaties with other member states. For instance, an agreement with Italy made in November of 2002 allowed for the mutual recognition of sentences for a number of crimes, including terrorism, organized crime and arms dealing, while also including mutual recognition of judicial decisions. This effectively eliminated extradition proceedings between Spain and Italy. Using this agreement as a model, Spain attempted to conclude treaties with the UK, France, Germany, Belgium and Portugal. Results here have been uneven. An agreement was successfully reached with the UK, but less progress has been made with France and Portugal, Spain’s nearest neighbors and common havens for ETA members (Closa and Heywood 2004: 238).

At the same time that the relationship between the Basque government and the Spanish government was deteriorating and Spain was pursuing European solutions, Lehendakari (Basque regional president) Juan Jose Ibarretxe proposed a plan that would revamp the institutional framework under which the Autonomous Couuujmmunity operated. The plan was based on the concept of shared or co-sovereignty, where the Basque Country would enter into a relationship of “free association” with Spain. For the PNV, it was a way to spur the central government into devolving the full range of powers listed in the Basque Statute of Autonomy (Lecours 2007: 107). The plan was vague on the precise political and institutional configuration that would result were
the proposal to be implemented. At minimum it would recast Spain as a multinational state with asymmetrical relationships between the central and regional governments. At maximum, it would set up a loose confederation. However, the same problems that plagued earlier attempts to redraw the relationship between the Basques and the Spanish government also hindered the Ibarretxe plan. For radical Basque nationalists, it fell short of the ultimate goal of full independence and did not include the maximalist vision of the Basque Country, by leaving out Navarre and the French Basque departments. The PP, representing the Spanish government, would not even consider the plan, as it contradicted the Spanish Constitution. The situation was again at an impasse (Lecours 2007: 107-108).

Ironically, it was the March 2004 bombings at the Atocha commuter train station in Madrid, or at least, its aftermath, that helped break the stalemate. Immediately following the attack, the PP blamed ETA, even as the information began to suggest that the work was not ETA’s, but an Islamic fundamentalist group with ties to, or at least inspired by, al-Qaeda (BBC News 2004). This would have been very damaging to the PP, due to their unpopular support of the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Confirmation that the attack was tied to Islamic fundamentalism would have given credence to the generally held belief that joining the US in Iraq had been the wrong decision, and could have cost the PP the elections slated to be held in three days. Subtly blaming ETA, on the other hand justified their hard-line policies on all forms of nationalism.
The PP lost the election to the PSOE; suddenly, there was hope for a renewed dialogue on the status of the Basque Country, as the PSOE was less committed to a vision of Spain that played down its diversity. Almost immediately, the new prime minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero met with Ibarretxe. Though the PSOE did not support Ibarretxe’s plan for Basque “free association”, the resumption of any dialogue was hailed as a major development in Basque-Spanish relations (Lecours 2007: 108).

On March 26, 2006, ETA declared another cease-fire (Tremlet 2006). Domestically, the organization had been subject to increasing pressure as a result of a powerful anti-violence social movement that featured various elements of Basque society, most notably families of ETA victims. This movement, combined with increasingly negative perceptions of ETA, indicated that tolerance for violence had only continued to decline since the failed cease-fire of 1999 (Lecours 2007: 109-111). Internationally, ETA was harshly rebuked even by governments that had previously been somewhat sympathetic to their struggle. The European Council for Home Affairs had declared the organization a threat to Europe and the Congress of the European People’s Party condemned ETA as a terrorist group (Closa and Heywood 2004: 237). Moreover, the defeat of the PP and the newly formed PSOE government suggested a climate of openness that had not existed for many years. In 2005, the PSOE had formally declared their receptiveness by passing a parliamentary resolution stating that the Spanish government would negotiate with ETA if the organization formally renounced violence.
Even more auspicious, the PSOE had already demonstrated their commitment to reform in late 2005 by agreeing to changes to the Catalan Statute of Autonomy that not only increase Cataluña’s fiscal autonomy, but also recognize it as a nation (Lecours 2007:109-111). The cease-fire ended on December 30, 2006, as ETA detonated a car bomb in a parking garage in the Barajas airport in Madrid. The bomb caused the building to collapse, killing two men. That evening, Prime Minister Zapatero announced that the peace process had been suspended. ETA attacks continued over the next four years, coinciding with arrests of members (Burnett 2007).

Another cease-fire declaration came in 2010. On January 10, 2011, ETA declared that this cease-fire would not only be permanent, but would also be verifiable by international observers. This declaration was met with significant skepticism, both within Spain and also internationally (Abend 2011). However, on October 20, 2011, ETA announced a cessation of armed activity via video clip sent to media outlets following the Donostia-San Sebastián International Peace Conference, which was attended by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Bertie Ahern, and president of Sinn Féin, Gerry Adams (BBC News 2011). Thus far, this cease-fire has been maintained. However, the Spanish government, led by the PP and Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy since 2001, remains unsatisfied with a cease-fire agreement, pushing for the full dissolution of ETA (Abend 2011).
For its part, Basque nationalism has not abated. If anything, recent electoral results have indicated that its popularity might even be increasing. In the most recent BAC elections, held in 2012, a separatist coalition called EH Bildu came in second behind the PNV. EH Bidu, a coalition made up of former members of ETA’s political wing who joined with more peaceful separatists, won 21 out of 75 seats in the Basque parliament. With a combined two thirds of the seats in the parliament, Basque nationalists ended three years of socialist government in the BAC (Tremlett and Carrell 2012).

Moreover, a recent Scottish referendum on whether to declare independence from the United Kingdom has stoked tensions within Spain. Both the PNV and the Catalan Convergence and Union (CiU) federation declared their support for the Scottish ‘yes’ vote and expressed their desire to hold a similar referendum in their respective regions. For its part, the Partido Popular-led government, headed by Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy, has argued that such referenda would violate the Spanish Constitution (Hamilos 2013). Undaunted, the Catalans actually went so far as to schedule a non-binding referendum on declaring independence from Spain to be held November 9, 2014. When the government asked the Supreme Court to rule on whether such a vote was constitutional, the Court ordered the Catalans to abandon the plan to hold the vote until the Supreme Court could issue its ruling; such a ruling could take months. The Catalans have announced their intention to go forward, not with a referendum, but with a ‘consultation’ that would be conducted by volunteers rather than by election oversight.
officials (BBC News 2014). This is obviously an attempt to circumvent the Supreme Court’s order. At this time, it is unclear how the Spanish government will respond, should the Catalans press on with their ‘consultation’. 
Chapter 4: Literature Review

Area Studies: Spanish and Basque Cases

In comparison to studies of its peripheral or sub-state nationalisms, particularly the Basque or Catalan movements, studies of Spanish national identity are relatively few in number (Riquer 1994; Núñez 2001; Muro and Quiroga 2005). A few studies of Spanish nationalism were published in the 1980s (see Jover Zamora 1984, Cirujano et al. 1985, and Blas Guerrero 1989), but the subject matter remained largely ignored by scholars until the 1990s. At that point, a debate in the pages of the journal Historia Social between two prominent historians, Juan Pablo Fusi and Borja de Riquer, ignited scholarly interest in the subject (Fusi 1990; Riquer 1990). At the same time, this comparatively late start means that the study of Spanish nationalism has a long way to go in matching the volume and variety of the pool of literature on the peripheral nationalisms.

36 Though the peripheral nationalisms were at the center of the debate, it incorporated Spanish national identity and nation-building as a factor, conceptualizing Spanish nationalism as interacting and impacting the peripheral nationalist movements. Fusi’s article argued that the peripheral nationalisms emerged in the Basque Country, Catalonia and Galicia as a response the failure of the Spanish nationalist project to incorporate regional elites. The opposing view, articulated by Riquer posited that those identities pre-dated the Spanish nationalist project and that its failure is due to the fact that it did not take those existing identities into account.
The studies of Spanish national identity that have been published within the last twenty years or so cover some ground extremely well. Two time periods in particular have been heavily studied: the period leading up to and including the Spanish Second Republic and the nearly 35 years of General Francisco Franco’s rule. Studies of the Spanish Second Republic (1931-1939) are dominated by historians and tend to view the Spanish nationalist project as a failure, since it did not succeed in securing all citizens’ identification over other forms of identification; instead, the peripheral nationalisms emerged and flourished during this period (Beramendi and Máiz 1991; Blas Guerrero 1991; Mar-Molinero and Smith 1996; Holguín 2002). Holguín’s study, however, stands out because it acknowledges the constructed nature of national identity by documenting the efforts of Second Republic politicians and intellectuals to use literature, theater and film in order to construct a unified Spanish culture and history, especially in the more remote areas of Spain (2002). Specifically, Holguín takes issue with those scholars who argue that the coalition of the Second Republic either believed that the necessary national identity already existed or that it was unimportant (e.g., Graham 1996).

However, by far the most studied time period is the Francoist era, almost to the exclusion of all other time periods. A number of excellent studies examine Spanish identity mostly or exclusively during the roughly forty year period between the Spanish Civil War and the death of General Franco (Mar-Molinero and Smith 1996; Boyd 1997). Often, they may cover some of the period pre-dating the regime, but very few cover the
post-1975 era. To some degree, this interest is understandable because it was the period of Spanish nationalism in which the Spanish national identity — what Franco called National Catholicism — was not only clearly articulated, but also more successful at securing mass adoption (even if superficially) precisely because it was enforced by the state. This scholarly focus on the Francoist period both reveals and contributes to a popular narrative: that Spanish nationalism died with Franco. Within Spain, this view is reinforced by prominent intellectuals, the mass media and politicians, perhaps because Spanish national identity was such an integral part of the Francoist regime that Spanish nationalism became intertwined with the regime’s brutal repression of alternative expressions of identity (Núñez 2001). Within this perspective, Spanish nationalism cannot be compatible with Spanish democracy.

This assertion, that Spanish nationalism disappeared in the post-Franco democratic period, is challenged by Xosé-Manoel Núñez (2001), Diego Muro and Alejandro Quiroga (2005). Núñez asserts that although Spanish nationalism does not take the stereotypical or expected form this does not mean that the phenomenon does not exist. As he points out, the presence of state nationalism may be diluted, but it is persistent (Núñez 2001). Both the works by Núñez and Muro and Quiroga trace the Spanish nationalist discourse to demonstrate that not only does Spanish nationalism exist, but that there are also multiple versions being articulated by multiple actors.
Muro and Quiroga (2005) categorize these forms as either civic or ethnic, arguing that in the post-democratic era, a civic Spanish national identity based upon the constitution has, at least for the time being, become more popular than the previous ethnic version. Núñez (2001: 725) focuses on the “broad internal diversity” of Spanish national identity, pointing out that there are “Spanish ethnonationalists, civic nationalists, cultural nationalists, etc.”, noting that despite the overall success of the civic articulation of Spanish identity, it remains imbued with certain ethnic characteristics, particularly Catholicism. Though some might interpret this situation as indicative of the ongoing weakness of Spanish nationalism, it is important to point out that such competing versions of a state identity are common among state nationalisms (Ibid.; also see Kaufmann 2004).

In his book on the United States, Eric Kaufmann (2004) notes a similar situation, where an ethnic version of American identity as largely white, Anglo-Saxon, English-speaking and Protestant competes with a civic identity based upon adherence to constitutional principles such as individual freedom. Not only do competing elites push these competing versions of identity on the population, each version has found mass followings in different geographical areas. Thus, the identities have found a kind of uneasy equilibrium, where neither has managed to become widespread enough to be hegemonic (Ibid.). In Spain, the situation is even more complex. Here, geographically-bounded sub-national identities (for instance, Basque, Galician and Catalan identities) compete with both ethnic and civic versions of a Spanish national identity. The fault lines for the civic and ethnic versions of Spanish national identity are less geographically-bounded than in the case of the United States, but they do have identical political correspondents; more traditional or conservative elites adhere to a more ethnic version of Spanish national identity while more liberal elites gravitate toward the civic version.

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The Spanish area studies literature is also fairly circumscribed in regard to methodology. As alluded to earlier, historical perspectives dominate, as do descriptive methods. Though some studies use survey data in order to examine changing views of Spanish national identity at the mass level (see Muñoz 2009), virtually no studies examine Spanish nationalism from a social science perspective, let alone a comparative political one. Thus, this study will not only serve to shed more light on a dim area of the literature, it will also introduce greater theoretical and methodological variety.

The pool of academic literature which either centers directly upon Basque national identity or touches upon it in more tangential, but still important ways is vast and diverse. These works straddle numerous disciplines, including anthropology, history, sociology and political science, and as a result, vary in the types of questions that they ask and in the types of methods used to study the phenomena of interest. In order to understand the contribution that this study seeks to make to the area studies literature, this review will categorize the literature according to the type of research being carried out — descriptive or explanatory — and within those two major categories, according to their major topical and theoretical features. This scheme not only helps to link studies in light of the types of questions they are asking, but also to see the variety of treatments that have been applied to the Basque case. Particular attention will be paid to studies which examine Basque national identity through a comparative theoretical framework, since it is the purpose of this study to contribute to this particular category of studies by utilizing
the Basque case to test hypotheses regarding national identity construction and change. That said, it is important that some attention be granted to the more descriptive, atheoretical studies because these studies do contribute to the overall narrative of the literature. It is these studies toward which this discussion will turn first.

The category of narrative-driven works is populated by studies whose goals are primarily descriptive. While these works may not seek to provide explanations for phenomena that occur within the Basque case, they do make major contributions to our understanding of the case by carefully laying out its cultural and historical context. Comprehensive studies of Basque culture, tradition and history — works that could be labelled “Basque cultural studies” — have become popular narrative introductions into the group’s origins, their way of life and major historical milestones (Kurlansky 1999; Del Valle 1993; Collins 1986; Gallop 1970). Though these works are firmly situated outside of the realm of social scientific approaches, the contextual information that they provide can be invaluable.

The dominant type of study within this category, however, remains the historical narrative. Though these studies sometimes cover multiple eras of Basque history (Watson 2003), most tend to focus on a particular time period: early Basque history, with particular interest given to the fueros, the Reconquista and monarchical Spain (Carr 2000; Payne 1975); authoritarian Spain, often with a particular focus on the Franco regime
(Mees 1992; Granja Sainz 1986; Clark 1979); and the post-Franco democratic era (Woodworth 2001). Furthermore, these eras coincide with major milestones of Basque nationalism: its genesis, consolidation and adoption of violent tactics and finally, nationalist participation in democratic politics. As a result, these studies of Basque history also tend to be, wholly or in part, narrative studies of the history of Basque nationalism. Thus, historical narratives which focus upon the role of Sabino Arana y Goiri as the founder of the Basque nationalist movement also fit within this typology (Corcuera 1979; Larronde 1977).

It is important to recognize that these historical narratives vary in regard to two further dimensions. The first is the degree of analysis that they employ. For instance, Robert P. Clark’s (1979) examination of Basque nationalism during the Franco era pays particular attention to the role economic class played in the genesis and evolution of the nationalist movement, though it still remains largely a work of historical narrative. The second dimension along which these works vary involves the perspective on the nationalist movement adopted by the author. Some authors present the Basque nation as an immutable fact and a primordial reality that has endured despite centuries of repression (Nuñez Astrain 1997; Jacob 1994; Letamendía 1975).38 In this respect, it is appropriate to include even the works of Sabino Arana within this category. Still others

38 Though Jacob’s (1994) work focuses specifically on the French Basque nationalism, it remains a prime example of this sort of pro-nationalist view within the literature.
view Basque nationalism as a destructive force (García Venero 1968). The majority of historical narratives, however, maintain a much more objective position in regard to the phenomenon in question.

Another significant subset of Basque narrative literature focuses specifically on the radical, violent strain of Basque nationalism and in particular, on its agent Euzkadi ta’ Askatasuna (ETA). The fascination with ETA and violent Basque nationalism is conspicuous. Cameron J. Watson (2008: 15) points out that political violence is such a salient topic that it is often the first question posed in a conversation with someone that has no particular interest or connection with the area. In regard to scholarly work, the attention paid to ETA, Basque political violence and radical Basque nationalism can certainly be justified. Not only was it a significant component of the overall movement, but violent Basque nationalism also outlasted all other violent separatist movements in Europe, continuing its actions well into the 21st century. Moreover, this type of nationalism was only linked to the Spanish Basques, but never to the French Basques.39 Many studies exclusively trace the history of ETA, from the foundations of its birth in the early 1950s to its evolution during the Franco regime and subsequent ideological splits within the group (Júaregui 1981; Sullivan 1988; Garmendia 1995). Additionally, some

39 Given this background, it should not be surprising that the sense that radical Basque nationalism and ETA were unlike ideologically similar movements elsewhere is common.
studies take on a more obviously anthropological perspective — though certainly still narrative in nature — in order to examine the meaning of political violence within Basque society as well as its social consequences (Zulaika 1988; Aretxaga 1999).  

However, it is not only their contribution to our understanding of the history and context of Basque nationalism that makes these narratives worthy of discussion here, but also the fact that they highlight and underscore a tendency toward exceptionalism in the Basque literature. Throughout much of the early Basque literature, there is a palpable sense that the Basques, due to certain cultural characteristics, constitute an incomparable people and thus, a unique case. While it is not necessarily problematic to highlight the fact that Basques do exhibit some physical and cultural characteristics not present in other groups, there is a tendency for this focus to bleed into assumptions that other cases cannot augment our understanding of the Basque case or conversely, that the Basque case cannot be used to shed light elsewhere. Narratives, such as those that have just been discussed, can contribute to this narrative in two different ways. For some, it is an explicit goal of the work. This is much more pronounced in pro-nationalist works, where an author has a particular interest in pushing Basque uniqueness as part of a larger

40 And yet, while radical Basque nationalism is a noteworthy component of the larger movement, it is not the only component. Indeed, it is easy to overlook the fact that more moderate forms of Basque nationalism existed even as radical Basque nationalism overshadowed them.

41 A more thorough treatment of these characteristics will be undertaken in Chapter 3.
effort to validate and reinforce the group’s nationalist claims. However, even works which do not explicitly adopt this view are capable of contributing to this existing narrative unwittingly, particularly when they examine the Basque case in isolation (as narratives do, almost by definition); this tendency is particularly obvious within some of the cultural studies literature. Basque exceptionalism is a major point of departure for more theoretically driven work on the Basque case in general and for this work in particular. As more and more studies examine the Basque case within the context of theoretical frameworks and in comparison with other cases, this sense of Basque exceptionalism will only continue to decline.

The second major category of literature regarding Basque nationalism is comprised of studies that seek to explain some aspect of Basque nationalism. These studies tend to ask either “How?” or “Why?” and are informed by social science methods and theories. Generally, these studies can be conceived of as clustering around two major issue areas: first, around questions of Basque national identity emergence and persistence and second, around questions of the specific content or program of Basque national identity. Each will be discussed in turn.

As previously discussed, studies that tackle the emergence and endurance of nationalist movements often focus upon a small number of explanatory variables. In the Basque case, however, it is important to note that some of the more popular theories do
not seem to have much explanatory power. For instance, the Basque Country provides a contrary case to Hechter’s theory of internal colonialism, as it was much more industrialized than many other areas of Spain at the time the nationalist movement emerged (Da Silva 1975).

Other efforts to explain Basque nationalist emergence focus on other structural aspects. Heiberg (1989; 1975) views it as a strategic response by actors to certain realities within the Basque Country and the competitive struggles launched by industrialization, state centralization and the rise of Spanish socialism among the working classes living in urban areas of the Pais Vasco. Lecours (2007) considers the rise of Basque nationalism as a response to the changing forms of the Spanish state and Spanish nationalism; each iteration of the Spanish state, from loosely defined, largely autonomous territories, to authoritarian state and finally, a democratic polity, pushed Basque politics into specific pathways of political interaction. It is worth noting that Lecours’ (2007) study stands out as one of very few to consider Basque nationalism in the context of and in fact, as a response to, Spanish nationalism. This conceptualization is a crucial component of the study undertaken here.

A second cluster of explanatory Basque studies examine the various forms inhabited by Basque national identity and nationalism. This discussion will consider two particular topics of interest: first, studies which seek to explain violent Basque
nationalism and second, studies which seek to explain the particular programmatic elements of Basque national identity. As previously discussed, violent Basque nationalism has proven to be a source of interest for scholars; it should come as no surprise that scholars not only wish to document the violence, but also explain it. Many of these studies do so from a comparative standpoint, employing similar movements, both violent and non-violent, elsewhere.

The case most often used as a basis for comparison is Catalan nationalism. Like the Basques, the Catalans have a history, culture and language that are separate from the rest of Spain and sought to preserve this autonomy in the face of Castilian centralization efforts. Both were numbered among Spain’s most industrialized areas by the mid-1800s and experienced increased Spanish immigration as a result. Finally, both experienced the emergence of ethnic nationalist movements in the late 19th century. The major difference is that the nationalisms have taken very different forms; Basque nationalism has historically been more violent and more separatist-minded than Catalan nationalism. Numerous studies have sought to explain why this has been the case. Of these studies, many embrace cultural variables, including the compatibility of compatibility of core Catalan nationalist symbols with consensus politics (Desfor Edles 1999) and a culture of political violence present within the historical discourse of the movement (Watson 2008). Conversi (2000) explains the relative lack of violence in Catalan nationalism via a corresponding lack of political and social fragmentation; in particular, he points to the
near ubiquity of Catalan versus the unstable status of Euskara. Díez Medrano (1994) adopts a structure/choice framework, arguing that particular patterns of development in each case impacted the relationships that Basque and Catalan capitalist elites established with the Spanish economy.

Though somewhat less often employed as a comparative case, the French Basques also provide an interesting counterpoint to scholars wishing to explore the relative violence of Spanish Basque nationalism. The French Basques, much like the Catalans, never developed the type of militant, separatist nationalism that developed in the Spanish Basque provinces. However, in contrast to the Catalans, culturalist arguments hold very little explanatory power. Thus, structural arguments tend to be much more prevalent here. Jan Mansveldt Beck (2004), for example, argues that territoriality and the very different processes of mass nationalization undertaken by Spain and France has played a major role in encouraging violent separatism in Spain.

A third comparative case often employed in examinations of Basque political violence is the case of Northern Ireland, as it represents an example of another long-standing, violent separatist movement in Europe (Flynn 2000; Keating 2001). This is particularly true for scholars interested in conflict resolution; the Irish peace process has been used as a test case for a similar resolution in Spain (Mees 2003). Turning the question on its head, Cynthia Irvin (2000) has examined why violent nationalists have at
times opted to operate within the confines of institutionalized politics, arguing that rational calculations regarding the responsiveness of the regime, their potential political competitiveness and the resources available to each group.

Studies which seek to explain the content of Basque identity examine the articulation of what it means to be Basque: what markers delineate a Basque from a non-Basque and why are some markers chosen over others? This question can be approached from two different directions. On one hand, studies can use a top-down orientation and examine the hegemonic version of identity or they can utilize a bottom-up orientation by investigating how these identities are interpreted and adopted (or ignored) by the masses. The latter approach is much more common and often takes the form of survey-driven studies. In one study, Juan Linz (1985) examined whether individuals living in the Basque country were experiencing a shift in identity, from one based on primordial, ethnic characteristics to one based more on territoriality with mixed results.

42 The formulation of these survey questions can take a number of different forms and, as with any survey, the construction of the question can exclude certain outcomes. For instance, some survey formulations will allow respondents to choose only one identity label. Others will allow respondents to choose multiple identities, but tell us nothing about their relative importance to the individual. Still others will allow for respondents to weight the relative strength of two identities, usually one state-level and one sub-state level (see Rosie and Bond 2008 and Gunther et al 1986 for examples of these types of questions).
However, the top-down orientation is of much greater interest here, as it is the particular perspective adopted in this study for the reasons explored in the previous section. In a second comparative study of Basque and Catalan nationalism, Conversi (1990) examines the selection of core values in each identity articulation; in particular, he questions why Catalan nationalism adopted language as a core value very early on, while Basque nationalism was inconsistent in regard to those core values. He argues that existing anthropological and cultural preconditions impact political developments. In this case, the poor diffusion of Euskara caused early Basque nationalists to avoid adopting it as the symbolic vessel of Basque identity in favor of race, a core value that was lent weight by the specific history and conditions of the Basque people (Ibid., 61). However, according to Conversi, this situation eventually became untenable. Specifically, he points to the massive immigration of Spaniards to the Basque Country in the 1950s as the turning point; race, at this juncture, was too exclusionary and thus, impossible sustain as a core value.

In this piece, Conversi subtly nods to the constructed nature of identities by illustrating the fact that Basque nationalists shifted the markers (or core values) that would be employed as in-group delineators. At the same time, his explanation that race as a core value was abandoned due to the fact that it was too exclusionary ignores the fact that employing Euskara as a core value is not particularly inclusionary. First, because it is spoken by a minority of the individuals toward which the identity is aimed. Second,
Euskara provides somewhat of an exception to the idea that identities based on language are much more inclusionary because languages can be learned; Euskara’s notorious difficulty still provides a significant barrier to that inclusivity. Thus, while Conversi does employ an implicit version of the rational actor model, it is incomplete. He focuses only on what each marker can do in terms of the maximization of group membership, as though that is the only interest at play. A more elaborate theoretical model, such as the one presented earlier in this discussion, based on Amílcar Barreto’s work, provides a much more convincing explanation of why race and language have taken the positions that they have.
Chapter 5: Analysis
Mid-20th Century Basque Identity and Francoism as a Structural Break

This chapter focuses on Basque identity articulation in mid-20th century Spain. By examining identity dissemination through the schools, it will trace the changes in Basque identity articulation from the original Aranist articulation based on race and religion to a nearly exclusive emphasis on language. Such a shift contradicts primordialist views of identity and as a result, fundamentally challenges the culturalist framework as a useful explanatory device. This chapter combines a rational choice lens with a structuralist one in order to examine the markers selected to define an identity. The central argument is that nationalist elites select markers that satisfy their interests. The introduction of the Franco regime, however, represents a structural break which triggered a reordering of Basque nationalist elite preferences; these social and political elites subsequently rearticulated Basque identity on the basis of that altered set of preferences. The arguments in this chapter form the basis for the analysis conducted in the following chapter regarding the EU’s impact on identity articulation. The goal of this discussion is two-fold: first, it seeks to demonstrate that the rational choice paradigm provides a compelling explanation for identity shift and second, it seeks to provide support for the usefulness of school textbooks in examining identity articulations.
Hispanidad and National Catholicism: Identity in 1930s Spain

The 1930s marked a period of great upheaval in Spain. The Second Republic was intensely opposed by forces on the Right which loathed its ideological underpinnings: anti-clerical, progressive, socialist and receptive to Basque and Catalan demands for autonomy. The Second Republic lasted for less than a decade, succumbing to a Right-led coup in 1939. The coup plotters anticipated a quick displacement of the Second Republic. Instead, it unleashed a nearly three-year long Civil War. The outcome of that conflict was a Right-led regime that would eventually become a personalist dictatorship helmed by General Francisco Franco.

Up to this time, Basque national identity was based upon the Aranist conception originally articulated in the late 19th century. ‘Basqueness’ was predicated upon two ethnic markers: race and religion. While Arana was the first to articulate the Basque identity in this way, subsequent nationalist leaders adhered to it as well. In fact, these markers remained hegemonic until after the Spanish Civil War, as exemplified in the doctrinal principles agreed upon by the PNV, the nationalist political party founded by Arana, in 1930. The platform at this time consisted of four major planks: first, it maintained Catholicism as the true religion of the Basque Country; second, it supported efforts needed to preserve and strengthen the Basque race; third, it supported the reestablishment of the old practices and traditional institutions of the Basque provinces;
and fourth, it purported that political independence was both a right and the objective to be achieved by the Basque people (Diez-Medrano 1994: 547). Thus, the ethnic markers of ‘Basqueness’ and the objectives laid out by the PNV in 1930 closely resemble those espoused by Arana.

Upon the overthrow of the Second Republic, the Right-led regime embarked upon a nationalization project almost immediately. The identity they articulated was based upon two major tenets: National Catholicism and a return to the notion of *hispanidad* that had been popularized during the Primo de Rivera dictatorship of the 1920s. Spain was conceptualized as a unified, homogeneous, Catholic nation rooted in and built by a historical struggle against foreign invaders, both actual and ideological. *Hispanidad* linked Spaniards and the Hispanic races in Portugal, Central and South America via cultural, historical and linguistic ties; individual Spaniards and their brethren elsewhere shared a common religion, a common language, and a common history rooted in the Spanish empire and Catholic monarchs of the 16th century.\(^43\) Political actors embarking on a national mythmaking venture seek out, or even outright invent, a Golden Age (Smith 1997). For Spanish rightists that idealized past was rooted in the culmination of the *Reconquista*, the expulsion of Iberia’s Muslim and Jewish communities, the dawn of

\(^{43}\) The concept of *hispanidad* was articulated by an intellectual named Ramiro de Maetzu in his work *Defensa de la Hispanidad*. It is important to point out that Maetzu’s work pre-dates the regime and was a thread of the Right’s articulation of Spanish national identity dating back to the Primo de Rivera dictatorship.
Spain’s transoceanic empire, and the submission of the peninsula’s linguistically-
heterogeneous Christians to a Castilian crown and language.

The regime viewed the education system as a crucial instrument for spreading its
particular version of identity. In fact, the Spanish Right blamed the dangers of the Second
Republic — specifically socialism and separatism — on the educational system.
Pedagogy was not the Right’s priority, nor was it concerned with the transmission of
literacy and basic skills. Rather, its focus was squarely on the transmission of a uniform
and state-directed myth of national identity. The educational system, so the Right
claimed, had served as the incubator of the very ideologies that had threatened to shatter
Spain. Controlling the schools and using them to inculcate the regime’s chosen values
would ensure the longevity of the new order (Lampreave 1938). Thus, schools were
recruited to serve a dual function: as an educational tool and a nationalizing one.44 Where
these two roles came into conflict, the former was subverted to the latter. This sense that
the nationalizing role of schools was preeminent is vividly recounted in a 1937 prompt
soliciting manuscripts for a book of Spanish history. The stated purpose of the book was
to ensure that future generations would support the Patria. Authors were instructed to
ensure that the portion of the book dedicated to Spain’s history refute what was viewed as

44 The intention of the regime to use schools for this purpose is made clear in Decree 66
issued on November 8, 1936 and Circular 7 of December 7, 1936.
an unfair and unnecessarily negative portrayal of Spain in European historiography.\textsuperscript{45} To this end, the book needed to “highlight the uninterrupted contribution of Spain to civilization and preferably, the coincidence of these efforts with the current Movement … and, as an alternative to absurd separatist tendencies, propose the lofty idea of the union of all the regions within the great Spanish Patria” (translated and quoted in Boyd 1997).\textsuperscript{46}

Thus, books were often chosen more for their nationalizing value than their educational value.

The regime put their stamp on the school system by making major changes to its design. It eliminated co-education and required all students to study religion and religious history. A latter day inquisition was set into motion. State bureaucrats expunged libraries of any material they considered anti-regime, anti-patriotic or which contradicted Spanish values. The purge of unwanted texts continued among teaching staff and school personnel; any individual who was suspected of harboring anti-regime sentiments or who might be sympathetic to the left were removed from their positions.\textsuperscript{47}

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\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{45} This anti-Spanish literature was termed “The Black Legend” by Julián Juderías in his book \textit{La Leyenda Negra y la Verdad Histórica} in 1914.
\item \textsuperscript{46} The prompt was published as part of an Order from September 21, 1937.
\item \textsuperscript{47} These changes were made by Orders issued on September 4, 21, and 22 of 1936. As a result of these purges, it is estimated that nearly 1/3 of school personnel were either fired or demoted. See Navarro Sandalinas and Tuñón de Lara 1990 for further discussion of these purges.
\end{itemize}
consolidating control over the teaching corps, the regime also moved to ensure that classroom materials and activities supported the regime. All existing school books and any future books published would be reviewed by the newly created Comisión Dictaminadora de los Libros de Texto dedicados a la Primera Enseñaza (Advising Committee on Primary School Textbooks). Books that were deemed unfit would either be forced to undergo revisions or be banned from use in public schools. In order to ensure that schools were adhering to the new standards, the regime assigned town mayors the responsibility of monitoring classrooms for anything that deviated from the regime line.

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48 The Committee was created by Government Order on August 29, 1938. However, its existence was actually the result of a compromise, as Falangists within the regime supported the publication and distribution of “official” regime texts to all public schools in Spain. As proposed, the text would have been written by the Instituto de España, a cultural body that was formed by merging the major literary and scientific academies of Spain. The proposal failed largely due to heavy opposition from publishers who would see the markets for the texts that they sold dry up overnight. Catholic interests within the regime also objected to the proposal, not because they were necessarily opposed to the creation of official textbooks, but because they objected to the involvement of the Instituto, which was dominated by Falangists. This type of competition between the Falangist and Catholic interests within the regime was common. Though they both embraced Catholicism as a defining characteristic of Spain, the Falange was committed to Spanish unity and the reclamation of Spain’s rightful empire, stating explicitly in their manifesto that their primary goal was the “aggrandizement of the nation” and that any interference by the Church that impacted either the dignity or integrity of the nation would not be permitted (Primo de Rivera 1934). Conversely, Church interests sought the retrenchment of Catholicism in Spanish life. These goals were not always compatible and in fact, often contradictory, leading them to compete for influence within the regime.

49 This power was granted by Government Decree on September 14 and October 7, 1937.
The curriculum and textbooks that were approved for use during the first half of the Franco regime reflected the regime’s efforts to exploit the school system for nationalistic purposes. The common themes of the curriculum and the official-sanctioned texts were congruent with National Catholicism and *hispanidad*, highlighting the elements of ‘Spanishness’ that the regime announced its intention to inculcate in children, as well as in the general population: devout Catholicism and spirituality, Castilian language and a sense of common history rooted in the greatness of the Spanish Empire of the 16th century. Within these specific cultural lessons, the nationalization project also injected overarching themes of unity, patriotism, imperialism and obedience.

Study of the tenets of Christianity, biblical stories and religious terminology were pervasive throughout all texts, not just those intended for religious education. History texts often included lists of martyred Spanish saints for children to memorize and recite, while biographies and encyclopedias included entries on the lives of saints alongside Spanish monarchs and military heroes. The message was abundantly clear — in the post-1492 polity church and state were indivisible. Books intertwined Spanish history with sacred history so that there was no discernable line between them; Spanish national history, then, was begun with the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Serrano de Haro 1943). The message telegraphed to children was that of the ever constant presence of Catholicism in Spain’s daily life.
The regime’s embrace of hispanidad was evident in two different aspects: first, in the Castilianization of the school system and second, in privileging of the history of the Spanish Golden Age. During the Franco period in particular, Spanish culture and Castilian culture were equivalent. Castilian Spanish was the only medium in which textbooks were available and the only medium of instruction offered; minority languages were forbidden from being taught in schools or, in some cases, from being spoken publicly. The diversity of Spain — with at least five distinct languages and many more dialects — was either ignored or denied. One text claimed that all of the other languages, except for Basque, which it omitted, were merely dialects of Castilian (Menéndez-Reigada 1939: 11-12).

It was in the legacy of the 16th century, however, that hispanidad and National Catholicism came together, linking the Spaniards of the present to the past and rooting them in a tradition of greatness. During this period, Catholic Spain reached the height of its power. Inter-linguistic differences among Iberian peoples were cast aside. It was a dominant political, military and cultural force in Europe, exploring the West, expanding its empire and spreading Christianity to the countries that it conquered. The regime considered it to encompass all of the attributes of the ideal Spain (and incidentally, reinforce their vision of ‘Spanishness’): Catholic, Castilian-centric, absolutist, and

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50 See Clark 1979 for a full discussion of Francoist repression of minority languages.
imperialist. In a heavily-emphasized history curriculum, it was the centerpiece and books spent a significant amount of space covering it. Moreover, they revered it as the greatest of world empires (Muñoz 1924). The glorification of this past also served another purpose by providing a path to regaining that former glory. The legacy of 16th century Spain was that of political and spiritual imperialism, a legacy that modern Spain had an obligation to recapture (Onieva 1937; Muñoz 1940). The country’s destiny lay in its role as a warrior for Catholicism, its national mission to universalize the faith.

Historical readers, especially those that contained biographical narratives were a key component in the attempt to link children in 19th century Spain to this glorious past by situating them within an ancestry of saints and heroes. These works gave ample space to the exploits of military leaders like el Cid,51 explorers like Hernán Cortes, and Hernando de Soto, as well as monarchs like King Charles I (who later became Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor), and Philip II. Alongside the biographies of these historical figures were profiles of modern figures, often famous Carlists52, along with individuals

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51 Though el Cid predates the 16th century, he is considered Spain’s national hero. Moreover, his role as a military leader and standard-bearer for Catholicism led to his continued popularity during the Franco regime.

52 The term ‘Carlist’ was coined as a result of a battle of royal succession that resulted from King Ferdinand’s death in the 1830s. Carlists supported the claim of Don Carlos, the king’s brother, while their opponents supported King Ferdinand’s daughter, Isabella. The conflict hinged upon the proper line of succession. Historically, women had been excluded from the Bourbon line of succession, which would have made Don Carlos the
who played a significant role in the overthrow of the Second Republic, such as General Sanjurjo and of course, General Franco (Edelvives 1939; Onieva 1954).

The fact that Spain’s Golden Age was overseen by an absolutist monarchy was the basis for an ongoing celebration and justification of the authoritarian state: it was the form of government under which Spain flourished and thus, the Patria needed a strong leader “accountable only to God and History” (Onieva 1940: 11). It was predicted that, without authoritarianism, Spain would inevitably fall into chaos and disorder (Pemán 1939). Given the temporal proximity of the Civil War and the fall of the Second Republic, this was not just a celebration of authoritarianism, but an indictment of democracy. According to these books, democracy was to blame for Spain’s strife; the country was naturally suited to authoritarianism. Moreover, by celebrating strong leaders, the books also lionized Franco. One pointed out that, throughout Spanish history, strong leaders had always emerged in times of grave danger to rescue Spain from catastrophe; Franco was one in a long line of Spanish saviors (Onieva 1940). In the spirit of historians
Hobsbawm and Ranger we see here a classic *Invention of Tradition*. Unlike Spain’s Christian’s monarchs Francisco Franco was a commoner. But his role as savior from the vices of the Left dubbed him a latter-day aristocrat destined by Province to govern.

This focus on 16th century Spain underscores the importance of history to the curriculum and to the regime’s nationalizing efforts; it was simultaneously instructive and prescriptive. To this end, the curriculum’s content and organization was closely related to one of the predominant mottos of the Franco era: “España: Una, Grande y Libre.” A pithy restatement of the nationalist vision of Spain — indivisible, glorious and free from foreign influence — it also served as an organizational scheme for teaching history. Thus, Spain’s past was divided into three eras: the first and earliest tells the story of Spain’s unification, covering the first settlers through the Reconquista and the Catholic kings. The second covers the Golden Age and the third covered the more contemporary period where a weak and divided Spain was reunited and strengthened by Franco. As has been mentioned elsewhere, what the history curriculum ignores often reveals as much about a particular articulation of identity as what it includes. In this case,

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53 This motto was well-known in Spain during this time as Franco would end his speeches with it. He would exclaim: “¡España!” (Spain) three times. After each invocation, the crowd would respond in turn: “¡Una!”, “¡Grande!”, “¡Libre!” — One!, Great!, Free! (Preston 1998).

54 In the nationalist rhetoric, “free” had a dual meaning, encompassing both sovereignty and freedom from foreign ideas, like democracy.
the Francoist focus on these relatively more recent periods ignored much of Spain’s Carthaginian, Greek and even Roman past. Of course, these instances of pagan rule were not congruent with the sense of Spain’s Catholic destiny that the Franco regime was pushing; rather than contradict the nationalist narrative, these periods were simply ignored.

At the same time, contemporary history was also treated very carefully. A faithful examination of the Second Republic and the Civil War would have raised questions about Spanish unity, challenging both the version of identity articulated by the regime and perhaps, even the regime’s very legitimacy. In order to avoid these contradictions, textbooks adopted one of two approaches: either ignoring the events entirely or reframing the events to fit the regime’s narrative. The first approach tended to be adopted by textbooks that were intended for younger students, a move that is consistent with teaching the purest possible form of identity to the youngest of students. To this end, anything that is remotely contradictory is erased. This task was much easier in texts that did not use the device of chronological narrative to teach history, specifically books that used biographies to teach history or in encyclopedias that were collections of non-chronological facts (e.g. Onieva 1954; Pérez 1955). Here, gaps in the narrative were not as pronounced. At the same time, books that were organized chronologically had no problem simply ignoring the Second Republic and the Civil War; the historical narrative in books adopting this approach tended to skip from the Carlist Wars — which similarly
defended traditional Spanish religion and values from more progressive ones — to General Franco’s regime. Here, Franco’s regime was described as rescuing Spain from a general atmosphere of anarchy and disobedience.

Other books, particularly those meant for older children, recast the Second Republic and the Civil War in terms that were more congruent with the regime’s version of identity. One explained the Civil War as a Spanish defense of Catholicism during the anti-religious Second Republic (Serrano de Haro 1943). Another framed the Civil War as a battle against foreign ideologies, which situated it within the overall progression of Spanish history: a series of battles against foreign incursions (Pemán 1939).

This sort of approach to history, where contradictory information is avoided or manipulated, discourages critical thought. This effort was reinforced by a return to more traditional pedagogical methods, relying heavily on repetition, memorization and recitation. Textbooks both reflected and reinforced this reality. An educational medium conducive to these traditional methods, they contained lists, maxims and sayings for children to copy and memorize (Serrano de Haro 1943; Pérez 1955). Accompanying teacher’s guides suggested classroom activities that involved copying or memorization (Pérez 1955). The cumulative effect was the discouragement of independent thought; children who could mimic the regime’s selected ideologies would be rewarded and thus, would excel in school.
As critical thought was being dampened, obedience and respect for authority was amplified, nodding toward the reverence for authoritarian government. In the Francoist classroom, this ventured beyond typical efforts to teach children to heed their parents, their teachers and other authority figures. Here, obedience was all-encompassing, a way of living life. One text intoned: “He who obeys never makes a mistake” (Onieva 1940: 33). Along these same lines, deference to authority was linked to patriotism; to be a patriotic Spaniard, they must embrace authority and be of service to both their community and to the Patria.

*Shifting Markers: Basque Nationalism during the Francoist and post-Francoist eras*

Thus far, the examination of textbooks from the early to mid-Franco era has demonstrated that the major themes present in regime-approved texts were emblematic of the regime’s version of Spanish national identity. ‘Spanishness’ was defined as Catholic and Castilian, anchored by the imperialist and absolutist legacy of 16th century Golden Age Spain. Most important, it was the only identity that was presented. Any identities that might compete with this articulation — either rival versions of Spanish identity or alternative regional identities like those associated with Basques or Catalans — were excluded.
With the school system under the control of a competing nationalist elite, Basque nationalists faced significant barriers to disseminating their own version of identity. This challenge was compounded by the fact that the regime repressed outward signs of diversity exhibited by Basques, especially their language, while also exiling, imprisoning, torturing and executing individuals who either criticized the regime or expressed support for Basque nationalism. The stakes for regional nationalists wishing to articulate and disseminate a rival identity, then, were very high. Since directly and publicly contradicting the regime was not truly an option, nationalists used more subtle or clandestine methods in order to subvert the regime.

One tactic involved the use of what were known as ‘travel books’ in local schools.\(^{55}\) Travel books were used to teach children Spanish geography. Each followed a familiar format, in which a group of school children traveled around the country, stopping in each of the regions to learn about local customs, industry and agriculture, cuisine, architecture and local history (e.g. Siurot 1937; Torres 1942; Edelvives 1944; Solana 1955). Thus, travel books injected diversity into an otherwise culturally homogenous curriculum. Travel books had been popular prior to the Second Republic and the regime did not object to their continued use because the diversity that they presented was, in a way, folkloric and non-threatening. As Boyd (1997: 268) points out, 

\(^{55}\) Carolyn Boyd (1997) has an excellent examination of Second Republic and Franco-era travel books.
these books depicted regional particularities as examples of national strength rather than emblems of disunity. For the regions beyond Castile, however, the travel books provided local elites with an opportunity to subtly resist Castilianization and to promote competing versions of identity. This is supported by the fact that some educators disliked travel books, feeling that they encouraged competition between the regions and strengthened local identifications at the expense of a unified national identity (ibid.; see also Maillo 1943: 2).

A more overt, clandestine and risky effort to resist Francoist nationalization is embodied by Basque ikastolas. The ikastolas, or Basque-medium schools, began in the 1950s at the height of the regime’s repressive policies. Located in private homes or in churches, ikastolas quietly taught the Basque language and Basque culture to small groups of local children (McNair 1984:162). For the first decade of their existence, the

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56 In order to teach a language, however, there must be a standardized version of the language. In instances like the Basque case, where multiple dialects exist, the process of standardization requires either that one dialect is selected as the standard or that multiple dialects are blended in order to create the official language. The selection of dialects privileges not just the dialect, but the speakers as well. As a result, it is a process that is often fraught with conflict. Moreover, as Jacqueline Urla (2012) points out, the process of language standardization, is itself a process of invention and is as much an ideological process as a linguistic one; this was particularly true in the Basque case, where language and nationalism were inextricably linked. For instance, the dialect selected for Batua or Unified Basque was Gipuzkoan. The reasoning provided for this selection was that it had the largest number of speakers (Ibid.: 81). Incidentally, it also a province that tends to be relatively more supportive of Basque nationalism and whose residents tend to identify
number of ikastolas and the size of their enrollment were relatively small. To some degree, this is indicative of fear of reprisals at the hands of the regime and the additional cost attached, as parents furnished the money necessary to run the ikastola, particularly the salary of the teacher (Payne 1979: 147).  

Despite this low enrollment at their inception, the very birth of ikastolas provides some of the earliest evidence of identity shift in the articulation of Basque identity. A language that had, heretofore, been derided as barbaric and largely ignored by Basques in favor of Castilian Spanish was suddenly worth risking the threat of confiscation of much more strongly as Basque. At the same time, more radical Basque nationalists criticized Batua as artificial and overly Castilianized; the result, they argued, is a language that bears little resemblance to the language spoken in the streets (Ibid. 80-81). These conflicts underscore the degree to which language planning is an ideological process (See Laitin 1977 and Lewis 1999 for similar arguments).

Salaries for teachers in ikastolas have generally been low, particularly when compared with salaries attached to comparable positions elsewhere. In the earliest ikastolas, some teachers were volunteers, and were unpaid for their work (McNair 1984: 162). Given that ikastolas have historically been considered ‘Basque-er’ than other schools, the comparatively low compensation suggests that these teachers were motivated to work in such schools as much or perhaps more by ideology.

In 1934, it was estimated that, out of a population of more than 1.2 million people, just over 500,000 were able to speak the language with varying degrees of fluency. By the early 1970s, the population had doubled, but the absolute number of speakers declined (Clark 1979: 144). Though this is partially attributable to Francoist repression, the trends of Euskera-speakers were moving downward even before the Civil War and the overthrow of the Second Republic.
property, imprisonment, torture, and execution to teach to young children. Moreover, though clandestine schools do not lend themselves to textbooks or even official written materials, the schooling materials that have survived that period support the sense that understandings of ‘Basqueness’ had begun to shift to emphasize Euskera as a significant marker of Basques. Children were taught that Euskera was not just the Basque language, but “our language,” a mark of “who we are.” Moreover, it was important for all Basques to “speak and live like Basques” as much as possible in order to ensure that the “Basque way of life” would survive. These phrases were part of a language lesson, jotted in a notebook in both Spanish and Euskara. Accompanying the exercises were drawings of the banned Basque flag known as the ikurriña and a crude map of the Iberian Peninsula. On the map, the Basque Country was delineated in the same way as Portugal. Admittedly, these materials offer only a snapshot of one family’s experience in an early ikastola in Guipúzcoa during the 1960s. However, the small, private acts of rebellion against the regime’s articulation of Spanish identity and the content of the competing Basque identity are corroborated by oral histories from the time period (see Hamilton 2007).

This identity shift is linked to a book written by Fredrico Krutwig entitled Vasconia (1963). For Krutwig, Euskara was the defining element of Basqueness:

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59 I am grateful to Amaya Carricaburu for providing access to early ikastola materials that had been saved by her family.
“Euskera is the quintessence of Euzkadi. While Euskera lives, Euzkadi will live” (quoted in Conversi 1997: 184). At the same time, Krutwig was incredibly critical of the Church, viewing it as an instrument of repression. *Vasconia*, therefore, turns Aranist Basque national identity on its head. For Krutwig, Euskara is the defining mark of ‘Basqueness’, while religion in the guise of the Catholic Church is complicit in its oppression.

The founding of ETA gave Krutwig’s ideas a wider audience and the group adopted his work as part of their political program. As part of their articulation, ETA rekindled parts of the old Aranaist thinking, embracing a rejection of all things associated with Spain. However, in a sharp departure, ETA rejected Arana’s race and religion markers, declaring that “once language is lost, race alone will not sustain the Basque identity” (as quoted in Conversi 1997: 173). Thus, ETA made language central to their conception of ‘Basqueness.’ Yet, ETA was more measured in their treatment of religion as a marker of Basque national identity than Krutwig. Where Krutwig outright rejected religion as a marker based upon his suspicion of the Church, ETA merely demoted it so that religion lost its primacy to language.

The more moderate Basque nationalist elites, exemplified by the PNV, followed suit. They too displayed a sharp deviation from Arana’s race and religion-based identity. The party altered their platform so that one of its objectives was the naming of Euskara as
the Basque national language. The planks referring to race and religion were removed; the party founded upon Arana’s principles subsequently abandoned them.

Francisco Franco’s death in 1975 ushered in a new democratic era and a newly autonomous era for the Basques. The Spanish Constitution, ratified in 1978, set up seventeen autonomous communities. Each of these regions was guaranteed powers that would be under their sole purview; cultural and educational policies are two examples. This was a complete reversal of the situation that prevailed during the Francoist regime, as the regional governments gained control of local schools and the materials used in them. This division of responsibilities has endured to the present day.

When the Basque autonomous community was finally granted control of school materials in the early 1980s, the version of identity presented to school children reflected the rearticulation of Basque identity that occurred during the Franco era. This articulation of identity will remain the version disseminated to school children throughout the democratic era. Helping disseminate this version of identity is the overall pedagogical importance of textbooks in schools during this time. Families with children attending schools in any Spanish region must purchase textbooks for each academic year; as children progress in their schooling, the number of textbooks that families must purchase in order to cover all of the necessary subjects increases. Textbooks are central to modern pedagogy in Spain; their use dominates classrooms. Thus, the articulation of national
identity presented in these textbooks is not only disseminated widely, it is also a central feature of classrooms.

Euskara was presented as the defining marker of Basqueness, a source of national pride and emblem of the Basques. Almost all of the texts examined from this time period referred to Euskara as “our language” and to the Basque people as euskaldun — literally “one who has Basque” (e.g. Euskara Hizkuntza 3 1991; Euskara Hizkuntza 4 1991; Irakurgaiak 3 1992). Some contained the notion that, without the Basque language, the Basques would cease to be identifiably separate from other groups: Basques are not Basque without Euskara (e.g. Iriondo and Extebarria 1985c; Irakurgaiak 4 1990). Spanish, on the other hand, lost any special status. It was treated as an example of other languages that people might learn and speak, just like English or French or German (see also Echeverria 2001). The implication, of course, was that Spanish was the marker of another group, a group separate from Basques.

At the same time, Euskara was presented as a source of national pride. Books underscored Euskara’s ancient and mysterious origins, explaining to students that it was one of Europe’s oldest languages (Iriondo and Etxebarria 1985c) or more simply, that Euskara was very old (Irakurgaiak 2 1990). The notorious difficulty of learning Euskara was another source of pride. An often repeated folk tale tells the story of the devil, travelling to the Basque Country to try to learn Basque. He left, humiliated, only able to
learn the words for ‘yes’ and ‘no’. Upon crossing the border, he forgot even those words.
The language becomes both a creator and a preserver of the boundary between Basques and others; it defines the in-group as different from the out-group, while its complexity insulates the group.

Given this emphasis on Euskara as the defining trait of Basqueness, and the relatively few adults who knew the language, children became the keepers of Basque identity and the group’s hope for surviving. Books discussed Euskara’s status, underscoring the degree to which the language was in danger of being lost (Iriondo and Extebarria 1985d; Irakurgaiak 3 1994). They asked children to consider what the Basque Country would be if it were to lose Basque. One book answered this question by explaining to children that Euzkadi would not be a very nice place to live if Euskara were lost (Irakurgaiak 5 1996).

Thus, learning Basque became every child’s duty. Students were encouraged to practice the language as much as possible and to use it every single day. In the classroom, this encouragement takes a number of forms. As Begoña Echeverria points out (2003a), teachers can play an important role by either encouraging or requiring

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60 The message presented to students in this textbooks regarding the importance of the Basque language to the Basque Country is then reinforced by the slogan “Euskarlerrian Euskaraz” (Basque in the Basque Country), which is commonly seen on posters and signage both inside of classroom and outside of them.
students to speak Euskara in the classroom. Textbooks encourage this particular language behavior by praising the use of Basque or by showing the desirable consequences that might come from speaking Basque. For instance, in one book an illustration of a smiling gnome was used when children were speaking Basque. When children were speaking other languages, however, the elf was depicted as desperately trying to escape being crushed by falling rocks that spelled out the word “erdera” (Gorostidi 1991; Euskara Hizkuntza 3 1992). The word “erdera” refers to foreign languages, or more specifically, any language that is not Basque.

Basque traditional culture formed a second kind of marker, as books discussed “the Basque way of life” and Basqueness in terms of cultural elements (e.g. Ingurunea 5 1994; Ingurunea 6 1995). For instance, Basque rural sports and displays of strength like Harri jasotzea (stone lifting) and Aizkora proba (wood chopping) are rooted in the historical agricultural and fishing communities that made up the Basque Country. The technical obsolescence of many of the activities has resulted in their transformation into popular Basque sports. These sports, in turn, were used as examples of and symbols of Basqueness. As symbols of the in-group alongside Euskara, they performed an important function. Since the vast majority of the population was, in fact, non-Basque speaking, these traditional cultural elements provided an opening in the in-group, another avenue for expanding group membership.
At the same time that they provided an opening into in-group membership, references to traditional cultural activities also reinforced Euskara as a marker through discussions of *bertsos*, or spontaneously composed verses. These verses are sung or chanted at public events or in competitions; the art of composing and singing these *bertsos* is known as *bertsolartiza*. Famous *bertsos* have been recorded throughout Basque history and form a significant portion of the literary curriculum in upper grades; students learn these famous *bertsos* as other students learn Shakespearean sonnets. Basque textbooks used the *bertsolartiza* to not only illustrate traditional Basque culture, but also to demonstrate the importance of Euskara to that culture (e.g. Iriondo and Etxebarria, 1985b; Ingurunea 5 1995). Without Euskara, *bertsolartiza* would not exist:

61 The Basque *bertsolaritza* bear a strong resemblance to Welsh events known as *eisteddfod* (meaning session), which date back to at least 1176 (Morgan 1983: 56-57). Like the *bertsolaritza*, the *eisteddfod* were competitions centered upon music and verse. In the Middle Ages, they also functioned as a kind of professional examination that the bardic guilds would use to determine which performers would be licensed and which would be excluded. However, as distinctively Welsh culture was consumed by Anglicization and Europeanization, the bardic guilds and the *eisteddfod* disappeared along with the ancient way of life they represented. In the same way that Basque nationalists view *bertsolaritza* as crucial elements of Basque culture and emblematic of the central role that Euskara plays in Basque identity, the nationalist elites attempting to revive Welsh culture and national identity viewed the *eisteddfod* as a crucial element of that ancient past. Moreover, like the *bertsolaritza*, the *eisteddfod* provided a public forum for the celebration of the national language, which in both cases had previously been derided, ignored and nearly lost.
lose Euskara and Basques would lose yet another cultural marker. This only amplified the need to learn, speak and protect Euskara.

Religion, on the other hand, ceased to be used as a marker or symbol of the Basque in-group. Catholicism dominated the religious studies curriculum, but, other than the inclusion of moral axioms designed to teach children right from wrong, it remained contained within that curriculum. Religiosity and sacred history did not permeate other subjects. With the Franco regime, which made Catholicism a central component to Spanish national identity, the religion permeated all subjects as sacred history became part of national history and religious terminology and imagery abounded. Thus, democratic era Basque textbooks exemplify a direct departure from the Aranist conception of Basque identity; religion was no longer used as a marker or symbol of Basqueness.

The depiction of the Basque Country within these textbooks was noteworthy, particularly when it came to maps and atlases. First, the Basque Country was most often depicted in isolation of its surroundings, rather than in the context of either Spain or France. Rather, the area was shown as a free-floating entity, untethered to any other administrative unit. Moreover, the place names were always given in Basque and

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62 Anderson (1991) discusses the importance of visual representations of the nation, like maps, for the imagined community. Urla (1993) discusses how maps and statistics have been used specifically to imagine the Basque nation.
geographical orientations were given in relation to either the northern or southern Basque Country. Such depictions underscore the sense of Basques as separate from Spain and echoes the depictions of the Basque Country from the previously discussed ikastola materials where Spain is largely erased. At the same time, the maps presented tended to delineate the Basque Country as encompassing all seven provinces, rather than just the BAC. This is important in that it is a claim that is particularly pressed by Basque nationalists. Texts go on to point out that these seven provinces share one history and one culture (e.g. Iriondo and Etxebarria 1985c), which again, is an important component in the Basque nationalist program. Here, textbooks are presenting a maximalist vision of Basque nationalist aims.

At the same time, the absence of Spain in the depictions of the Basque Country as unmoored from its surrounding geography was echoed in the overall absence of the Spanish in-group from the textbooks surveyed. For instance, Basque history was disentangled from Spanish history, demonstrating that Basques had had their own historical trajectory. This served, on one hand, to privilege the Basque historical narrative and on the other hand, to underscore the line of demarcation between the Basque in-group and the Spanish out-group. To this end, one of the overarching themes was the ancientness of the Basque people (e.g. Irakurgaiak 3 1992). A number of books pointed out that the Basques were some of the earliest inhabitants of Western Europe, if not the first. A second common historical theme was the sense that Basques had been
independent and self-governing until relatively late into the consolidation of Western European states. This was underscored by a heavy emphasis on the fueros and the concept of universal nobility as evidence that the Basques historically were permitted to rule themselves.

Thus, the markers of identity presented in democratic era Basque textbooks represent a sharp departure from the Aranist conception of Basque identity based on race and religion. Instead, the books privilege Basque language as the defining marker of the in-group. These markers serve to define the Basque in-group and to insulate it, while also excluding Spaniards by emphasizing a sense that they are an ‘other’. If they are not Basques, by definition, they are not part of the in-group. In this sense, the boundary markers define the in-group at the same time as they define the out-group.

How can we explain why Basque national identity shifted from the Aranist conception based on race and religion to a language-based identity where Euskara was the defining marker of Basqueness? Cultural explanations, which are closely linked to primordialism, have very little explanatory power in cases like these because culturalism conceptualizes identity as immutable. Thus, the content of the identity, what it means to be Basque, should not change over time. In this case, it changed significantly; a marker that was originally discounted suddenly became the marker of the in-group. Thus, this case provides a strong argument against not just the value of cultural explanations for the
content of national identities, but against primordialism more broadly. Structuralism, while useful for explanations of identity emergence, is less useful on its own for explaining identity content.

Examining Basque elite behavior through the lens of rational choice, however, provides a compelling explanation for this shift. This explanation will be built upon Barreto’s (2001: 30-32) five part model of elite behavior, which seeks to explain how elites choose which markers will be emphasized in an identity articulation. First, elites choose a marker that differentiates the group in question from other groups; it must create an ‘us’ and a ‘them.’ Second, this marker should be present in ‘us,’ but not within ‘them,’ maximizing the disparity between the in-group and the out-group. Obviously, the more stark the contrast, the more effective the boundary markers may prove to be; this explains why emphasized markers are often traits that are outwardly manifested, such as language. However, in maximizing the differences between groups, the chosen marker must also minimize any differences within the in-group; thus, it is crucial that the particular marker link the elites and the masses. Equally as important, the chosen marker should make ‘us’ either equal to or better than ‘them’. Finally, and perhaps most important, the marker should maintain elite privilege among members of the in-group; thus, elites will not choose markers that would somehow diminish their status within the in-group and likewise, will attempt to relegate those markers that elevate the status of other elites (Ibid., 30-31). Elites then, have two fundamental goals in the selection of in-group
markers: differentiating their group from outsiders and maintaining their privilege within the in-group (Ibid., 22).

For instance, the objectification of language is particularly advantageous. First, the adoption of official national languages and the development of national print languages served to link members of imagined communities and perhaps, more important, served to delineate the ‘us’ from the ‘them’ in the starkest, clearest terms possible. Furthermore, in the effort of elites to create a hegemonic concept of national identity, they must prove that the group is unique; language, then, becomes a useful tool, for there are few traits more demonstrative of uniqueness. It is an outwardly manifested symbol of membership to the in-group, thus it is more obvious than markers such as race or even religion. Also, language is one trait that is easily discernable to every member of a community; one does not even have to be literate to understand that there is a difference between individuals speaking two different languages. Furthermore, despite the fact that languages can be learned, it will always be spoken by ‘foreigners’ with a distinct accent that will, as a result, serve to automatically set them apart as not one of ‘us’. Lastly, elites often favor language as a marker because it is their version or dialect that is most often selected to represent the nation. Elites already speak the ‘correct’ dialect, in addition to speaking the language with the ‘correct’ accent, thereby serving the purpose of maintaining the status of elites within the in-group.
Thus, in their creation of national identities, elites manipulate cultural markers toward two goals: first, maximizing the difference between their group and another group and second, maintaining their status within the in-group. Furthermore, where the markers employed as part of the articulation of an identity change over time, it can be assumed that this is the principle driving the shift; in such a situation, some aspect of the environment must have changed, resulting in different elite preferences. For elites then, the articulation of national identities requires a balancing act; markers that elevate their status must be emphasized, while those markers which serve to benefit others must be deemphasized.

Basque nationalism emerged from a very small group of traditional Basque commercial and land-owning elites, as well as members of the middle and lower-middle classes. The wealthiest capitalist elites in the País Vasco were not involved in the articulation or dissemination of any nationalist program; they had strong, historic ties to the Spanish state and were well-represented among the Spanish political elite (Diez-Medrano 1995: 69). Thus, they had little incentive to form nationalist programs, as maximization of their self-interest lay with aligning themselves as closely as possible to the Spanish state. On the other hand, the pre-industrial commercial and landowning elite had major incentives to articulate a particular Basque identity. Against the backdrop of rapid industrialization, modernization and the expansion of heavy industry, such as iron, the Basque provinces received a massive influx of immigrants; with the discovery of the
Bessemer process for the production of steel, they also saw a large percentage of heavy industry being owned by foreigners. Thus, these pre-industrial and landowning elites were displaced both economically and socially, spurring them to form a political alliance that resulted in the articulation of a nationalist identity (Diez-Medrano 1994: 545). Arana emerged from this group.

Given the five-point framework for elite decision-making in identity construction, it seems at first paradoxical that Arana would select race and religion as the markers of Basque national identity. The selection of religion, for instance, does not fulfill the very first of the tenets: it fails to differentiate Basques from Spaniards, as both populations are traditionally Roman Catholic. Furthermore, though religion can conceivably draw together members of the in-group (though not as effectively as a trait that would exclude the Spanish in addition to tying Basques to one another), it cannot easily serve the purpose of elevating their status vis-à-vis the out-group; once again, this is due to the fact that the trait is present in both populations. Arana did attempt to circumvent this issue by claiming that Basques were morally superior to Spaniards, but it was a weak claim. For most observers, both groups were Catholic and were still, at base, similar. Furthermore, the elevation of religion as a marker elevates the status of another group of elites—the clergy—of which Arana and the majority of other nationalist elites were not a part (Diez-Medrano 1995: 49-50). As a result, the articulation of a national identity based heavily on
religion gives these clerics a significant level of input in defining ‘Basqueness.’ Thus, the selection of religion appears to privilege a different elite, which is at odds with the model.

At the same time, race is equally problematic. Though it does create a boundary, marking the in-group from the out-group and also serves to tie together all members of the in-group, it is not an outwardly manifested trait, at least not in this case; the phenotypical differences between the average Basque and Spaniard would not be obvious to the casual observer, meaning that it is not effective for confirming the differences between the two groups. To this end, race and religion appear to be largely ineffective markers for employment in the nationalist discourse.

Such an inefficient selection of markers is doubly confusing when one considers that Basque nationalists had, at their fingertips, a marker that could starkly differentiate the in-group from the out-group; language, unlike the objectification of race and religion, is a trait that most obviously differentiates Basques from Spaniards, indeed differentiating them from all Europeans. This combination of uniqueness and antiquity provides a convenient and powerful marker. It is capable of elevating the nation vis-à-vis other nations, thereby imparting a sense of nationalist pride in Basques. Moreover, its role in providing proof of antiquity cannot be underestimated; while other nationalist leaders had to work diligently in order to create traditions to wrap their community in myths of
antiquity (through which claims of legitimacy can be confirmed), early Basque nationalist leaders had all of this at their disposal.\(^{63}\)

However, Basque nationalism first emerged from, and was articulated by, an elite that did not speak the language. Indeed, in Arana’s time, only a very small percentage of the Basque population spoke Euskara. Moreover, it was largely belittled (Ben-Ami 1991: 497). Even more tellingly, Arana himself was a monolingual Spanish speaker, though he did attempt to learn later in life. Consequently, Arana moved away from language as a representative trait of Basqueness, as it would not maintain or elevate his status as a member of the elite. In addition, given the negative popular opinion of Euskara, Arana’s credibility may have been damaged were he to select it as a marker. Thus, while the selection of language as a boundary-marker would have optimized the difference between the in-group and the out-group, selection of that particular marker would have excluded the majority of the population in the Basque country, including Arana himself. Given the context, language was a difficult choice; Arana opted instead for race and religion.

By the time the articulation of Basque identity begins to shift in the 1950s and 1960s, Euskara had not experienced a renaissance. More than half of the population of

\(^{63}\) To be fair, Conversi (1993: 65-66) points out that the Aranist conception of Basque national identity did not completely ignore Euskara. Though this may be the case, Arana never used it as a cultural marker.
the País Vasco at that point spoke only Spanish and a significant number of those who could speak any Euskara could do so only with difficulty. How then, does a language that has been neglected by the major figure in the articulation of a hegemonic national identity, that is regarded as barbaric by members of the literary community, and that is spoken by less than half of the population, become so central to the sense of ‘Basqueness’? One of two things must have occurred in order to spur such a shift in elite preference; either the composition of the elite group articulating the identity changed or the environment within which elites were articulating the identity from Arana forward were most often middle-class intellectuals; in fact, the later re-articulation of the national identity began with the song of an industrialist whose ideas were adopted by a group of university students. As such, there was not a shift in the composition of the nationalist elite group from mostly clerical to heavily secular that would otherwise explain the abandonment of religion as a core value. Thus, a situational change is a much more likely explanation.

Indeed the shift toward the objectification of language as a mark of Basqueness is rooted in the repression of the Francoist regime. It was the trait for which the Basques were castigated. Recall that the regime viewed the Basque provinces as traitorous for their support of the Republic. In order to consolidate a united Spanish state, the regime oppressed all outward manifestations of Basque culture: the performance of dances and songs were forbidden, universities were closed, Basque surnames were translated into
Spanish and parents were prevented from giving their children Basque names. Moreover, the regime prohibited any education in Euskara and punished offenders who were caught speaking the language, either in public or in private. Books written in Euskara were burned and all publications of books or the broadcast of radio shows in Euskara were ceased. There was even a mandate demanding that tombstone and funeral marker inscriptions written in Euskara be removed (Conversi 1997: 81). Of course, the preeminent symbol of Francoist brutality concerning Basques is the bombing of Guernica. To be sure, this repression was wrecked upon all minority cultures within Spain at the time, particularly in Catalonia, resulting in a scholarly debate concerning whether Francoist repression really was most brutal within the Basque provinces; however, the relative degree of repression is less crucial than the perception of its brutality by Basques and its emphasis on the elimination of Euskara.

Another element of the Francoist regime that is important to this study is the emphasis that was placed upon religion in the National Catholicism ideology. The close association between local Catholic Churches and the Francoist regime, for the Basques, mean that the clergy was inextricably linked to the regime and consequently, with the repression of their culture. This situation was only exacerbated after cooperation was further formalized with the Vatican through a Concordat with the Franco regime that granted the Church extraordinary powers (Conversi 1997: 83). Basques now perceived even the Vatican as complicit in the government’s repression of Spanish minorities; it
became less a matter of neglect by the local clergy, and more a matter of a lack of support or aid from the entire Roman Catholic hierarchy.

Ironically, the perception of the association, particularly at the local level, was more important than any actual cooperation. During the Francoist regime, the local Churches were major sources of support for Basque folk culture and Euskara. Clerics ran or provided space for *ikastolas* in church buildings and they secretly hoarded books that were written in Euskara so that they were not burned by Francoist forces (Ben-Ami 1993: 503). Furthermore, 339 priests from three Basque dioceses signed a petition to their bishops denouncing the political and cultural oppression of the Basque provinces. The manifesto defined official Church policy as complicit in genocide (Conversi 1997: 95)

Yet, even with the local clerics’ involvement in safeguarding Basque culture, the association between the Church and Franco’s repressive policies was too great to overcome.

Thus, the shift from elite objectification of religion and race to the objectification of language can be viewed largely as a function of the competing rational self-interests of two sets of elite actors who created identities in opposition to one another. In this case, General Franco articulated a Spanish identity that sought to create the illusion of a homogenous state; the use of National Catholicism and *hispanidad* allowed Franco to maintain that there were no minorities in Spain. If Catholicism was a major marker
defining what it meant to be Spanish, it placed Franco one step closer to claiming that all people living in the territory of the Spanish state, were indeed, Spanish. This served the regime’s interests, as the fastest way to marginalize a nationalist movement within the territory of a state is to claim that there are no minorities. Conversely, an acknowledgement of the existence of a national minority is equal to an admission that the area inhabited by that minority is not the legitimate property of the state (Danforth 1995: 110). By maintaining the guise of a homogenous state, a regime can effectively discredit the claims of nationalist groups, particularly those espousing doctrines of autonomy or independence. The state then, clearly has an interest in deemphasizing the boundaries between the majority group and the minority group; thus, Franco used Catholicism as a way to erase the boundary between Basques and Spaniards. Similar efforts deny the existence of minorities in order to undercut nationalist claims have occurred elsewhere. For instance, Greece has historically denied the existence of ‘Macedonians’ as a separate national group with a distinct national identity by claiming that they were merely Greeks who also happened to speak a Slavic language (Danforth 1995).64

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64 Danforth (1995: 30) also points out that: “The Greek position could not be more clear: Macedonia and everything associated with it are not only Greek; they are exclusively Greek and nothing else”. By extension, then, if the markers of a Macedonian identity are actually Greek, then there is no boundary between Greeks and so-called Macedonians. In this view, a Macedonian identity cannot exist. However, Greece does not simply apply this logic only to a Macedonian identity; it actually asserts that there are no ethnic or national minorities in Greece at all. The exception is a Turkish national minority that
Nationalist elites in this case, however, have the opposite goal. In order for their claims to be seen as legitimate, they must maximize the boundary between the in-group and the out-group, between Basques and Spaniards. Since Catholicism had been co-opted by Franco, it was no longer seen as available for the articulation of Basque identity. Where the state was using religion as a means to erase the boundary, nationalist leaders needed to objectify another marker in order to restore it. Moreover, the fact that the newly selected marker in no way accurately represented most Basques at the time was a moot point. The representativeness of the marker itself became less important than its usefulness as a tool of differentiation. Preferences had shifted because the situation had forced a change in nationalist goals.

However, it should not be assumed that Basque elites abandoned the objectification of religion purely for the larger goal of a successful nationalist movement; rather, there is also an aspect of personal self-interest inherent in this choice. Since certain markers benefit certain elites, it is clear that the selection of religion automatically elevates clerics, providing them with a large amount of input into the definition of what it means to be Basque. While this situation was also true of the Aranist articulation, the close ties forged between the Church and Franco’s regime caused a crucial break. Thus, Greece acknowledges, but labels as a small Muslim religious minority (Ibid.: 34). In this way, Greek nationalists undermine any possible claims that could be made by national minorities by folding them into the Greek in-group.
while the objectification of language in reality benefitted few of the nationalist elite, the objectification of religion would have benefitted not just an ‘other’ but a vilified ‘other’.

Additionally, as previously discussed at length, selection of language provided Basque elites with another tangible benefit — they would choose the standardized form of the language from among the eight or so existing dialects of Euskara, so that their particular language patterns would become the ‘correct’ form. Selection of religion, however, does not allow for such maneuverability, but rather places control and as a result, status, in the hands of the clergy.

The de-emphasis of race in the later articulation of Basque identity appears to be somewhat less deliberate, but no less directly related to elite self-interest. The reasons for this rejection are two-fold. First Fredrico Krutwig, whose articulation of identity eventually came to unseat Arana’s, was himself not Basque. Therefore, race played no role in his writings, while contempt for the clergy was a preeminent feature. Thus, his theories’ predominant role in ETA’s re-articulation of Basque identity resulted in an almost de facto rejection of race as a marker; it simply wasn’t included in his writings and thus, would be far less likely to find its way into the later nationalist discourse. Secondly, when the goal of nationalist elites became the maximization of differentiation between Spaniards and Basques, race became a less efficient way to achieve that goal. Since it is often not an outwardly manifested symbol, as is true of this particular case, it is
not capable of creating obvious, undeniable boundary between the in-group and the out-group. There simply is not a stark enough difference between Basques and Spaniards to rely on race to differentiate.

Thus, this chapter has demonstrated that the articulation of Basque identity shifted from a racial and religious articulation to one that relied on language to create the boundary between Basques and Spaniards. It has argued that this shift was based on rational decision-making by elites who were responding to a changing political context and competing national identity. For Arana, achieving the goal of a widespread nationalist movement required a balancing act: create an in-group that is as inclusive of Basques as possible in order to disseminate the national identity (and nationalism’s political ambitions) widely. For post-Franco Basque nationalists, however, the calculous changed as a result of two elements of the Franco regime. First, the version of Spanish national identity articulated by the regime sought the erasure of the boundary between Basques and Spaniards as a way of undermining nationalist claims. Second, Francoist repression of outward signs of Basqueness attempted to forcibly impose Spanish national identity on the sub-state national groups. Suddenly, the very existence of the Basque in-group was threatened. Basque elites responded by rearticulating the identity so as to reinforce the boundary between Basques and Spaniards.
Chapter 6: Analysis

A New Structural Break?: The European Union

Thus far, this investigation has used the rational choice paradigm in order to explain identity construction. It has argued that elites have certain goals in creating a national identity. Their long-term objective is to establish a group — of course, one they lead — that would provide the basis for a credible claim for self-government; this ultimate political end is the very definition of a national identity, as opposed to an ethnic one. Elites, then, create national identities by selecting markers which delineate the group boundary and define the content of group identity. According to our model, following Barreto (2001), elites choose markers based on the following preferences: the marker differentiates the in-group from others; it elevates the status of the in-group, providing a source of national pride and making group membership desirable; and, it elevates or maintains elite status within the in-group. This perspective views identity as reflective of elite interest maximization, not primordial urges.

For instance, the previous chapter discussed Basque nationalist Sabino Arana. Although he selected core markers for Basque identity they did not maximize in-group differentiation from the out-group. Instead of language, Arana opted to objectify race and religion for two reasons. First, he was articulating a fledgling identity and needed to give it the widest possible appeal. Here, selecting the marker that would maximize the
boundary between the Basque in-group and other out-groups, especially Spaniards, would have excluded a significant portion of Arana’s target audience. Moreover, the fact that the language was largely derided would have undermined his credibility. Second, Arana himself did not speak the language, so his own status within the in-group would have been diminished. Arana then balanced his short-term goals with his long-term desire to create an in-group that could be a viable vehicle for claims of Basque self-determination.

When elites change the markers that define an identity, as they did when Basque identity was rearticulated on the basis of language during the Franco era, it points to a change in either the actors articulating the identity or to a change in or reordering of goals. In the former instance, identity shift might be expected if, all things being equal, the nationalist elite changed dramatically in regard to composition, where a group dominated by clerics shifted to favor secular elites. Since the same markers do not privilege every kind of elite in the same way, we might expect that a newly-dominant elite would rearticulate a national identity in order to solidify its status. In the Basque case, the composition of the elite did not change in such a way that would provide a prima facie reason to expect an identity change. Thus, the first input in the basic rational choice model — actors — cannot be the source of the eventual identity shift.

In examining the second input — elite goals or preferences — the long-term goals of the nationalist elites did not change. They were still attempting to use identity in order
to create a group that could sustain a claim for some degree of eventual autonomy. By process of elimination, then, a change in elite short-term goals was the likely explanation for a shift to the boundary-maximizing language marker. Like all markers, selecting Euskara as a defining sign of ‘Basqueness’ results in both benefits and costs. On one hand, its uniqueness certainly maximizes the boundary between Basques and any other group because it is a trait that only Basques have. Moreover, the peculiar nature of Euskara means that it excludes even tangential similarities between other group-defining languages from being exploited. On the other hand, the fact that Euskara is not widely spoken means that it excluded a significant number of individuals from group membership. In addition, it was likely to diminish the status of elites because the vast majority of them — like the rest of the masses — could not speak it. Thus, the downsides to Euskara as a marker of Basque identity remained largely unchanged from what Arana faced when he articulated the original identity. Yet, the identity did in fact change. How then, can this change be explained?

Elisabeth Jean Wood’s (2000) research suggests that there is a third source of change in the rational decision-making model — a significant environmental change that forced elites to reconsider their tactics resulting in a different outcome. In Wood’s research, elites in El Salvador and South Africa who had previously supported authoritarian regimes (because they supplied them with material advantages) agreed to support democratization. She traces this shift in support for political liberalization to a
sustained insurgency of the lower classes, which served to alter the calculations of elites. The insurgencies’ negative impacts on the economic interests of elites spurred them to prefer the relative uncertainty of a more democratic system to the on-going conflict. Which the economic elite wished to maintain their privileges, the increasing costs of a resistance that appeared to stretch far into the future provided a catalyst for elites to re-examine and reassess support for authoritarianism.

The previous chapter underscored that the Franco regime provided a similar catalyst. Francoist efforts to erase the boundary between Basques and Spaniards in order to discredit nationalist claims coupled with the regime’s severe repression of outward signs of diversity, especially those attached to ‘Basqueness’, triggered Basques elites to re-adjust their tactics. With the very survival of the in-group at stake, Basque elites opted to select a marker that would counter Francoist attempts to minimize the differences between Basques and Spaniards by making those differences as stark as possible. In the face of Francoist repression, the priority became the survival of the group, the in-group identity and the long-term goal of group-based autonomy. Moreover, the fact that Franco co-opted the Catholic marker of identity associated the selection of that marker with unacceptable costs. Retaining it as part of the Basque national identity would have actually aided the regime’s goals, not the goals of Basque nationalist elites.
The remainder of this discussion suggests that European Union has provided a similar structural break by having a tangible impact on the domestic and even international spheres within which Basque elites are operating. The Basque and Spanish relationship in the post-transition era can be characterized as confrontational and at times, antagonistic. While Basque nationalists have made some progress toward their goal of greater autonomy for the Basque people by securing a Statute of Autonomy, the Spanish central government has blocked the realization of many of the promised reforms. As a result, many if not most, of the nationalist gains have been symbolic at best. At the same time, the Spanish central government, particularly when led by the conservative Partido Popular, has inflamed even moderate nationalists. Not only have they blocked the full transfer of powers guaranteed by the Statute of Autonomy, but they have also articulated a much more homogenous Spanish national identity that Basque nationalists perceive as hostile to their identity. Moreover, the PP exacerbated the already heightened tension by attacking Basque cultural institutions under the pretense of fighting ETA terrorism.

In the same way that changes in the international context contributed to elite preference reordering in Wood’s research, this chapter will contend that the EU is not only capable of tangibly impacting elite decision-making by constraining some paths to interest maximization and by opening others, but also that it already has. It will be shown that, as both actor and arena, the EU has led to significant changes in the domestic political spaces of member states, both by placing restrictions on state actions and by
providing an alternative arena through which elites can pursue largely domestic goals. At the same time, it will be shown that elites are using the EU as a political issue to achieve electoral goals. It is the contention of this investigation that the instrumental use of the EU is carrying over to nationalist goals as well.

Post-Transition Spain: Nationalist Frustration and Central Government Hostility

After the introduction of democracy in Spain following the death of Franco, Basque nationalists made what appeared to be some progress toward their ultimate goal of maximal autonomy. The new constitution reserved significant powers to the regions, including what would become the Basque Autonomous Community, and guaranteed the autonomy of the sub-state national groups. However, the document also placed limits on decentralization in order to balance the autonomist demands with efforts to prevent cascading claims for autonomy that could eventually result in the state breaking apart. For instance, the 1978 Constitution precluded any federations between Autonomous Communities and diluted the special claims of the historical nationalities by extending potential autonomy to any region that wanted it. Moreover, the power of the Autonomous Communities is constrained so that they are less powerful than the constituent entities in a truly federal system. They are not strongly represented in the upper house of the
legislature, nor are they necessarily capable of amending the Constitution; though they can initiate amendments, actual passage is through the legislature or public referendum.

Thus, the degree to which the Constitution satisfied Basque nationalist demands was actually quite low. Consequently, Basque nationalist political parties advocated either a ‘no’ vote or abstention on its adoption. When the results were tallied, the Constitution was adopted, but with a very high abstention rate in the Basque provinces. The fact that it was adopted over high levels of opposition by Basque nationalists hurt its legitimacy in those areas and reinforced existing negative views of the Spanish state.

The Basque Statute of Autonomy, which resulted in the creation of the Basque Autonomous Community (BAC), garnered significantly more support. It defines the particular competences of the Basque government, laying out the functions of the various branches of government overseeing the BAC. Most important, the statute served to enshrine the post-Franco version of Basque national identity as the basis of the BAC. Euskara was established as the language of the Basque people and was made a co-official language, along with Castilian. The ikurriña became the official Basque flag and the conciertos económicos — a nod to the historical fueros — were revived. The latter concession was notable, as it represented an arrangement that was unique to the BAC in the context of the other Autonomous Communities. Thus, Basque elites appeared to make
significant progress toward their ultimate goal of self-determination in the democratic era.

The reality of the situation, however, was much more complicated. The special privileges granted to the Basques meant that other regions demanded similar treatment; this was particularly true in Catalonia where nationalists objected to the fact that a special status was conferred upon the Basques. These demands stoked latent fears that the centripetal forces of decentralization would build until the country shattered. The result was a coup attempt in 1981. Though ultimately unsuccessful, the damage was done; the Spanish government attempted to slow down the process of decentralization and delay the full implementation of the statutes of Autonomy and, as a result, the full transfer of powers to the Autonomous Communities. Thus, the relationship between the fledgling democratic Spanish state and Basque nationalists only deteriorated.

By the 1990s, the Spanish-Basque relationship deteriorated so severely that it could best be described as antagonistic. This atmosphere was attributable to two major factors. First, radical, militant Basque nationalism — a response to Francoist repression and the perceived failure of moderate Basque nationalism to respond effectively to it — continued its campaign unabated. ETA continued targeting government buildings and officials, amassing roughly the same number of victims as during the Franco years. Public opinion turned against ETA and even moderate forms of nationalism. This was
particularly true for Basque nationalism as, for the public, it was inextricably linked to violence. Under these circumstances, there was no incentive for the central government to accommodate further autonomy for the sub-state nationalist movements. In fact, one could argue that ETA’s continued violence provided a significant disincentive; accommodating nationalist demands while ETA was still carrying out its attacks might be viewed as caving to what the government labeled as a terrorist group. Not only might this embolden militant nationalists, it would also likely result in an electoral backlash for whichever party attempted it.

Moreover, the government’s attempts to combat ETA were viewed by many Basques as overzealous and contributed to an atmosphere of distrust between the Spanish government and even moderate nationalists. The government’s support of a paramilitary force, the *Grupos Antiterroristas de Liberación* (GAL — Antiterrorist Liberation Groups), to track down ETA members who crossed the Pyrenees into France reinforced the sense that little had changed since the Franco regime. This was only exacerbated by reported torture of suspected ETA militants and the Spanish government’s practice of jailing ETA members far from their families.

The second factor was the increased electoral success of the conservative Partido Popular. The PP subscribed to a version of Spanish national identity that, much like the Francoist vision, deemphasized the country’s cultural diversity. The PP’s success at the
polls provided it with a perceived mandate to aggressively pursue less tolerant policies toward the sub-state nationalist movements. ETA’s actions reinforced this inclination and spurred it further; the PP not only sought to put an end to ETA, it also attacked moderate Basque nationalism arguing that Basque nationalism was inextricably linked to ETA’s violence. By 2001, the PP’s electoral successes resulted in their winning a majority of the seats in the Cortes. The impact of these electoral results was two-fold. First, they gave the PP a presumed country-wide mandate and freed them from the necessity of forming coalitions. The PP consequently embraced a harder line on nationalism, adopting policies geared toward eradicating all forms of nationalism. It shuttered Basque language newspapers and outlawed Herri Batasuna, the radical nationalist political party. Moreover, the PP refused to even speak with its counterparts in the Basque government.

At the same time, the moderate Basque nationalists were gradually promoting greater autonomy, if not sovereignty, for the BAC. One notable attempt was made by Basque president Juan Jose Ibarretxe, who proposed a plan to revampe the institutional framework under which the Autonomous Community operated. Based on a concept of shared or co-sovereignty, the plan proposed that the Basque government would enter into a relationship of “free association” with Spain. Here, the goal of the PNV was to force the Spanish government to devolve the full range of powers listed in the Basque Statue of Autonomy. The PP, for its part, would not even consider the plan, as it was considered a violation of the constitution.
The present situation in Spain has resulted in a kind of stalemate. Though ETA has declared a permanent cease-fire that, to this point, has remained in effect, the Spanish government’s attitude toward the claims of even moderate Basque nationalists has oscillated from tentative openness during periods when then Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE — Spanish Socialist Worker’s Party) was in office to outright hostility under a Partido Popular administration. Basque nationalism, however, has not abated. In the most recent elections for the Basque national parliament, the moderate PNV gained the most votes and thus, a plurality of seats, though not a majority. A left-wing coalition known as Euskal Herria Bildu came in second. Both parties support increased autonomy for the BAC. EHB, notably, supports separatism, while the PNV is less clear on the precise relationship that it seeks with the Spanish government. Most important, EHB gained 16 seats over their showing in the previous Basque election. Thus, it would appear that support for Basque nationalism has continued and that support for independence in the BAC may actually be increasing (Tremlett and Carrell 2012).

The 2014 referendum on establishing an independent Scottish state separate from the United Kingdom has added an additional wrinkle to this story. The referendum was hailed by both Basque and Catalan nationalist leaders. Both declared their desire to hold a similar referendum in the near future. The Catalan legislature has actually indicated their intention to hold a non-binding referendum in Catalonia within the next year. The current Spanish ruling party, the PP, has vowed to block any such referendum in the Spanish
court system, arguing that it would be a violation of the Spanish Constitution (Gyldenkerne 2014a; Gyldenkerne 2014b).

Though much less outwardly repressive, the prevailing political atmosphere in post-Franco Spain shares some noteworthy similarities with the Falangist period. Here, Basque elites have made some progress in securing increased autonomy, but have been prevented from fully realizing even these concessions. Nationalist efforts to encourage the full devolution of powers have been either ignored or rebuffed by a government that, at times, has refused to even speak with their Basque counterparts. Moreover, the PP’s efforts to entrench a Spanish national identity which minimizes the claims of the national minorities and erases the boundary between Basque and Spaniard is reminiscent of Francoism. The same is true for the PP’s attacks on Basque cultural institutions. Thus, the current relationship between the Basque nationalist elite and the Spanish central government has many of the same core qualities that marked the Franco regime. Though Francoist policies were much more explicitly repressive, many of the policies pursued by the central government, particularly under the PP, garnered similar results.

Given this domestic context, there is little surprise that Basque national identity has remained largely unchanged though the Franco era, the democratic era and into the present. Basque nationalists are still fighting the central government’s efforts to weaken the boundary between the Basque in-group and the Spanish out-group by entrenching a
homogenous Spanish national identity and to downplay regional diversity. The goal of such efforts on the part of the central government is to undermine nationalist claims and to undercut their demands for further autonomy.

From the 1980s through the present day, the articulation of Basque national identity presented in school textbooks has retained many of the same major features. Language remains the preeminent feature and defining marker of the Basque nation. The vast majority of the books continue to refer to the Basque language as “our language” and many use the term *euskaldun* to describe the Basque people (e.g. Euskara Hizkuntza 3 1998; Begiristain 2001; Imaz and Iparragirre 2000; Mari Arano 2001; Mari Arano 2005; Irakurgaiak 5 2009b). Thus, the implication remains that the Basque people are synonymous with speaking Euskara. Moreover, the books retain the sense that Euskara underscores the ancientness of the Basque people and that its uniqueness sets Basques apart from other groups.

While learning Euskara is still considered to be every child’s duty, a new emphasis emerged as the democratic era shifted to the post-EU era. Whereas democratic era textbooks of the 1980s placed a great deal of emphasis on learning Basque, post-EU era books heavily emphasized *using* Basque (e.g. Mari Arano 2000; Mari Arano 2001; Iana 2012). This is an acknowledgement of one of the challenges facing the Basque language revival movement: students are learning Basque in unprecedented numbers, but
many opt to speak in Spanish outside of the classroom and at times, even inside of the classroom. This situation, known as diglossia, has been studied by Begoña Echeverria (2003a; 2003b), who discovered that Basque-speaking students would often switch between Basque and Spanish, speaking Basque in the classroom or when the teacher could hear them, while switching to Spanish outside of the classroom. Such a situation is problematic for nationalist elites defining an identity on the basis of an exclusive language, as it suggests that children prefer to communicate in a different language and only use their national language when forced.

Books attempted to counteract this situation by encouraging children to not just learn Basque, but to use it throughout their daily lives. Children were urged to consider when they speak Basque and when they speak other languages that they may know (Euskara Hizkuntza 3 1998; Irakurgaiak 2008; Iana 2013). One exercise asked them to consider with whom they spoke Basque and in what settings, as well as whether they were consuming media (TV, movies, radio, etc) in Basque (Euskara Hizkuntza 3 1998: 134). The framing of this question is noteworthy. Though the questions are obviously directing children to consider when they use Basque and when they use Spanish, Castilian is never mentioned by name.\(^5\) As in the 1980s, Spanish is lumped in with other

\(^5\) Though children are increasingly acquiring third languages in their educations, especially English, these tertiary languages are not as problematic as Spanish. First, these tertiary languages are not replacing Basque to the degree that Spanish is replacing
languages as just one of many other languages that students might learn or speak. This trend continues into the post-EU era.

The emphasis on Basque traditional culture as a way of marking the boundary between Basque in-group and out-groups also found its way into the contemporary period. Images of Basque dancers, traditional Basque dress and drawings of Basques participating in traditional Basque sports were common (Goia et al. 2000; Begiristain 2001; Lourdes and Iparragirre 2012). Books used these traditional sports to link the modern student to their Basque ancestry by pointing out that these traditional sports reflect the Basque heritage of agriculture and seafaring (Goia and Manuel Rodriguez 2003). Moreover, these sports remained emblems of Basque strength, uniqueness and ancientness, as they set Basques apart from other groups.

The Spanish in-group, on the other hand, is largely absent from the pages of these books, unless their inclusion is somehow negative. This was similar to the manner in which Franco-era texts erased minority groups and any traces of cultural diversity. For instance, when Basque textbooks discuss concepts like government, they feature photos of Basque government buildings and officials. Though the central government is discussed in passing, the overall focus of these passages remains on Basque Basque. Second, those tertiary languages are not associated with an out-group from which nationalist elites are attempting to distance their in-group.
contributions. A similar device is employed when discussing history. When historical events involve and intertwine both Basques and Spaniards, Basque contributions are emphasized, as a way of separating the narratives. When Spanish contributions are discussed, they tend to be events that cast Spaniards is a much more negative light. For instance, when discussing the Reconquista, the valor of the Basque principalities is celebrated; Basques are presented as crucial to the reclamation of the peninsula for Christianity. When discussing the Spanish Golden Age, the contributions of Basque explorers to the discovery of the Americas tend to be emphasized, while the Spanish monarchy and its imperial expansion is described as brutal and cruel (Prego Axpe 2009b). This negative cast is jarring, since the Basque explorers discovering new lands were instruments of the Spanish state, working for and with this cruel monarchy. Moreover, the events integral to Spanish history that Basques emphasized enabled them to cast Spaniards negatively: the Inquisition, Golden Age imperialism and unsurprisingly, the Civil War. Thus post-EU era textbooks not only continued to present Basque identity as an ethnic identity based upon language, they also reinforced the notion of distance between the Basque in-group and the Spanish out-group.

Examining this content, it is clear that much of the content of Basque national identity, particularly vis-à-vis Spaniards, has remained stable since the post-Franco identity articulation. This is consistent: the domestic circumstances under which Basque nationalist elites are operating are similar in many ways to the circumstances of the
Franco regime. It follows that Basque nationalists would continue to try to maximize the boundary between Basques and Spaniards by continuing to objectify language as their defining trait. On the surface, it appears that nothing has changed significantly enough to re-order elite preferences. However, as the remainder of this discussion will demonstrate, Basque identity has begun to exhibit signs of further change, not in how it positions itself vis-à-vis Spanish identity, but in how it positions itself vis-à-vis European identity.

Reordering Elite Tactics: The European Union

Elisabeth Jean Wood’s (2000) research demonstrates the importance of examining not only the domestic context, but the interplay between the domestic and international contexts in understanding elite calculations. Changes in the international arena are capable of reordering elite strategies in two ways: by constraining some choices and by making others more attractive. In her study, the end of Cold War and the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe ushered in new international norms that made elite preferences for authoritarian rule less tenable. The costs of continuing to support a non-democratic regime were thus increased; not only was authoritarianism spurring a costly insurgency, but continued support of that type of regime would also have potential international costs as well. At the same time, the demise of the Cold War reduced the possible costs inherent in the uncertainty of transitioning to a more liberal regime by
favoring neoliberal economic policies. This international shift away from socialism — led by the powerful United States — reassured economic elites that support for a more liberal political regime was less likely to result in redistributive economic policies that would harm their economic interests.

In the Basque case, the introduction of the European Union has proved to be a similar significant change impacting the international and domestic arenas both directly and indirectly. The very nature of the EU as a supranational organization, for instance, suggests that it must alter the domestic political spaces of member states. Membership in the European Union constrains member state behavior by forcing states to adhere to certain guidelines both prior to and as a continuing condition of membership. For instance, there is evidence from post-communist states like Estonia, Romania and Macedonia that the treatment of minorities in respect to languages and citizenship laws have been much more accommodating than they otherwise might have been, absent EU membership (Csergo 2000; Wallander 2002; Brusis 2003). Though these studies were specifically focused on EU modification of new member behavior, the logic can easily be extended to the behavior of existing members — the EU constrains the options that states have for pursuing their goals.

Moreover, as European integration has deepened, the impact that the EU has on the day-to-day workings of member states and on the lives of its people has been
significant. The introduction of the Euro as a common currency has not only interlinked member states’ markets and economies, it has also symbolically linked them; currency can be understood as a powerful symbol of national identity (Wolters 2001). The most recent EU treaties — the failed Constitution and the replacement Lisbon Treaty — have only amplified the impact that the EU has on domestic policies. The failed Constitution was intended to consolidate all of the existing EU treaties into one document. The Constitution would have given legal force to the Charter of Fundamental Rights, and replaced unanimous voting with Qualified Majority Voting in certain areas, while also creating positions for an EU President and EU Foreign Minister (European Union 2004). Therefore, the Constitution not only continued expanding its competences into the historically state-owned area of foreign policy, it also reduced member state veto power in 45 policy areas. Both of these steps weaken state sovereignty and transfer more power to the EU. To be sure, these were serious sticking points for opponents of the Constitution, as they argued that it went too far in centralizing EU power and weakening state sovereignty. The Lisbon Treaty replaced the Constitution when the latter was rejected in referenda held in France and the Netherlands. Ironically, the Lisbon Treaty contained many of the same provisions as the Constitution. The major difference was that

66 The Charter of Fundamental Rights contains 54 separate articles divided thematically into seven articles: dignity, freedoms, equality, solidarity, citizens’ rights and justice. The seventh article deals with the application and interpretation of the Charter (European Convention 1999).
the Lisbon Treaty merely amended the former treaties, rather than consolidating them (European Union 2007). This difference is crucial in that it ensured that most member states could bypass public referenda in favor of passage by the state legislature; this made it much more likely that the Treaty would be accepted. However, the fact that it contained many of the same provisions as the Constitution meant that it was opposed for similar reasons (EU Committee of the House of Lords 2008: 335; Bonde 2008: 41). Moreover, the machinations of its passage, such as ensuring that the Treaty would not be subjected to public referenda and a ‘do-over’ in the only such vote that was held, only contributed to the sense that the treaties centralized too much power in the European Union (BBC News 2009).

The increased power of the European Union and its expansion into more policy competence, especially areas like agriculture and foreign and security policy that have been historically jealously guarded by states indicates the degree to which the European Union, as a supranational actor, has had an impact on the behavior of member states. This is further supported by empirical evidence from the member states. For instance Topaloff (2012: 26-29) argued that the EU’s impact on domestic policies is so significant that stances on the EU and further integration have become politically salient issues; political parties have been increasingly forced to address their positions on the European Union in their party manifestos. Though this is partially related to instrumental calculations by political parties — a point to which we will return shortly — it also reflects the degree to
which the European Union has impacted the domestic political landscape. The palpable presence and visibility of the EU has led the public to demand information on how a party approaches further integration and by implication, how they approach the future involvement of the EU at the domestic level. Political parties literally cannot ignore the European Union.

In addition to its role as an actor, the European Union has also changed the domestic political landscape by acting as an alternative arena through which regional elites can pursue their goals, even if those goals are largely rooted in domestic concerns. These elites have used the European Union in order to deal with these issues in ways that are perhaps more effective than the member state could pursue on its own. For instance, the Spanish central government used the EU to aid in its fight against ETA in the 1990s (Fugairiño 1995: 100), seeking EU-wide reforms of domestic asylum and extradition laws that would make it easier for the state to pursue suspected ETA members when they crossed state borders (Closa and Heywood 2004).

Sub-state elites are also using the new arena that the European Union has provided to pursue their goals. One of the major areas where this occurs is within bodies that provide representation and an official status for local and regional authorities. Though these bodies do not provide serious decision-making power, as their roles are mostly advisory, they do provide regional elites with certain benefits (Weatherill 2005).
In particular, they have allowed for regional elites to voice concerns that may not be addressed at the domestic level in addition to providing space and opportunity for transnational, regional, cooperation. For nationalist elites, the access to this space cannot be underestimated.

Though the success of the efforts to use the European Union as a separate arena via which elites can pursue goals is mixed, the fact that elites are opting to use it in this way is telling. It points to the degree to which the EU, as both actor and arena, has become a part of the political landscape in member states. For the purposes of this investigation, it provides support for the notion that the EU constitutes a structural break in the ongoing political environment.

Moreover, the empirical evidence indicates that the European Union has directly impacted elite strategic calculations by explicitly becoming a part of those calculations. For instance, Topaloff (2012) demonstrated that political parties tailor their stance on the EU and further integration not according to ideology, but according to interest. There is no coherent pattern of pro- or anti-EU stances falling along the traditional left/right political fault lines that might be expected if a party’s position on integration were related to their political ideology (ibid: 87-89). However, the study did discover that parties in the center of the spectrum, mainstream parties, tended to have relatively more positive views of the EU, while parties at the extremes tended to espouse more negative views.
This is especially curious given that the voting public in EU member states tend to be relatively more skeptical of further integration. Topaloff argues that this situation is related to certain strategic calculations; political party support for integration, then, is derived not just from the benefits that parties can expect to receive from the EU from the relative costs and benefits associated with adopting that particular stance. Those costs and benefits are, in turn, related to the party’s position in the overall system and to their future prospects, an additional calculation that Topaloff (ibid.) calls the “shadow of the future”. The concept of this additional strategic calculation is derived from Tsebelis’s model of nested games, wherein actors are involved in multiple games and thus, must balance their interests. As a result of these nested games, actors may appear to make sub-optimal choices, when in fact, they are accepting some costs in order to maximize their benefits elsewhere.

Mainstream parties are situated in the political center where most voters tend to cluster. By virtue of this position, they tend to perform well enough in elections to have a significant say in government, whether they are in power or in the opposition. Moreover, a basic feature of democratic systems is the oscillation of power among political parties, where parties sometimes lose (Przeworski 1991). As a result, for mainstream parties it is reasonable to expect that they will be in control of the government at some point in the future. In the past, this control would extend only to the domestic sphere; with the introduction of the European Union, however, mainstream political parties must also
consider that they will one day wield power at the European level as well. The tendency of mainstream parties to adopt relatively more positive stances on the EU and further integration is a result of this position in the system and on these future considerations; there are fewer incentives for them to adopt more euroskeptic views.

Overall mainstream parties have greater influence over the bodies of the European Union and thus, can use those bodies to extend their power in the domestic sphere. This is especially evident when it comes to the EU’s financial powers; mainstream parties can use their influence to impact the EU’s budget in ways that strengthen their domestic positions (Topaloff 2012: 146). The benefits that mainstream parties receive as influential actors at the EU level provides a significant incentive for these parties to adopt a positive stance on integration, as further integration is likely to provide them with greater benefits. Even when a mainstream party is not currently in power, the “shadow of the future” — or the expectation that they will someday be in power and in a position to reap the same benefits — provides a significant disincentive to adopting more euroskeptic views.

These future considerations also help explain why mainstream parties who are in the opposition do not pander to the general trend of euroskepticism in the voting public in order to gain enough votes to unseat the incumbent party. If mainstream parties reasonably expect to be in power in the future and as a result, expect to be working at the European level, they may find it extremely difficult to be effective after espousing anti-
EU views. This fear is not unfounded, as Topaloff (2012: 106) points out, at least three parties have found that their previous euroskeptic views made it difficult to operate within EU institutions. These future considerations override the desire to make short-term voting gains by adopting populist Euroskeptic views (ibid: 106).

Marginal parties, however, have a lot more to gain by adopting much more negative views of further integration. Due to their position on the outskirts of the political system, the barriers to their entry into the political system are high; they do not have the same reasonable expectation that they will win elections like the mainstream parties do. As a result, each vote is worth much more to marginal parties, who might otherwise struggle to get any representation in the government. Thus, more extreme parties are more likely to adopt populist political positions like euroskepticism as a way of exploiting that sentiment in the general public for more votes.

However, not all marginal parties stand to gain from adopting hard euroskeptic views. This explains why stances on the EU were unevenly distributed through marginal political parties; though they tended as a whole to be more euroskeptic than mainstream political parties, the results within were somewhat mixed, including softer euroskeptic views and even more eurosympathetic views (Topaloff 2012: 66). Topaloff argues that the crucial factor here is again, the shadow of the future. If a marginal party has few expectations of becoming part of a governing coalition — usually because it is
ideologically incompatible with other political parties — it will direct its efforts to ensuring its survival by adopting anti-system or populist views, which will result in hard euroskepticism (ibid: 167).

Marginal political parties that are coalitionable, or which have a reasonable expectation that they may become part of a governing coalition in the future, have a somewhat more complicated set of considerations. Like non-coalitionable marginal parties, they will tend adopt stances that are generally more euroskeptic overall. However, they may at times adopt harder or softer stances, largely depending on the political party in power. If their potential coalition partner is not from the same ideological family, they are likely to adopt softer stances in order to keep themselves coalitionable. If their potential coalition partner is from the same ideological family, they might adopt harder euroskeptic stances in order to differentiate themselves from the mainstream kin party’s more positive views on integration.

Topaloff’s work is instructive for this investigation because, at its core, it shares many theoretical similarities with this investigation. It is an examination of how the European Union has impacted the electoral landscape in member states; in response to these changes, political parties are using their stance on the ‘European issue’ as a way to achieve their political goals, altering that stance when necessary to more effectively achieve their goals. In the same way, the overall argument of this investigation is that
nationalist elites are using the European Union to achieve their nationalist goals. Thus, despite its focus on political parties, the rational choice theories that underpin the work can be extended to competing nationalist elites; both groups seek to gain public support and ensure victory over their opponent. Moreover, nationalist elites and political parties are not necessarily completely separate groups. Not only do nationalist movements often have corresponding political parties, but these can play major roles in articulating and disseminating national identity. This is particularly true in the Basque case where the PNV was created by Sabino Arana and has historically played a major role in identity construction. Thus, how political parties use the EU to compete for votes may be instructive in constructing expectations for how nationalist elites use the EU to compete with the out-group.

Topaloff (2012: 28) does examine nationalist political parties in order to determine their expected orientation toward either a positive or negative view on the European Union and in order to investigate how and under what conditions that view may have changed over time. For instance, Jean Marie LePen’s National Front, a right-wing French nationalist party, was originally a supporter of the European Community. For LePen, the EC provided an opportunity to challenge the traditional dominance of mainstream French political parties (ibid: 28). LePen thought that the EC would dilute their influence and possibly constrain the actions of the central government; by providing a counterweight to the existing centers of political power, both outcomes would result in
strategic victories for the National Front. Over time, however, the National Front embraced a hard-line Euroskeptic stance. Topaloff (2012: 28-29) attributes this to the realization that the EC and later, the EU, were not counterweights, but extensions of mainstream political power; developments at the EU level advantaged the mainstream political parties and kept the National Front marginalized. Moreover, the National Front was not a likely candidate for a coalition partner. Thus, the benefits of adopting such a hard line Euroskeptic stance were much higher than the associated costs. The Austrian Freedom Party, another right-wing populist/nationalist party, followed a similar path (ibid: 29; see also Leconte 2010).

The Basque PNV, like these other nationalist parties, could be considered to be a marginal political party in the context of the Cortes and the Spanish central government. The PNV currently holds 5 out of 350 seats in the lower house of the bicameral legislature and 5 out of 264 in the upper house. Moreover, the PNV’s prospects for coalitionability are generally poor, though this is due more to a quirk of the Spanish electoral system than to ideological incompatibility. The Spanish system is based on limited proportionality, using the d’Hondt PR electoral formula. In order to maximize proportionality, the formula requires larger constituencies; the larger the constituency, the more proportional the outcome. The Spanish system, however, is based upon very small electoral districts. Moreover, the lower house of the legislature is considerably smaller than comparably-sized European countries; this, coupled with a 3 percent threshold for
entrance into the lower house means that representation for small, marginal, political parties is minimized. The overall result is that the Spanish system operates very much like a two-party majoritarian system, reducing the need to form coalitions (Topaloff 2012: 182-183). Thus, marginal parties in Spain have low expectations of future coalitionability simply because coalitions are not often necessary.

Given these circumstances, and given the decision-making of other nationalist elites, we might expect that the PNV has eventually come to embrace a generally Euroskeptic stance in order to defy the mainstream parties and to garner more votes. However, they have followed the opposite path. When Spain first acceded to the European Community in 1986, just six years after ratifying the Spanish Constitution, Basque nationalist elites were solidly against membership. In the past fifteen years, however, Basque nationalist elites have become some of the staunchest supporters for further EU integration. For instance, the PNV advocated for a “yes” vote to the European Constitution proposal in 2005 and supported the Lisbon Treaty in the Cortes Generales.

Moreover, this solidly ‘Europhile’ perspective is evident in more recent textbooks from the post-EU period. In marked contrast with how Basque textbooks present the

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67 Such a shift is also evident in Scotland. There, support for Scottish self-government is positively correlated with support for the European Union and further integration (Dardanelli 2002: 19).
Spanish central government and the Spanish out-group, the European Union was presented in an overwhelmingly positive light. For the most part, specific discussion of the European Union as a supranational organization is confined to texts used in later primary school cycles. It is at this point in their education that children learn about the Union and what it means to be a member. When it is specifically discussed, the European Union was described in overwhelmingly positive terms, as an organization that allows states to accomplish more through cooperation than they could on their own (Ramon Makuso and Maria Balerardi 2008). By approaching the European Union in this way, children are taught that while the Union does infringe on state sovereignty, it might actually be a good thing. In terms of the positive impacts of weakening state sovereignty, a number of books pointed out that the EU has been an important force for the protection of minorities in Europe (ibid.). Thus, in the context of discussions of government in Basque textbooks, the treatment of the European Union is incredibly uneven when compared to the treatment of the Spanish government, though they have similar effects upon the Basque Autonomous Communities. Where the Spanish government was largely ignored, the European Union was praised. Such asymmetrical treatment pervades discussions of the EU.

Even more important, textbooks — one of the polity’s sharpest instruments in the political socialization of the next generation — also have begun to place Basque individuals in the context of a greater European citizenry, in addition to presenting
European membership as a net positive. For instance, books positioned Basques as part of a European citizenry (Begiristain and Zubeldia 2002; Ramon Makuso and Maria Balerardi 2008; Goia and Manuel Rodriguez 2003). While this is certainly true, it is noteworthy that it was never pointed out that Basques are all citizens of Spain, as well, which is equally true. This effort, when coupled with texts that taught that Basques were some of the first Europeans (e.g. Iana 2012; Iana 2013), contextualizes Basqueness alongside Europeanness. The two identities are not just compatible, they are intertwined. Again, this is in stark contrast to the treatment of Basque identity and Spanish identity. Though the reality is that Basqueness and Spanishness are intertwined for many individuals, textbooks (and nationalist elites) consistently treat them as though they are mutually exclusive.

The sense that Basque identity is compatible with a sense of European identity is also evident in recent books that treat the relationship between Basques and Europeans as a kind of close friendship or kinship relationship (Prego Axpe 2009b; Goia and Manuel Rodriguez 2004). Curiously, the exact nature of these attachments between Basques and Europeans was ambiguous. At times, the relationship was characterized as quasi-ethnic. Recall again, the sense that Basques were the earliest Europeans, which roots Basques within a European ancestry. At other times, the ties were characterized as civic, where both Basques and Europeans embraced freedom and diversity. Regardless of the exact nature of these kinship ties, however, what remains is that the treatment of the European
group and the Spanish group is asymmetrical. Though Basques share many literal kinship ties with Spaniards, those relationships are largely ignored. Basqueness is separate and incompatible with Spanishness while being simultaneously compatible with Europeanness.

It seems apparent, then, that Basque nationalist elites have not conformed to the expected pattern of behavior. Given Topaloff’s model, we would expect that the PNV, as a marginal party, would have a greater incentive to adopt a more Euroskeptic stance on the EU and integration. That incentive should be strengthened as the EU continues to be dominated by mainstream political actors and as the PNV’s expectation for a future as a coalition party continues to be dim. However, not only has the PNV become more supportive of the EU and of further integration, Basque textbooks are teaching this perspective in an effort to reinforce and replicate it. How might this deviation be explained?

One possible explanation takes into account the fact that Spain, as a whole, is comparatively more supportive of the EU and of further integration than the citizenry of other member states. Thus, it is possible that political parties in Spain — regardless of their position on the political spectrum — face a disincentive to adopting Euroskeptic views because the public is staunchly in support of the EU. Such an explanation, however, is not borne out by the empirical evidence. First, though Spanish support for the
EU and further integration may remain comparatively higher than in other member states, the percentage of Spaniards who strongly support further integration has been dropping in recent years. However, we have not seen a corresponding shift in the views of the PNV. Moreover, when Spanish support for membership in the EC was incredibly high prior to its accession, the PNV’s position placed it in opposition, which runs counter to the expected trend.

A much stronger explanation is that the PNV is quite different from the right-wing nationalist parties Topaloff examined; in fact, it could be contended that the PNV has as much, if not more, in common with mainstream parties than more marginal parties. Most nationalist parties are best characterized as marginal parties because their fringe views do not appeal to a wide enough sector of the voting public and thus, do not win enough votes in order to gain wide representation for their views. This is certainly true of the PNV if we consider their appeal and their performance at the national level; however, the particular structure of the Spanish system featuring Autonomous Communities with separate governing institutions provides Spanish political parties with another possible venue for pursuing power and gaining representation. If we take into account the Basque Autonomous Community and the Basque Parliament, we get a slightly different picture of the PNV’s status. The PNV, as a moderate nationalist party, appeals to a wide swath of the voting public here. As a result, they are one of the more powerful political parties, currently holding 27 out of 75 seats in the Basque Parliament. Within the context of the
BAC, then, the PNV might be more appropriately considered a mainstream political party.

However, the most crucial difference between right-wing nationalists and the Basque nationalist parties is their position vis-à-vis the central government, the type of nationalism that they pursue and the related fact that the ultimate goals that they pursue as nationalists are fundamentally different and in fact, diametrically opposed. Basque nationalists are separatists, ultimately seeking the maximal autonomy and possible independence of the Basque Autonomous Community from the Spanish state. This is a very different nationalist goal from those associated with right wing nationalist groups, where the goal of the nationalist movement is to protect the national identity associated with the state. Moreover, the fact that we can observe similar patterns of support in other separatist nationalist groups, such as the Catalan Convergence and Union electoral alliance and the Scottish Nationalist Party, suggests that there is something in the decision-making matrix of separatist nationalist parties/groups that leads to their having much more positive views on the European Union, counter to those that we might expect from similarly positioned parties in the domestic power structure or more right-wing nationalist parties.

In fact, examining the potential impacts that the European Union might have on these nationalist goals provides a compelling explanation for the divergence in support
for further integration. As previously mentioned, the nationalist goal of right wing parties like the French National Front is to protect what they define as the French in-group from foreign influences. Thus, the National Front supports, strict immigration policies and a homogenous French national identity. For instance, a recently elected mayor from the National Front made headlines when he announced that the public employees under his control would only speak French (Daley 2014). Using Topaloff’s model, we would expect that the National Front’s position as a marginal party means that they would derive benefits from adopting a hard-line Euroskeptic perspective in order to undermine the mainstream parties that dominate the central government. This is consistent with the National Front’s position on the EU; as it became clear that the EU would not, in fact, constrain the mainstream parties, but would empower them further, the National Front adopted a hard-line Euroskeptic stance.

The argument here, however, is that the National Front also has nationalist goals that they must also consider. In this case, the overriding goal is to maintain the boundary between the French in-group and the non-French out-group. Certain aspects of the European Union, however, hinder the pursuit of this goal by, for instance, lowering barriers to immigration and by extending its reach into more competences. This would also help explain why the National Front moved from supporting the European Community to a hard-line Euroskeptic stance; the European Community was a fundamentally different organization with a much more limited impact on the state and
consequently, on right-wing nationalist goals, than the modern European Union. Thus, while it is certainly true that the National Front adopted Euroskepticism when it became clear that the EU was privileging mainstream parties, they also adopted Euroskepticism when it became clear that the EU would make it more difficult to pursue the kinds of policies necessary to achieving their nationalist goals.

Likewise, considering how the European Union impacts the particular goals of separatist nationalist movements helps explain why the Basque PNV shifted its stance on European integration from the 1980s to the present. The Spanish Constitution and the Basque Statue of Autonomy had just been ratified when Spain joined the European Community. At that time, it was unclear how Spanish membership in the organization would impact the competences that the regions were granted within the Spanish constitution. A number of policy competences that had been newly granted to the regions were suddenly transferred by the central government to the EC; as a result, the transfer of power to the Autonomous Communities was pre-empted and the central government retained de facto power over competences that it was now co-deciding with the EC (Bengoetxea 2005: 52). Thus, Basque nationalist elites viewed the European Community as a threat to the gains that they had made toward their ultimate goal of autonomy.

Much like it did with the National Front, the particular nature of the European Union has perhaps altered the calculations of separatist nationalist elites. First, while the
European Union does privilege mainstream parties and tends to maintain the status quo, it does offer some potential benefits specifically to separatist nationalist elites. The European Union provides not just an alternate arena via which nationalists can continue to pursue their goals, but it may also lower the costs of separatism by providing a context in which a new state is viable. Such a calculation was evident in the discourse of the recent Scottish independence referendum. In the run-up to the vote, supporters of Scottish independence allayed concerns about the future of an independent Scottish state by arguing that the benefits that would accrue to a Scottish state as part of the EU would not only be enough to sustain it, they would also be much greater than those it would stand to receive by remaining part of the United Kingdom. Though the referendum was ultimately unsuccessful, the discourse surrounding the vote supports the assertion that the EU is not only changing elite cost-benefit calculations in regard to their support for further integration, but also that separatist elites in particular are perceiving that the Union is capable of providing significant benefits to them in pursuit of their goals.

Moreover, the manner in which the Spanish government responded to the referendum demonstrated that they were aware of similar strategic calculations being made by Basque and Catalan nationalist elites. It should not be surprising that Mariano Rajoy, the leader of the Partido Popular and current Spanish Prime Minister was critical of the Scottish referendum; the central government in Spain feared that a successful referendum would stoke the separatist sentiments within Spain (Hamilos 2013). This fear
was well-founded, as both groups have expressed admiration and support for the Scottish cause and have indicated their desire for a similar referendum in their respective autonomous communities (Gyldenkerne 2014a). The Partido Popular has maintained that such a referendum would be in direct violation of the Spanish constitution (Gyldenkerne 2014b). However, in 2013, Rajoy also argued that even if the referendum was successful, an independent Scotland would never be allowed to be a part of the European Union (Hamilos 2013). This comment was largely understood as a warning to both Scottish nationalists as well as to Basque and Catalan nationalists and was clearly designed to undercut nationalist expectations that continued EU membership would lessen the costs of independence.68

What then can we make of the apparent incongruence between EU support of the status quo and privileging of mainstream parties and separatist support for the organization? Why do separatist elites persist in support for further integration when further integration has not yet appeared to pay off? Though the following is largely

68 This situation is ongoing. The Catalan Parliament did actually schedule a similar, though non-binding, referendum on independence from Spain to be held on November 9, 2014. The Partido Popular pressed the issue in the Spanish Supreme Court, which has ordered the Catalans to suspend their plans until it could consider the constitutionality of such a measure; such a ruling could take months. The response of the Catalans has been defiant. Artur Mas i Gavarró, the President of the Generalitat de Catalunya, has vowed to press on with an ‘informal’ vote that he is calling a “consultation of citizens” in the hopes of circumventing the Supreme Court’s order (BBC News 2014).
speculative, I would argue that there are at least three possible factors at play here. First, in domestic situations where the nationalist group has repeatedly found its demands blocked by the central government, the outlet that the European Union provides — and the possibility of future gains — is enough to sustain continued support for integration. In the Spanish case, the EU has provided at least some alternative platform for Basque elites via regional bodies. At least for now, it appears that the Basques prefer that platform to none at all. Second, it is possible that nationalist elites are using pro-European views in order to gain support and sympathy for their cause in the hopes that those sentiments can be converted into nationalist-friendly policies at the EU level. The general expectation here is that the EU is much likelier to respond positively to nationalist groups if those groups are generally supportive of the organization. Finally, like the looming shadow of the future in Topaloff’s (2012) analysis, perhaps separatist nationalist elites are planning for possible future in which they are an independent state that must work at the European level. If elites expect that they will one day constitute an independent member state, then it is likely that they are making the same calculation as mainstream parties by considering the difficulty of effectively wielding power with the mantle of Euroskepticism hanging around their shoulders.

Thus, this chapter has made several key points. First, it has argued that the European Union has constituted a second fundamental break in the political environment within which Basque and Spanish elites are operating. This fundamental break is due to
the impacts that the EU has had as an actor, as an arena and as a political issue. As an actor, EU membership constrains member state behavior by forcing states to adhere to certain guidelines as a condition of membership; the EU, then, limits the options that states have for pursuing their goals. This impact has only been amplified as integration has deepened and the EU has extended its reach into further policy competences. As an arena, the EU has provided an alternative venue for both regime elites and sub-state regional elites to pursue their goals, which are often primarily domestic in nature. Finally, as a result of its impact as both an actor and an arena, the EU has also become an issue that political elites have exploited to their advantage by adopting stances on further integration that are strategically calculated to improve their own position and undermine their competitors. Thus, the European Union is not only capable of reordering elite preferences, it already has.

Second, in the time period following Spanish accession to the European Union, it was demonstrated that Basque nationalist elites have adopted an increasingly positive stance on the European Union and have become staunchly supportive of further integration. This support is evident, not only in the actions of Basque nationalist political parties like the PNV, but also in overwhelmingly positive textbook representations of the EU. Moreover, these textbooks are beginning to position Basque identity as compatible with European identity. This is marked deviation from previous articulations of Basque identity, which defined the in-group as exclusive, especially vis-à-vis other out-groups.
Thus, while the Basque identity remains incompatible with Spanish identity and the in-group closed to ‘Spanishness’, Basque national elites have opened the in-group to ‘Europeanness’.

It was argued that both the nationalists’ positive stance on the EU and its positioning of the Basque nationalist identity as compatible with European identity are a result of separatist nationalist strategic calculations. Basque nationalists have been blocked from further pursuing their long term goal of securing maximal autonomy at the domestic level by the Spanish central government. Thus, not only do Basque nationalists perceive the EU as providing an alternative arena via which they can continue to pursue these goals, they also perceive the EU as potentially lessening the costs of eventual independence. Adopting a positive stance on the European Union is much likelier to pay nationalist dividends down the road than alternative courses of action.
Chapter 7: Conclusion

At its core, this research has focused upon examining the process of decision-making in identity construction. Using the case of Basque nationalist elites in Spain, it has argued that the process via which identities emerge and change is based upon rational calculations; nationalist elites articulate identities with particular goals in mind. Ideally, the markers they choose to objectify, in order to form the boundary between the in-group they are attempting to create and the out-group, are selected in such a way that maximized those goals. This work has argued that cases of identity shift, as is observed in the Basque case during the Franco regime, the rearticulation must be attributable to either a change in the composition of the elite articulating the identity or the order of their preferences. When the composition of the elite remains static, as it did in the Basque case, the likely source of the change in articulation is a change in elite preferences. Here, it is argued that structural changes inherent in the Franco regime impacted elite preferences in such a way that it triggered Basque elites to reconsider the markers used for boundary-formation. The race and religion markers that had previously been used in order to delineate the boundary between the Basque in-group and the Spanish out-group no longer maximized elite interests; thus, the elite emphasized a linguistic marker instead.

Moreover, there is evidence supporting the notion that a second rearticulation has been triggered in the post-European Union era. The evidence suggests that the Basque
articulation, while remaining very exclusive vis-à-vis Spaniards, is increasingly being positioned as compatible with a sense of Europeanness. It was argued that this rearticulation is due to certain strategic advantages that Basque nationalists perceive and anticipate from the EU; because of these calculations, Basque nationalists have not only adopted a supportive stance on the EU and further integration, they have also begun to disseminate that stance as part of their nationalist program.

Thus, this work is situated at the juncture of the literature on nationalism, Basque/Spanish area studies and the European Union. It has drawn on the related theories, methods and research inherent within these pools of literature and in many ways, has inserted itself into the debates that animate them. In some respects, this investigation makes small contributions to each of these groupings of literature by providing support for existing theories. At the same time, it raises further questions and provides new avenues for fruitful research.

**The Basque Case in the Context of the Literature on National Identity**

One of the most basic issues that this investigation tackles is the nature of nations and their related national identities. It inserts itself into academic debate which centers on two major perspectives: primordialism and constructivism. Each school of thought has a particular perspective on the nature of identity, the origin of identity content and
expectations for how that content might evolve. Primordialism views nations as naturally occurring and their identities as ancient bonds, which have survived across time and space. In this view, national identities are fundamental, innate and thus, impervious to change; the content of identity and its constituent markers are therefore intrinsic. Constructivist scholarship, however, regards identities as constructed, contingent and relatively modern phenomena. This conceptualization of identity as conditional allows for and even anticipates identity change where the constituent markers shift over time, emphasizing different traits at different times.

The Basque case, of course, defies primordialist thinking. A widely shared Basque national identity did not exist until the late 19th century, when Sabino Arana articulated one based upon racial and religious markers. Even then, it was not necessarily the only Basque national identity that existed at that time; it just happened to be the one that became hegemonic. Moreover, the content of Basque national identity has shifted over time. By the 1950s and 1960s, the racial and religious markers that were privileged in Arana’s conception of Basque identity were deemphasized and discarded in favor of a linguistic marker. Thus, the trajectory of Basque identity provides support for the constructivist school of thought.

One of the major challenges for the constructivist view of national identity, however, is to fully illuminate the process by which identities come into being. If they are
constructed and contingent, how are they constructed and under what circumstances do they change? This investigation has provided possible explanations to these questions by focusing on elite decision-making processes. For constructivist scholars, elites are the most likely engineers of national identities, due to their status, their education and access to necessary tools that their societal positions afford them. In other words, elites are the only group in society which has the means to articulate a coherent identity and sell it to a population on a wide scale. Elements of the Basque case reinforce and underscore the importance of elites for this process. In fact, it is rare that a single figure plays such a pivotal role in national identity articulation and in driving a nationalist movement that did not previously exist. Yet, in the Basque case, Sabino Arana played such a significant role that he is known as the Father of Basque Nationalism. Without Arana’s efforts to delineate an in-group and to engineer the necessary symbols, Basque national identity might not have become such a politically volatile force. At the very least, the Basque and Spanish relationship might be very different. The role of Arana in Basque identity underscores the degree to which elites are involved in the process of national identity construction and provides support for the continued examination of their role in the process.

This investigation also demonstrates the usefulness of the rational choice paradigm for studying the process by which elites construct national identities. Currently, this paradigm is the least often employed by studies of national identity. Some scholars
reject it based on the erroneous presumption that national identities are inherently irrational. Others implicitly employ its assumptions, bringing in consideration of elite interests, but never explicitly lay out the theoretical framework guiding their work.

However, it is the contention of this study that the rational choice paradigm provides a compelling explanation for national identity articulation and identity change. This is particularly true if, like Barreto, we expand our understanding of elite interests beyond strictly material considerations. Nationalist elites articulate national identities in order to create social and cultural in-groups that can provide a vehicle for claims of self-determination. Thus, the most effective markers maximize the boundary between the in-group and out-group while also minimizing within group differences. At the same time, nationalist elites are also concerned with maintaining status, an objective which is actually two-fold. Elites are trying to ensure that the in-group’s status is maintained or elevated vis-à-vis a target out-group while at the same time, cementing their own status at the top of the in-group hierarchy.

However, the Basque case cautions us against an insistence upon an artificially orthodox and straightforward application of rational choice principles without taking other contextual factors into account. As Tesebelis’s work on nested games reminds us, nationalist elites are pursuing multiple goals and interacting in multiple arenas. Thus, scholars may erroneously focus on one particular arena or one particular goal,
overlooking the fact that the concern of the elite in question is actually concentrated elsewhere. Moreover, not all goals are completely compatible such that the maximization of one goal might entail unacceptable costs for the pursuit of a different goal. Elites are forced to balance the costs and benefits of various courses of action for all of their interests.

Were we to simply examine, for instance, Sabino Arana’s selection of race and religion as markers of Basque identity, neither of which effectively maximized the boundary between Basques and Spaniards, we might be misled that the selection was irrational. This conclusion, however, fails to take into account that selecting the boundary marker that would have unquestionably maximized the boundary between Basques and Spaniards — language — would have also excluded most of the individuals that Arana was targeting for in-group membership and identity adoption. Moreover, Arana himself would have been excluded from the in-group. Thus, the goal of maximizing the group boundary would have entailed unacceptably high costs to Arana’s other goal of creating an in-group in the first place.

Contextual factors were also crucial in understanding one of the central puzzles of this investigation: why Basque nationalist elites began emphasizing language as a defining marker of Basque national identity in the 1950s when the costs associated with objectifying Euskara as a defining marker of ‘Basqueness’ had not lessened or changed
very much since the late 19th century. The language was still spoken by a very small percentage of the population, while being derided as archaic and unfit for use in a modern society. Yet, in the 1950s, Euskara was suddenly the defining marker of Basque national identity. In the rational choice model, there are only two major sources of identity change: either the composition of the elite articulating the identity changed or elite goals were re-ordered. In the Basque case, the composition of the elite had not changed significantly or in any way that would explain such a shift. By excluding this as a source of change in the model, attention was turned to elite goals. Wood’s study of elite support for democratization in El Salvador and South Africa provided a sound theoretical basis for how elite goals might change: a structural change in either the domestic or international sphere (or possibly both) that triggered elites to reconsider their options, reorder their preferences and thus, arrive at a different decision.

In the Basque case, the structural change was traced to the Franco regime. Not only was the regime articulating a competing identity that undermined the claims of nationalist elites by, for instance, co-opting the Catholic religious marker, but it was also severely repressing Basque culture. Thus, Basque elites reordered their preferences, deciding to maximize the boundary between the Basque in-group and the Spanish out-group by emphasizing Euskara in order to reestablish the validity of their claim for autonomy. This decision also had the added benefit of encouraging the protection of a cultural element that Franco was actively repressing. To be sure, language revival became
a cornerstone of Basque nationalist efforts; these efforts have carried over even to the present day.

Consequently, while this investigation provides support for the usefulness of the rational choice framework it also cautions against overly parsimonious or rigid models. National identity construction is a dynamic process that responds to and interacts with other identities as well as contextual factors. Failure to take these factors into account may overlook major explanatory factors in elite decision-making or may lead to erroneous appraisals of elite behavior.

Methodologically, one of the major challenges facing studies of national identity is measurement. Survey instruments have come a long way in effectively measuring identity on the individual level by moving away from conceptualizing identity as mutually exclusive categories of ascription. Increasingly, they recognize that individuals can adopt multiple identities, nesting them within one another and emphasizing different identities within different contexts. The same advances have not been made in measuring the content of the elite-preferred version of national identity. While elite surveys or interviews are one possible option, the politics of nationalist movements, particularly where they are part of a volatile domestic political environment, can be such that elites are not willing to speak openly or honestly on the topic. Archival research and content
analyses of speeches, writings, party manifestos and the discourse surrounding identity within a particular national context is the second, and probably most dominant, method.

This study suggests that school textbooks can provide an additional method of collecting data on elite articulations national identity. As Chapter 5 demonstrated, school textbooks in both the Franco era and the post-democratic era accurately reflected the prevailing articulations of identity that the Franco regime and the Basque nationalist elite were articulating. Moreover, textbooks used in primary schools provide the added benefit of containing a simplified, uncomplicated version of identity; because the markers of identity are very clearly presented to children, these textbooks are an excellent resource for researchers who are attempting to tease out the content of national identity.

**Basque Area Studies Literature**

There is a tendency within the area studies literature on the Basque to characterize the case as somehow unique and incomparable to other cases. Such a view exploits what one might argue are unique cultural or phenotypical traits and is underscored by the fact that the Basque case, regardless of the topic, is often studied in isolation. Indeed, area studies literatures are ripe with “exceptionalist” assumptions. This study challenges such perspectives.
First, situating the case within a rational choice theoretical framework undermines arguments that the Basque case is unique. Using generalizable theories of elite behavior, this study demonstrated that Basque nationalist elites are engaging in the same kind of nationalist mythmaking in which nationalist elites elsewhere have engaged. Such a perspective has been supported by evidence of similar efforts in other cases. While it may be possible to argue that Basque elites began with advantageous cultural elements that made it a bit easier to set Basques apart — for instance, a mysterious language arguably unrelated to other existing languages and fueros that supported arguments for the historical independence of Basques — it must also be acknowledged that Basque elites needed to engineer sources of support for their preferred version of identity just as other nationalist elites. For instance, a lot of effort was put into language revival in order to make Euskara a viable marker of identity in the long-term.

Second, by demonstrating how the Basque national identity has historically interacted with the Spanish national identity, this study has called into question the utility of studying the Basque case in isolation. No identity is created in a vacuum, as the creation of an in-group requires a corresponding out-group. In the Basque case, this extends a bit further because the Basque national identity is as much about being Basque as it is about not being Spanish. As a result, the two identities interact and respond to one another; it is difficult to have a full understanding of one identity without incorporating the other.
Basque National Identity and the European Union

In arguing that the European Union constituted a second fundamental break in the political context within which Basque elites were operating, thus triggering a second re-articulation of identity, this study underscores the sense that the European Union has had a significant impact upon the domestic politics of its member states. This impact is three-fold and is linked to three different dimensions of the EU as an organization. First, as an actor, the EU constrains state behavior by creating new rules which states must follow as a condition of entrance and continued good standing in the organization. Second, the EU provides a new venue for elites within member states to continue pursuing their claims, even when their goals are largely related to their particular domestic context. In both of these dimensions, the EU is an active participant in the changes that are being observed; it is literally driving the change. The third dimension, which is certainly derived from the first two, conceptualizes the EU as an idea or an object that is itself exploited by member state elites to serve their own ends. Such a view is incorporated by Topaloff’s study on Euroskepticism in political parties; here, the EU as a political issue — in the form of pro- or anti-EU sentiment or support for further integration — is used to garner votes, undermine political enemies and reinforce political power. Together, these three dimensions suggest that the EU is not only capable of altering domestic elite preferences,
but that it is already doing so. Thus, this study argued that the European Union constituted a structural break that was similar to the one that was introduced by the Franco regime.

Given the impact that the structural break of the Franco regime had on Basque national identity articulation, one of the central questions of Chapter 6 is whether the structural break of the European Union has also impacted Basque national identity articulation and if so, how? Asking this question, in and of itself, presumes that supranational organizations like the European Union are solidarity- and attachment-forming entities. If they were not, they would be unlikely to have an impact on identity at all. This is not an uncontroversial assertion. Study after study has argued that there is no such thing as a European identity and Eurobarometer results on EU identity questions do not dispel this view. However, these studies have only examined whether a sense of European identity has been incorporated into identity constructs by individual citizens. In other words, what previous studies of European identity have determined is that citizens have not yet adopted such an identity alongside their other group identities.

The contention of this investigation, however, is that focusing on whether the masses are adopting a sense of European identity starts at the wrong end of the identity equation. It is certainly true that the targets of the identity articulating efforts of nationalist elites do not necessarily have to adopt the version of identity that elites are
trying to disseminate and thus, play a crucial role in determining whether and which version of a national identity becomes hegemonic. At the same time, it is elites who are the driving forces of identity construction. If we want to examine whether the European Union is spawning a sense of ‘Europeanness’, we should examine whether elites are articulating such an identity or incorporating it into existing identities.

The evidence presented here suggests that Basque elites are in fact incorporating a sense of European identity into their national identity articulation. Textbooks have demonstrated not just a positive stance on the EU as an organization and support for further integration, but they have also exhibited an effort to link the Basque national group to a larger European national group. This move exhibits a sharp departure from previous Basque identity articulations, which were largely exclusive and positioned as incompatible with other identities. The exceptional nature of this deviation is underscored when we examine Basque identity vis-à-vis Spaniards, where Basque national identity continues to maintain an impermeable boundary between two groups. Thus, Basque national identity is considered completely incompatible with Spanish identity, but shows signs that it is receptive to a European identity.

Like other aspects of national identity, we have demonstrated that this openness to European identity is a strategic calculation on Basque elites. In the same way that political parties manipulate their stance on European integration in order to undermine
competing electoral elites and better position themselves to achieve electoral goals, this study has suggested that Basque national elites have manipulated their national identity articulation in order to both undermine competing national elites and better position themselves to achieve their nationalist goals. Incorporating a sense of Europeanness into their national identity is a logical extension of their support for further integration: both are calculated attempts to circumvent the central government and pursue their nationalist goals via the EU.

In doing so, this investigation established preliminary expectations for how separatist nationalist elites might approach the European Union. The evidence from Spain’s two separatist nationalist groups and Scottish separatist nationalists supports this perspective: separatist nationalists are expected to have positive views on the European Union and thus, support further integration because the EU constrains central governments, provides regional elites with a platform for their views as well as a venue that provides an end-run around central government efforts to block them from pursuing further autonomy, and most important, is perceived by elites as potentially lessening the cost of an eventual bid for independence. Until a region within the EU does achieve its separatist goals, nationalists cannot know whether this gamble will actually pan out; but the possibility and lack of alternative options keep this strategy alive.
For states with separatist movements, this conclusion will be unsettling, largely because it suggests there is not yet any end in sight for separatist movements in Europe. Despite the fact that 9/11 dramatically raised the costs of pursuing separatism through violent methods, the European Union offers a plausible and attractive alternative for continuing to pursue those goals through political methods. For states like Spain with multiple separatist movements, the stakes are especially high, as one successful campaign for independence can open the door to others. On November 9, the Catalan Parliament plans to hold what they are calling a ‘consultation’ on declaring independence from Spain. For its part, Spain has vowed to block the vote as a violation of the Spanish Constitution. The Catalans, thus far, have not demonstrated any sign of abandoning their plan. Whether the vote is actually held, its outcome and the aftermath will provide us a fuller picture of where separatist nationalism may be headed within the context of the European Union.

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69 Again, this semantic contortionism is an effort to circumvent an order by the Spanish Supreme Court preventing a referendum from being held until the Court could rule upon its constitutionality. The Catalan Parliament has argued that this ‘consultation’ is not actually a vote or referendum because it will be conducted by volunteers, and is therefore not covered by the Supreme Court’s order (BBC News 2014).
Future Research

This investigation has raised a number of questions that have pointed out possible paths for future research. The most obvious path for further research is to apply the models used to study the Basque case to another case of separatist national identity in order to further refine the theoretical underpinnings of this study. The Catalan case in particular might prove to be fruitful given that it is operating in a similar context to the Basque case. An alternative case could be the United Kingdom, with a particular focus on Scottish national elites.

Given that Basque and Spanish identity have been demonstrated to be interconnected and responsive to one another, one possible direction is to examine how Spanish national identity has responded to the changed political environment in the post-European environment. Such an investigation would paint a fuller picture of the European Union’s impact on the domestic environment from the perspective of central government elites.

Additionally, the manner in which Basque elites are strategically incorporating Europeanness into their national identity articulation raises questions of how Basque ingroup members are interpreting and internalizing the nationalist message. Have individuals begun to show signs that they are accepting this message? If so, that could
mean that a European identity may still be coming in the future. If not, what does that mean for the current strategy of the nationalist project?

Ultimately, all political phenomena, including national identities, are complex and multi-faceted. As a result, any scholarship on national identity must accept that it is at best, capable of explaining only a sliver of that phenomenon; no study, no matter how well-crafted, is definitive. At the same time, those explanations of small portions of phenomena are crucial to building larger-scale explanations and general theories. It is the hope of this researcher that this study and the questions that it has raised provide the necessary building blocks for a fuller understanding of nations and national identity.
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