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The Belligerent Basques and the Composed Catalans: An Analysis of Violence in Basque Country and Catalonia

by Deborah Sutton

Introduction

In October 2013, the European Court of Human Rights ordered Spain to free a Basque separatist militant, ruling that Spain had illegally extended her detention. The woman, Inés del Rio, was incarcerated in 1989 for her involvement in twenty-three ETA assassinations and bombings in Madrid. She was due for release in 2008, but Spain continued to detain her, as they have dozens other ETA terrorists (Fotheringham 2013). The court declared that retrospective changes in her sentence violated her human rights. Yet Spain's minister of justice justified her extended sentence, claiming it was unfair that "a person who has committed one murder suffers the same penal consequences as somebody who has committed twenty" (Fotheringham 2013). This is just one example of the ongoing conflict between Basque Country and Spain. Despite a ceasefire since 2011 and proclaimed peace between the Basque state and its Spanish mother, dissatisfaction persists and national liberation movements continue.

The motto of the violent Basque nationalist movement, Euskadi Ta Askatasuna or ETA, is *Bietan jarrai* or "Keep up on both." This statement refers to the two figures in its national symbol: the snake, which represents politics, and the axe, which represents armed struggle. The motto reminds Basque nationalists that in order to gain the independence they desire, they must straddle both politics and militancy. Nationalism in Catalonia is less aggressive. The Catalan Solidarity for Independence is an umbrella election coalition for six political parties that support Catalan independence. Instead of promoting belligerence, their motto positively proclaims "We make independence possible!" The two mottos indicate a stark difference in the strategies of Basque and Catalan nationalists.

Various groups in Spain have had differing levels of separatist movements. Francisco Franco's totalitarian, nationalistic, oppressive regime used intimidation to keep those movements at bay. For example, "Public speaking of anything but Spanish was discouraged under the slogan '*une bandera, una patria, una lengua*'" (Greene 2012). However, once Franco's regime fell, the separatist movements returned more resolute than before. Since the fall of Franco's regime, radical reformist groups within the states of Andalusia, Catalonia, Basque, and Galicia have sought further autonomy within the Spanish government and sometimes complete secession from the motherland. In order to meet these states' demands, Spain has increasingly devolved since 1975 to give each Spanish state equal rights in the federal government as well as wide legislative and executive autonomy within each state government. For some, however, it is still not enough.

My intention is to seek out what key differences exist between Basque Country and Catalonia that are mechanisms of violence in one area and peace in the other. Catalonia and Basque Country are two cases that are similar in having distinct identities and in their desire for separation. Both states claim a unique identity from Spain in their language, ethnicity, and culture. They have regional media, football teams, and iconography that reinforce an identity cleavage between themselves and greater Spain. Both regions experienced harsh repression of their individual identity during the Franco regime, which fueled widespread sympathy for the independence cause. In addition, Catalonia and Basque share similar geographic features. Both areas are tucked away in the Pyrenees Mountains, which allows cultural isolation and defines a distinct territory. However, the Basque separatist movements have turned to violence and terrorism in their fight for independence, while Catalonia has not. Discovering what mechanisms cause nationalistic violence is essential to preventing civil war and, in the worst cases, genocide. Although no two situations are alike, understanding what fuels violence in Basque Country may shed light on solving or forestalling other conflicts around the world. In order to identify these factors, I will first lay out the similar characteristics of Basque Country and Catalonia that define their identity. Then, I will outline the differences. I argue that the presence of a core city in Catalonia, the higher inter-intelligibility of the Catalan language to Spanish, and the higher levels of mixed association between Catalans and Spaniards has given Catalonia no need to resort to violence to promote their nationalist agenda.

Literature Review

Much research has been done on what provokes groups into conflict. And since the world, once round, is now flat as nations, ethnic groups, and cultures converge more than ever before, conflict is ubiquitous. "In an ethnically plural society, where freedom of expression is not curtailed, some conflict on identity-based cleavages is typically expected" (Varshney 2007, 278). However while conflict is commonplace,

it takes a certain recipe to turn that conflict violent. Scholars debate back and forth over the ingredients of violent conflict. Charles Taylor argues that a group's need for recognition fuels violence. A group seeks recognition to counter threats to its equality, its rights, its language, its culture, its identity. Taylor states explicitly, "The need [for recognition], it can be argued, is one of the driving forces behind nationalist movements in politics" (2005, 225). Inevitably, violence garners attention from the government, but the attention is likely to be unsatisfactory. Instead of gaining further civil rights, political representation, and/or autonomy, violence can lead to less freedom. The government retaliates against violence by initiating further group suppression. Thus, the age-old conflict between the authority and the masses perpetuates: "The complex dynamic between the forces of authority on the one hand, and the society over which it presides on the other, has been at work since time immemorial. Violence has always been a necessary part of the contestation over the legitimacy of that authority" (Miller 2013, 10). Also, violent conflict is often a result of political contention between groups: "Minorities and majorities increasingly clash over such issues as language rights, regional autonomy, political representation, education curriculum, land claims, immigration and naturalization policy, even national symbols" (Kymlicka 1995, 1).

One scholar disregards the disputation over the ingredients of violent conflict and instead focuses on the heat of the recipe. A mixture of group dissatisfaction factors do not necessarily lead to violence, Petersen argues, until a "spark" sets off the movement. In his research, he posits that one of four emotions—fear, hatred, resentment, and rage—or a combination of the four spark violence. He explains, "While identities are multiple and malleable, identities can crystallize when one is in grasp of a powerful emotion" (Petersen 2002, 3). In other words, emotion explains *how* a general discontent consolidates and mobilizes into a movement. "Each emotion-based narrative provides an explanation of how, in the face of social complexity and fluidity, such a brutal simplicity comes to frame outlooks and motive action. Emotion can coordinate motivations and effectively point a legion of individuals in one particular direction" (Petersen 2002, 3–4).

In my opinion, the ingredients of violent conflict vary depending on situation. The forces behind violent conflict are as complex as the communities in which it sprouts. In this paper, I propose an argument that explains the violence in one nation of Spain and not in the other. It is not a general formula for all nationalist movements.

Similarities

Ethnolinguistic Identity and Nationalism

Nationalism began to sweep across Europe during the nineteenth century. Peter Alter terms this period "*Risorgimento* nationalism," referring to the influence of Italy's nationalistic unification on other nationalistic movements. These campaigns across Europe were also inspired by the liberal ideologies spawned by the French Revolution

of 1789. The people in Europe not only sought political unity through representation but also a unity of culture. On the other hand, Europe's balkanization during the twentieth century was based on identity, specifically an ethnolinguistic identity. Political states were subsequently formed around those ethnolinguistic groups.

Various autocratic leaders have used pathological and patriotic rhetoric, expressing a common ethnic and linguistic identity, to mobilize a group of people toward unification. For example, Joseph Stalin, in an essay on nationalism, claims that "a common language is one of the characteristic features of a nation" (Franklin 1973). Ho Chi Minh appealed to the familial connectedness of the Vietnamese people: "We have the same ancestors, we are of the same family, we are all brothers and sisters. . . . No one can divide the children of the same family" (in Connor 2002, 24). Slobodan Milosevic also strained the common ancestral identity of all Serbian people when rallying for Serbian independence: "This is your land. These are your houses. Your meadows and gardens. Your memories. You shouldn't abandon your land just because it's difficult to live, because you are pressured by injustice and degradation. Otherwise your ancestors would be defiled and descendants disappointed" (in Connor 2002, 25). These dictators appealed to the common ethnic identity of their people for support; and language defines ethnicity.

David Laitin argues that language is as key to the process of state formation as are political, economic, or demographic factors (1989). And Rokkan and Urwin argue that while there are many expressions of identity, language "is the most pervasive and obvious stigma of distinction" (1982). The phenomenon of language as the nucleus to state building can be attributed to the rise of literacy rates, increased education for all classes, print media in local vernaculars, and the decline in the use of Latin. In other words, colloquial languages began to be important in identifying a person's origin, family, and ethnicity. Peter Alter describes how language invoked violence among linguistic groups: "Linguistic movements [became] the core of a radical nationalism disposed to the use of violence, particularly where the language of the people or a minority was subject to discrimination by a dominant 'official language'" (1985, 43). Language creates cleavages between groups and can pose as rigid challenges to state authority.

In Basque Country, its spoken language is a language isolate, meaning it is genealogically unrelated to any other language in the world and its origin probably dates back to the Neolithic Era. The Basque language has no modern linguistic sisters. While most Basque-speakers are bilingual in Spanish and Basque, their ancient language is taught and promoted in school and remains a source of cultural pride. On the other hand, Catalan is a romance language, more similar to French than Spanish. However, Catalans exhibit the same pride in their unique language as the Basques. Catalonia has its own Catalan-language television shows, radio stations, newspapers,

and educational curriculum. In fact, there is a higher level of relative proficiency in Catalan than in Basque.

Culture and Nationalism

Again, ethnolinguistic identity is only one building block in the construction of a national identity. There is also culture. Lambert explains, "The nuclei around which a group's identity is crystallized is based on a shared language, origins, character and culture, or common subordination to a given state's power" (1964, 52). We have discussed the significance of language above, but the boundaries of states also encompass cultural realms. Here we define culture as "a term which refers both to the material production (artifacts) and to the symbolic production (the aesthetic)" (Hayward 1993, 92). Thus, we analyze the media (film, television, radio) and the iconography in Basque Country and Catalonia and how these influence their national pride.

In his famous work *Imagined Communities* Benedict Anderson attributes the epidemic of nationalism to innovations in communication, specifically print media (1983). Through print communication people are able to relate with one another and mobilize for common causes, thus communities are born. Communication is a cause of nation building (Yrungaray 2003, 2). Anderson's theory is compelling, but it fails to keep up with modern times. His theory fails to incorporate the impact of modern media on nationalism. No longer is print media the sole medium for communication. Technology has expanded communication to television, film, and Internet; therefore, technology has expanded nationalism. "There can be no question that better communication, improved by new modes of transport, innovations in news transmission, higher standards of literacy, the expansion of the press and so forth, provides a crucial environment for the spread of a national consciousness through a given population" (Alter 1985, 55).

For a tiny nation, Basque Country has a proud national cinema. The film industry in Basque Country did not take off until after Franco's death in 1975. Prior to the end of Franco's dictatorship, the film industry in Basque Country was limited to private, illegal clubs where films were viewed, politics discussed, and Basque spoken—all illegal actions. Many films from that early illicit period have an obvious pro-separatism/pro-ETA political bias. However, the Basque cinema exploded in the 1970s when the first Basque provincial government decided to allocate 5 percent of its regional budget to the local film industry. Unsurprisingly, a political dialogue continued to permeate Basque national cinema. Film has been, and always will be, a means to disperse a political agenda. Films like the *Spirit of the Beehive*, *Julio Medem*, and *Obaba* wrap subtle, or not-so-subtle, political sentiments into their stories.

Catalan cinema is arguably just as revered as Basque cinema, and, like Basque cinema, it often aims to leave a political imprint on its audience. Catalonia is home to its own annual film festivals and Catalan films are viewed and praised at film

festivals around the world. As in Basque Country, Francoist repression managed to galvanize Catalan nationalist pride and that pride presented itself in the film industry (Jordan and Mogran-Tamosunas 1998, 158). Only a few months after Franco's death, "more than seventy film professionals joined forces and set up the Institut de Cinema Catala (ICC) (Jordan and Mogran-Tamosunas 1998, 159). Here a forum for defining Catalan cinema was assembled and the new Catalan Cinema was born. Specific purposes of Catalan films as outlined by the ICC are to defend and normalize the Catalan language and engage film "in the struggle for democracy and political autonomy" (Jordan and Mogran-Tamosunas 1998, 159). Unabashedly, Catalan cinema was earmarked for nationalistic intentions. Whether nationalism fueled the cinema or whether the cinema fueled nationalism is unknown, but surely the consumption of national cinema instilled a national identity on the audience in Basque Country and Catalonia.

In addition to national cinema, both Basque Country and Catalonia have their own television and radio stations that are broadcast locally in their respective vernacular. Thus, Basques and Catalans are not forced to consume only Spanish media. Instead, they can opt to absorb their nation's media. I argue that national media reinforces the social cleavage between the in-group and out-group. Peter Alter explains how the media unites a group; he says that through media exposure "people become conscious of the commonalities that further social integration" (1985, 57).

Another way to stimulate a group of people into a nation is through the use of iconography. Iconography may be symbols, such as flags, banners, songs, and colors, or it may be people or institutions, such as national heroes, historical figures, celebrities, football teams, etc. Both regions have used icons and symbols to promote a national identity. The most important way to portray a sense of cultural identity is through symbols (Assmann 1998, 125). Basque Country and Catalonia have their own national flag, anthem, and football teams. The importance of icons in channeling patriotic feelings is explored in Dallas Hulseley's dissertation on the iconography of American nationalism. Whether they are visual or audible, national icons "inspire faith, devotion, and obedience to nationalist ideal" (2005, 4). Benedict Anderson also makes claims about how icons, especially icons in the media, help to enforce "imagined communities" (1983, 69). Although identity is posed as "imagined," because all members of the community will never know each other, all members still feel a tangible belonging to the larger group.

Economic Strength and Nationalism

Spain is an economic embarrassment for the European Union. Spain, Portugal, Italy, Ireland, and Greece are the weak links in the European Union's plan to become an economic powerhouse in today's world market. Spain has been in a deep recession since the credit crisis of 2008. In 2013, its current unemployment rate was 27.2 percent,

and its youth unemployment was 57.2 percent—one of the highest in Europe (Joy, Smith-Spark, Rebaza 2013). Its national debt crippled the country's banks from giving loans to investors and industry suffered. In the end, the European Union had to bail Spain out in order to avoid the country's complete default. However, two regions of Spain averted economic disaster: Basque Country and Catalonia. While the rest of Spain's economy deteriorated, Basque Country and Catalonia were booming.

Basque and Catalonia were both industrialized earlier than the rest of Spain. Both regions were rich in natural resources and had easy access for trade. Therefore, industrialization in Basque Country and Catalonia would inevitably yield high returns—and it did. Basque and Catalonia's income per capita and other indicators are higher than the rest of the country (Lilli 1994, 343). Basque Country has a booming steel manufacturing sector that makes trains for Amtrak all over the world (Fraye 2012). These two peripheral regions are far more economically advanced than the state's center: Madrid (Lilli 1994, 343). This is a major cause for Basque and Catalanian dissatisfaction with Spain. Basques and Catalans resent being the "milk cows" for the rest of Spain, sustaining the underperforming capital and impoverished south, i.e., Andalusia (Hechter 1974). Many nationalists perceive the respective states of Basque and Catalonia would be better off not belonging to the Spanish state (Lilli 1994, 344).

Francoism and Nationalism

When Franco came to power in 1939, he implemented a harsh nationalization policy across Spain. His regime "halted and even reversed the process of democratization, modernization, and decentralization" (Guibernau 2004, 34). He insisted the people of Spain adopt a mainstream Spanish identity. Other cultures, like Basque, Catalan, Galician, and Andalusian, were suppressed by his regime. Any other language besides Castilian Spanish was banned. His government, in the name of order and unity, controlled the media, education, social elite, and bureaucracy, creating a surveillance state (Guibernau 2004, 35). Franco attempted to culturally and linguistically homogenize the country. He promoted the Flamenco dance and bullfighting as Spanish symbols to smother out other cultural traditions.

An unintended consequence of group repression is a stronger identity. "The especially harsh treatments received by the Basques and Catalans encouraged the formation of a firm feeling of belonging in these communities—as a result the dichotomy between 'us' and 'them' was accentuated further" (Guibernau 2004, 36). The excessively repressive policies of Franco's regime unintentionally backfired. Instead of quelling national identities, they exacerbated them. In fact, if it had not been for Franco's authoritarian rule, nationalist and separatist movements in Basque Country and Catalonia may not exist today. His efforts to homogenize the region only encouraged the people to hold onto their language and their culture. Thus, Basque and Catalan separatism was born.

Theory

It is intriguing that two nations within Spain with similar aspirations for separation, autonomy, and/or independence pursue their goals through different means. Catalonia has used its powerful local government to pressure the Spanish parliament to grant them further autonomy. There is a referendum for Catalan independence currently lying in wait on the parliament's agenda. Their methods have been pragmatic and bureaucratic. In addition, every year Catalans commemorate the Catalan National Day—a day memorialized in remembrance of the day Catalan troops defeated invading Spanish troops in 1714—in a nationwide celebration that culminates in a human chain that runs along the border with France to Valencia. Hundreds of thousands of Catalans join hands every summer to show Madrid their unity and their defiance (Burgen and Hamilos 2013). Demonstrations like these in Catalonia are peaceful, yet powerful. On the other hand, Basque Country separatists often use temper-tantrum-like violence to get attention from the capital. The ETA alone has killed 952 people since 1968 and injured thousands of others in order to attract the Spanish government's attention; these acts are usually met with firm disapproval. The following are differences between the two nations and what I propose as causal variables of violent nationalism in Basque Country and peaceful nationalism in Catalonia.

Hypothesis 1: A Dominant and Influential Core City Leads to Less Violence

A core city is a populous metropolis in a state or nation that is the center of industry, government, and culture. The rest of the population sprawls away from the core city into suburbs, towns, and villages. Examples of core cities include Paris, London, and Berlin. A core city is vibrant, wealthy, attractive, and powerful; it is a cultural, political, and economic hub. Sometimes it is a state's capital, sometimes it is not.

If a national group has its own core city in the state, then it wields tangible power in federal negotiation. In a compare and contrast analysis of Malaysian and Indonesian nationalism, Peter Kreuzer explains that when there is equality and power-sharing at the elite level of government there is no recourse of violence to secure group rights (Kreuzer 2006, 44). Thus, as the core city inevitably has sway in the federal government, a separatist nation with a core city does not need violent demonstrations in order to achieve its goal. It has the innate ability to use the political process of the democratic system to enact change. Furthermore, the desires of the core city's population cannot be ignored by the rest of the government or else the government will be voted out. A core city with its large population gives the nationalist movement a priceless bargaining chip in the federal government. Varshney explains, "The conceptual issue is whether conflict is violent, or it is pursued within institutionalized channels of polity" (2007, 279).

A core city also supplies a central location for activists to galvanize and strategize and even use the groupthink phenomenon to its advantage. An unorganized chain of nationalist groups across the nation allows for the birth of extremism. The choice to turn to terrorism to promote a cause is selected by collective rationality, not irrationality (Crenshaw 1990, 8). "The group possesses collective preferences or values and selects terrorism as a course of action from a range of perceived alternatives" (Crenshaw 1990, 8). In other words, terrorism is considered against other methods of achieving political goals and selected to be the most efficacious. And in small groups, a dissenting voice against terrorism is immediately quelled. In addition, when the nationalist group is small and vulnerable, a loud and violent demonstration shows the most strength. When there is galvanization in a central location, the movement is already loud and does not need violence to be heard. In sum, disunity and disorganization among nationalists results in sporadic terrorist hubs spread out across the nation; whereas, a core city provides a central location for the group to meet and plan.

Hypothesis 2: Higher Levels of Intergroup Association Lead to Less Violence

One of Ashutosh Varshney's seminal works uses quantitative means to show civil society reduces violence if interaction crosscuts across ethnic lines. He argues that interethnic and intraethnic networks of civil engagement play opposite roles in ethnic conflict (Varshney 2001, 363). Interethnic mixing builds bridges and manages tension and is therefore an agent of peace (2001, 363). However, "if communities are organized only along intraethnic lines and the interconnections with other communities are very weak (or do not exist), ethnic violence is then quite likely." He also defines civil society into two types: associational forms of engagement and everyday forms of engagement. Associational forms of engagement are "business association, professional organizations, reading clubs, film clubs, sports clubs, NGOs, trade union, and cadre-based political parties" (2001, 363). Everyday forms of engagement consist of "simple, routine interactions of life, such as whether families from different communities visit each other, eat together regularly, jointly participate in festivals, and allow their children to play together in the neighborhood" (Varshney 2001, 363). Both types are necessary to crosscut cleavages and reduce conflict. Intergroup interaction leads to an acceptance of the other group by humanizing its individuals. Intergroup social mixing also leads to intergroup marriage which further increases the acceptance of the other group. One is less likely to hate and kill someone of another group when their aunt, cousin, or brother-in-law whom he or she loves is also a member of that group. Josh Gubler and Joel Selway use empirical evidence to make the claim that crosscutting cleavages reduce the likelihood of civil war (Gubler and Selway 2012). This theory can be extended to conflict in general: salient social cleavages that crosscut across ethnolinguistic identity reduce conflict among groups. For

example, it is less likely you will harm someone who may be the same ethnicity as your sister-in-law or yoga instructor. Crosscutting through intergroup association leads to less violence.

Hypothesis 3: Inter-Intelligibility of Language Leads to Less Violence

In addition, language divides society into linguistic factions that can further flame nationalism—although language is not necessarily a creator of nationalism (Edwards 2009, 211). This is because nationalist sentiment reflects a “complex sense of groupness” and identity of which language is a pivotal part (Edwards 2009, 211). Joshua Fishman further explains how language is a root of ethnonationalism: “A ‘true’ nation [is] an ethnic one based on primordial connections of kinship and descent, informed by an inherent collective spirit language expressed in its own language; consequently, a community that [does] not have its own language could not be an authentic nation” (Fishman 2012, 55). Identity, whether it be ethnic, religious, or linguistic suggests group “sameness” and also implies a sense of “otherness” for people outside the group. Furthermore, linguistic sameness entails group intelligibility and mutual communication; those who cannot communicate with the group are excluded. Therefore, intra-intelligibility within the group and inter-intelligibility among groups establishes a group bond that allows socialization and associational mixing and establishes an out-group that is estranged and met with “ignorance, intolerance, disdain and fear” from the in-group (Edwards 2009, 44). Thus, language is “a crucial element of what constitutes racial and ethnic identification” and in defining the in- and out-group (Fishman 2010, 12).

Finally, a nation with its own unique language is constantly at risk of losing its distinct language to the lingua franca of the motherland. In fact, many small languages are becoming extinct as larger languages, like English and Chinese, permeate the globe. However, the globalization and homogenizing of human society is strengthening local bonds, rather than diminishing them, argues Anthony Smith (Edwards 2009, 178). Thus, the push to preserve local culture is likely to “stimulate” ethnic solidarity and nationalist fervor (Edwards 2009, 178). For example, nations like Wales have passed initiatives to preserve its historical language. However, for a language to survive modernization it must have four components: standardization, autonomy, historical value, and vitality (Fishman 2010, xxiv). This is a feat that is difficult to achieve in today’s converging society. And because language and ethnicity are closely intertwined, a loss of language is seen as a loss of ethnic identity (Fishman 2010). Furthermore, when the foundation of nationalism is ethnically based this loss often turns unpleasant and violent (Edwards 2009, 178).

Differences and Results

These three hypotheses are tested through a similar research design. I have compared similarities between Basque and Catalan identity above and below I

analyze the differences in identity and situation that are causal factors of terrorism. It stands that after the similarities are eliminated, whatever differences remain are the cause of violent nationalism in Basque Country.

Core City

Basque Country and Catalonia are both peripheral states of Spain. Their location on the rims of the Spanish state and their shelter in the Pyrenees Mountains has nourished Basque and Catalan identity and secessionism. However, there is one stark difference between the nations of Basque Country and Catalonia: a core city. Catalonia has a core city—Barcelona—that is influential in Spanish politics, and Basque Country does not. Barcelona is Spain's second-largest city, with 1.6 million people, and it is a center of trade, industry, tourism, and play. It is the heart and soul of Catalonia, and its industrial sector makes it the brawn of Spain. On the other hand, Basque Country's largest city is Bilbao with 352,000 people. Already, Barcelona's large population gives Catalonia a token advantage in negotiating autonomy with Spain.

Barcelona, as a populous core city, wields enough clout to influence decision makers in Madrid for three reasons. First, it is an industrial hub, and the most profitable city in Spain. Without Barcelona, it could be argued that Spain's economy would collapse even further. Second, Barcelona, and the rest of Catalonia, is a tourist magnet; the city itself has a multi-million dollar tourism industry. Third, pro-Catalan-independence parties hold a greater amount of seats in the Spanish parliament than pro-Basque parties. In Spain's lower house, the Congress of Deputies, out of 350 seats, a combination of twelve seats are held by two Basque nationalist parties, a total of nineteen seats are held by two Catalan nationalist parties and the second-largest political party in Spain, the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, includes Catalan independence as part of its political platform and holds 110 seats in parliament. In a Senate of 266 senators, as of 2014, Basque nationalist parties hold six seats while Catalan nationalist parties hold twenty-six seats (Senado de Espana 2013). In government, Catalonia has the numbers and thus the pressure to enact change through the democratic system. The central government is unlikely to upset Catalonia when it depends greatly on the Catalans' public support to maintain legitimacy and authority. Spain is willing to cooperate and adhere to the demands of Catalonia because of its core city population and political power, while it is less willing to listen to the Basque country, because it has no collateral for talks.

Also, a core city allows galvanization of separatist efforts so activists do not resort to peripheral, violent demonstrations for attention. For example, a protest organized in Barcelona that disrupts traffic and repels tourism is likely to get the attention of Madrid—like the annual human chain of Catalan that stretches 400 kilometers across Catalonia to signify solidarity in the separatist cause, whereas scattered terrorism by Basque perpetrators is likely to be met with dismay and suppression by the central government. Another difference is that separatist movements in Catalonia are both

grassroots and treetops grown; the elite in Catalan are equally or more interested in separatism from Spain as much as the general public. The president of Catalonia firmly supports the cause and is expected to declare the next regional elections (in 2016) to be a plebiscite on independence; he expressed that the “vast majority of Catalans favor a referendum” of independence, and a stipulation in the constitution that bans state self-determination will not stop the force of the public (*The Economist* 2013). While both groups want further political autonomy, the separatist movements in Basque Country are more often limited to offshoot radical groups that are consistently ignored by the Spanish government and the Catalans have an organized base—in part due to a galvanizing core city—for its movement.

Intergroup Association

Basque Country has a history of isolation. The region resisted invasion and integration for centuries. Thus, their individuality flourished untainted by the outside world. On the other hand, Catalonia has frequently been a part of modern Spain and historic Spanish kingdoms and its rise in nationalism did not begin until the nineteenth century. Historically, Catalonia has had more association with the rest of Spain than Basque Country. I propose that intergroup association between the Catalans and the Spanish allows for trusting relationships to form and crosscut otherwise deep ethno-linguistic divides.

The Basques are an ancient group that settled in the Pyrenees Mountains over seven thousand years ago; predating Greek and Mesopotamian civilizations. Their homeland selection indicates a special foresight: The land is rich in natural resources like fish, game, wood, stone, and minerals, and its mountains isolate the land, protecting the early Basques from outside invasion. Even while Spain was conquered, united, Balkanized, and unified again, Basque Country remained untouched. It was never conquered by the Visigoths or Moors and successfully held off Spanish invaders time and time again. It was the last region of Spain to be visited by Christian missionaries. For centuries, hardly anyone immigrated to or emigrated from Basque Country. Thus, it maintained a unique identity—with a unique language—for centuries. However, Franco’s fanatical Spanishification of the Iberian Peninsula attempted to purge Basque identity from the region. Franco was ultimately unsuccessful. The Spanish language, culture, traditions, and religion seeped into the isolated Pyrenees, but instead of replacing Basque tradition, it made the Basque culture more resilient. The Basques resisted change. Today, there are many Spanish immigrants living in Basque Country so the Basque culture is not as pervasive as it once was, but for the Basques who still reside in their homeland, they proudly guard their traditions. A region as isolated as Basque Country is unlikely to be easily assimilated.

On other hand, Catalonia is a more integral part of Spain. Although the Catalans claim a unique identity, their culture and way of life is similar to Spain. Catalonia has historically been a part of Spanish kingdoms for centuries. In the

twelfth century, Catalonia was incorporated into the kingdom of Aragon since its location served as a strategic seaport for the kingdom (BBC 2013). And in the fifteenth century, Catalonia became a part of Spain when King Ferdinand of Aragon and Queen Isabella of Castile married and united their kingdoms (BBC 2013). It was not until the nineteenth century that Catalans ushered in a new sense of Catalan identity and a revival of their language. Previous to that, Catalonia was a content region of Spain. Catalans moved around Spain and the Spanish moved into Catalonia, and so the Catalans intermarried with the Spanish and adopted Spanish culture. Catalonia's history of association with Spain causes them to be less antagonistic toward their Spanish neighbors. The Spanish are their friends, their families, and their coworkers.

One example of the intergroup association between the Spanish and the Catalans is the rivalry between the two largest football clubs in Spain: FC Barcelona and Real Madrid. The rivalry between these two teams is played out in the most watched football match in the world: The Classic. Hundreds of millions of people worldwide enthusiastically follow the match, but for Barcelona and Madrid fans, the match extends beyond sports. FC Barcelona represents Catalonia and Real Madrid represents Spain, and their political rivalry is played out in the game. It could be argued that the football rivalry further divides Catalans from the rest of Spain, but on a deeper level, the competition unites Spain, much like the Olympic Games unites the world every two years. Real Madrid and FC Barcelona are the most popular and most talented football teams in Spain, and there is a level of mutual respect in addition to the mutual loathing. Basque Country also has a team, Athletic Bilbao, but their team is vastly overshadowed by these two juggernauts.

Inter-Intelligibility of Language

Basque and Catalan are regionally unique languages; the languages are spoken in the home, taught in school, and are two of the four official "recognized regional languages" in Spain. Since Spanish is the official language for Spain and the ubiquitous lingua franca, their respective languages are more than a method of communication; they are Basque and Catalan identity. However, the linguistic status of Catalan is higher than Basque. Basque "faces the possibility of extinction within several generations," while Catalan proficiency is thriving (Lilli, 345). Only one-fifth of Basque's population speaks Basque, while around half of Catalonia's population speaks Catalan, with signs of constant improvement (Lilli 1994, 345). In the eyes of the Basque people, Spain's encroaching presence in Basque Country is manifested in the desiccation of their language. There is genuine fear among Basque nationalists for the fate of their language (Lilli, 348). And since a threat to a group's language is a threat to its identity, the Basques react with "hatred and panic" and violence (Lilli 1994, 345).

One reason for the annihilation of ancient languages is due to mass communication via the printing press. Rokkan and Urwin write, "The chances of survival of a peripheral language were severely reduced if it had not been standardized and had not become a medium of mass communication before the takeoff of industrial development" (1983, 69–70). This partly accounts for the different status of both languages. Basque language did not become uniform until the nineteenth century, while Catalan was standardized in the fifth and sixth century. Another reason for the extinction of ancient languages is inter-intelligibility. "Inter-intelligibility can be defined as the 'distance' (measured in the degree of difficulty of understanding the other languages) between the peripheral and central languages" (Lilli 1994, 346). Catalan is a romance language similar to French and Spanish. Therefore, Catalan has a higher level of inter-intelligibility with Castilian Spanish than Basque. The Basque language is completely unique, with no linguistic ties to any other language in the world. Residents of Basque Country have no reason to learn and speak Basque except for cultural sentiment. Thus, immigrants to Basque Country do not learn Basque. The same argument could be made for Catalan. However, because Catalan is so similar to Spanish, it is quickly picked up by residents and immigrants alike. Catalan speakers can easily switch between Catalan and Spanish, and Spanish speakers can easily understand Catalan. The language permeates Catalonian media and life because the language is accessible. Catalonia's laws require teachers, doctors, and public workers to use Catalan in addition to Castilian Spanish. A Catalonian can learn Castilian and still retain its native tongue, while a Basque speaker lost to Castilian is lost forever (Lilli, 347). The influx of Castilian into Catalonia did not create the same frustration or loss of identity as it did when it reached Basque Country. Thus, a high level of inter-intelligibility of language increases the language's survival rate and reduces the need for violence.

Limitations

First, this research has low external validity. The results of this study are independent to the region studied. I cannot make the claim that the same independent variables will cause nationalistic violence in any nation of the world without further study and testing. Further study, analysis, and experimentation must be done before the theory can be expanded globally. This is an isolated case and must be treated as such. Also, this is only a qualitative study. I believe further quantitative research and testing should follow for more conclusive argument.

Although I am acknowledging the limitations to my thesis, I also pose that the arguments presented above should not be ignored. They were concluded through careful analysis and should be acknowledged. The causes of violence in Basque Country are important to know. Although the ETA has declared a ceasefire with Spain since 2011, that does not mean the peace will last. The ETA has carried out 3,300

terrorist attacks since the 1970s. The lull in their activity is only temporary, unless we can understand their motives. If we can discover what drives violence in Basque Country, beyond their desire for nationalism, we have a better chance at stopping the violence.

Conclusion

“Emotional attachment to the homeland derives from perceptions of it as the cultural hearth and, very often, as the geographic cradle of the ethnonational group” (Connor 2002, 29). Nationalists in both Basque Country and Catalonia see their land as a “cultural hearth” and a homeland for their family. Both groups are fighting for nationalism. And yet, the Basques have used violence to promote their cause and the Catalans have not. Why the difference? In 1994, Jacques Lilli analyzed the differences between Basque and Catalan nationalism. He claims Basque nationalism is primordial, based on its ethnic identity and, therefore, personal—and often emotional, whereas, Catalan nationalism is pragmatic. I agree with some of his arguments, but I think he is missing key pieces.

In this study, I compared the similarities of Catalanian and Basque nationalism in order to pinpoint the independent variables that cause violence. Catalonia and Basque Country are similar in that they have a distinct ethno-linguistic identity from Spain, they both utilize national media to promote political ideas, they both have national symbols that unite their people, they are both economically strong—the richest regions in Spain, and they both had their culture language harshly suppressed under the Franco regime. Basque and Catalan are both emotional in their resentment for previous—and current—discrimination and repression of their culture. And they both have elements of pragmatism in that they realistically know they could stand alone as countries separate from Spain. However, I have pinpointed three differences in the status of Basque Country and Catalonia that I believe are poignant: Catalonia has a core city—Barcelona; Basque Country does not; Catalonia has more intergroup association with Spain; and the Catalan language has a higher level of inter-intelligibility with Spanish than Basque.

At present, the Basque nationalist group ETA has declared a cease fire with Spain. There have been no violent attacks in a couple of years, but any number of events could spark a resurgence of ETA terrorism. This study may provide ways in which Spain may reduce dissatisfaction and prevent future attacks. For example, efforts should be made to enhance Basque Country’s largest city, Bilbao. A few government policies that encourage business, industry, and migration in Bilbao will be beneficial for the quality of life of existing residents and for the security of the region. Second, an active civil society must be promoted. Intergroup mixing via associations and daily activities is vital to curbing violence. Through organized associations, like clubs and sports teams, the Basque people will be encouraged to step out of their

cultural isolation and mix with other Spaniards. Finally, policies to preserve and teach the Basque language must be implemented. It may seem counter-intuitive that the way to reduce ethnic violence is to reinforce an ethnic identity through its language; however, the threat to the Basque language causes widespread resentment toward Spain. To reduce the animosity between Basques and Spaniards is to allow Basque Country to flourish, unimpeded by Spanish dominance.

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