The Future of the Spanish State in the Wake of Regionalistic Nationalism and Separatist Fervor

Deidre Jensen
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by

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Introduction

In the post-World War II era, demands for regional autonomy have been a recurring feature in Western Europe. These demands have been based on the inability of the modern nation-state to solve all of the political, economic, and social problems it faces. As regions are continually confronted with an inadequate central government that is limited by a lack of resources and political will, those peoples who feel most alienated, deprived, or exploited will agitate for more control over their own affairs. Nowhere is this situation more prevalent than in modern Spain.

Since its founding, Spain has been a nation of varied cultures, languages, governments, and histories. Although attempts have been made to unify these diverse peoples, the historical differences between the regions have continued to threaten the existence of the centralized state. Moxon-Browne gives two explanations for this grave situation. First, as a result of the historical uneven economic development of Spain, a situation of "inter­nal colonialism" has emerged. This has been characterized by the exploitation of the poorer regions by those that are more economically advanced and by the refusal of the economically strong regions to contribute to the development of the rest of the nation. The economic deprivation on the one hand and the refusal to share the wealth on the other, especially when coupled with ethnic pride, have both led to nationalistic fervor, agitation for regionalist autonomy, and, at times, the use of violent methods (Moxon-Browne 1989, 41).

Second, as in the Basque country, periods of rapid industrialization have brought many immigrants into the region. The resulting social upheaval has created a feeling of alienation among the native people, a
fervent ethnic and cultural consciousness, and a desperate grasp for their traditional and historical roots. This emerging nationalism has also quickly led to a desire for regional autonomy (Moxon-Browne 1989, 41). Although not exclusive, these are two of the many possible explanations for the regionalist sentiment which has continually influenced the history of Spain. Even though the Spanish government has tried to address this problem by granting partial autonomy to the regions, many regions such as Catalunya, the Basque country, and others will not be satisfied without further concessions. If concessions are not made, there is a possibility that at least the Basque country and Catalunya, the most economically strong regions in Spain, will demand their independence. Unless this situation changes drastically, the continuance of a unified Spanish state will be threatened by escalating conflicts between the regions agitating for more autonomy and the central government fighting to save its disintegrating nation.

**Historical Background**

Spain, until the fifteenth century, had been a nation of diverse peoples separated by geographical boundaries and ruled by separate governments. When modern Spain was finally unified through the marriage of Queen Isabel of Castile and King Ferdinand of Aragón in 1469, the capture of the last Arab stronghold in Granada in 1492, and the annexation of the Northern kingdom of Navarre in 1512, Spain had already developed somewhat of a federal system of government. For example, when Charles I (the grandson of Ferdinand and Isabel) came to power, he was not known as the King of Spain but rather as the King of Castile, León, Aragón, Navarre, etc. Not only that, but he had to promise to "respect the administrative, legal, financial, and cultural idiosyncracies of each kingdom or principality" (Newton 1983, 100). This federal system lasted until the seventeenth century when the Bourbons of France tried to unify the administration of the country. Spain was soon divided into fifty artificial provinces which cut across regional boundaries. This situation did not change until the nineteenth century.

A multitude of wars during the 1800s retarded Spain’s material progress and increased social and political divisions within the country. In the meantime, frustration with the inertia and interference of the Madrid bureaucracy led the Basque country and Catalunya to pursue their own paths of economic development. Failure of the centralized government to create a nationwide industrial complex coupled with the rising nationalist sentiment of the Basque country and Catalunya meant that by the 1900s, economic, social, and political differences between the regions and the central government were irreconcilable. Although attempts at granting partial autonomy to the regions were made initially, following the Civil War (1936-39), General Franco, the military dictator, prohibited any evidence of regionalism and autonomy. He desired a unified state with one language (Castilian), one leader (Franco), and one church (Catholic). His regime was one of intolerance, repression, and centralization. However, his programs only succeeded in revitalizing regional cultures and creating strong opposition to the concept of a unified Spain. Following his death, the presence of regionalist nationalism and the desire for autonomy was greater than it ever had been previously.
The post-Franco era was characterized by a resurgence in the autonomy movement, which occurred for a variety of economic, political, cultural, and demographic reasons. In part, it was a reaction to years of oppressive government centralization throughout the history of Spain. Also, it began because of the social tensions which had arisen between the immigrants and native peoples in various regions throughout the country. In addition, it could be attributed to the uneven economic development between the regions and the methods taken by the central government to remedy that situation. Finally, it was a result of increased regionalist nationalism, ethnic consciousness, and deep-seated historical differences which were impossible to reconcile (Donaghy and Newton 1987, 98). Whatever the reason, the regions in the post-Franco era demanded autonomy and decentralization. Their demands were met by the constitution of 1978, the Constitution of the refurbished democratic Spain.

The Constitution of 1978

The Constitution of 1978 was a document of compromise which, although not ideal, was considered to be the primary step towards more regional autonomy. It contains an interesting mixture of centralized government and regional autonomy which is neither a federal system nor a nation-state system. It primarily discusses the rights of regions, the process of becoming autonomous, and the roles and responsibilities of both the central and regional governments.

The regions of Spain are guaranteed autonomy in Article 2 of the Constitution. This article states that the "constitution is based on the indissoluble unity of the Spanish Nation, the common and indivisible motherland of all Spaniards, and recognizes and guarantees the right to autonomy of the nationalities and regions of which it is composed" (Donaghy and Newton 1987, 100). (See appendix one). It is interesting to note that the central government mentions the indissoluble union of the state before it mentions autonomy to express the overriding idea that the centralized state will continue even in the presence of autonomy.

After autonomy is guaranteed, Article 143.1 talks about the territorial basis for the establishment of autonomous regions. It declares that only "adjoining provinces with common historical, cultural and economic characteristics . . . will be able to accede to self-government and form autonomous communities" (Donaghy and Newton 1987, 100). This historical basis not only ensures autonomous privileges but it is the deciding factor in the length of time it will take to acquire autonomy. The regions, such as the Basque country, Catalunya, and Galicia, which had historically voted in a referendum to be autonomous could proceed quickly towards full autonomy. The rest of the regions would have to wait five years after the approval of their statutes before they could gain the same full autonomy guaranteed to the historic regions. According to Donaghy and Newton, this was to give them time to organize their own governmental institutions for housing, public works, forestry, environmental protection, museums, libraries, cultural affairs, tourism, social welfare, health, and hygiene, etc. After the regions gained autonomy, they would have the primary control and jurisdiction over each of these areas in their own territories (Donaghy and Newton 1987, 113).

In addition to being able to control the areas mentioned above, each autonomous government is guaranteed the right to create and execute its own laws, to exercise finan-
cial autonomy (within the state’s overall responsibility for taxation), to control its own budgets and educational system, to write its own statutes (regional constitutions), to establish the parameters of its relationship with the central government, and to have its own capital city, flag, civil service, and supreme court.

In contrast, there are certain powers which belong solely to the central government. These include immigration, political asylum, defence and the armed forces, customs and trade barriers, the monetary system, general economic planning, authorization of elections and referendums, overall administration of justice, and the signing of international agreements and treaties (Donaghy and Newton 1987, 114-115).

In addition, the constitution declares that certain powers can be delegated by the Federal Parliament to be shared by both the federal and the regional governments. These powers include the overall system of communications, the ports and airports of general interest, the post and telecommunications, the control of air-space and transport, and the academic professional qualifications.

The Spanish Constitution as it exists today contains many strengths. It delegates a great deal of authority to autonomous regions while at the same time maintaining the unity and cohesion of the state under a centralized government. It is an extremely important document for the Spaniards because it is the first constitution to acknowledge the multinational and multilingual character of Spanish society and to establish the principle of governmental decentralization. However, having these strengths does not necessarily mean that this constitution will be acceptable indefinitely. As regions are experimenting more with autonomy they are beginning to feel independent of the central government. In fact, certain ones are even considering total independence as their next step. Since most of those advocating separatism are the economically strong regions such as the Basque country and Catalunya, it would be financially destructive to Spain if they succeeded. Not only that, but it is quite possible that separation and independence for these regions could create a tidal wave of regionalistic sentiment which would result in the dissolution of at least part of the Spanish nation. For these reasons, the Spanish central government is fighting against further separatist concessions. The future of this struggle could bring about many significant changes in favor of one side or the other. At this point all that is certain is that autonomy has been granted and will not be relinquished easily, neither the central government nor the separatist regions plan to budge on their demands, and, at some point in the future, concessions will need to be made by somebody. In order to understand the events that will surely happen, it is necessary to discuss 1) the factors which have caused regionalism to occur; 2) the extreme cases of separatism-Catalunya and the Basque country; 3) regionalism in other areas of Spain; 4) the response of the central government; and 5) what the future holds for the continuance of Spain, the modern state.

**Catalunya**

Catalunya is a region of Spain which borders France to the north, the Mediterranean Sea to the west, the Ebro basin to the east, and coastal hills to the south. Because of her geographical location, she has been relatively isolated throughout a large part of her history from the other areas of the Iberian peninsula. As a result, her history
has been distinct from that of the rest of Spain.

Up until the fifteenth century, Catalunya was an autonomous region ruled by the counts of Barcelona. In 1289 the Generalitat de Catalunya was established which "defined the traditional Catalan liberties and privileges as a bastion against the Centralizing encroachments of the Spanish Crown" (Moxon-Browne 1989, 25). Catalunya's political identity was not threatened until the male line of the counts of Barcelona became extinct in 1410 and the Catholic kings unified Spain, including Catalunya, in 1469. At this point, Castile exercised the most influence because of an economic boom, her monopoly on trade with the Americas, and few legal barriers. As a result, Catalunya "which had been the major component of the Catalan-Aragonese monarchy, lost political importance and influence although it retained control over its own affairs" (Coverdale 1979, 25).

Finally, in the seventeenth century it was able to reassert its influence by refusing to join the Hapsburg monarchy until its autonomy had been guaranteed (1653). However, with the entrance of the Bourbon kings during the 1700s, Catalunya lost the autonomy she had gained. This loss was soon offset by her growing economic vitality; she was even more prosperous in 1760 than was Castile. During the 1700s regional differences persisted but the Catalans supported the Spanish monarchy during the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. In fact, Coverdale believes that by this time, "a workable equilibrium had been reached in which Catalunya could participate in a larger Spanish national undertaking without renouncing altogether its linguistic and ethnic identity" (1989, 26).

This equilibrium was disturbed, however, during the 1830s when the liberals attempted to impose a centralized government on Spain. Nevertheless, during this time Catalunya's economic strength was unequalled, she experienced a cultural renaissance, her language was used in literature and science, her citizens studied her history, a pride in her traditional institutions emerged, and a fervent nationalism created the desire for autonomy. Autonomy came in 1932 but it was rescinded shortly after Franco came to power following the Spanish Civil War. In addition, Franco prohibited the use of Catalán in schools and books, declared that cultural associations were illegal, and prohibited all Catalan cultural expressions. In Catalunya during the Franco regime, this fierce repression served only to "unite her people in widespread opposition to a hated, centralist regime" (Newton 1983, 109) and to "reinforce the desire of the Catalans to regain their autonomy" (Moxon-Browne 1989, 48). In the post-Franco era, Catalunya pushed for autonomy and, in the Constitution of 1978, was one of the first three regions to achieve it. In this way alone she was different than the majority of the other regions of Spain.

However, Catalunya's distinctiveness with the rest of Spain goes much deeper than her history. Her citizens just simply feel different than and separate from their fellow Spaniards. A New York Times article dated 26 September 1989 described the Catalans in the following way:

Hard working, prosperous and deeply proud of their Catalan language and culture, the people of Barcelona Spain make no secret of their belief that their city's selection as the site for the 1992 Olympic Games is further proof that they are just a touch superior to other Spaniards.

According to Moxon-Browne, the superiority that the Catalans feel is based on "past history, linguistic distinctiveness, and a
feeling of being different from the Castilian majority in Spain" (1989, 49). This feeling is demonstrated more clearly in appendix two which shows that nearly 40 percent of the citizens of Catalunya feel more Catalan than they do Spanish. In other words, they identify more with their region than with their nation. Another poll among young people in Barcelona in 1984 showed the same results. Moxon-Browne declares that "27 percent said they felt 'only Catalan' and a further 16 percent felt more 'Catalan than Spanish'" (1989, 48). Furthermore, the Catalans define their identity in terms of their language and culture instead of in terms of the Spanish culture and the Castilian language (Gunther, Sani, and Shabad 1988, 319). Because of this regional nationalism and immense pride in their culture and their history, many Catalans would like to see an independent state (19 percent in the 1984 poll) and most would like to receive more autonomy from the central government. This is shown clearly by the end result of the 1984 elections in which the foremost nationalist party, the CiU, won an absolute majority in the parliament with 46.6 per cent of the vote. Since 64.4 per cent of the voters went to the polls, it is obvious that many of the Catalan people support their regional parties and government (Moxon-Browne 1989, 49). (Further information on the percentages of Catalan support for more autonomy is available in appendix three). Therefore, although the Catalan region most likely will not separate from Spain in the near future, the presence of a desire for more autonomy or for independence will be a continual threat to the nation-state of Spain in the years to come.

Regionalist nationalism and distinctiveness is manifested by the pride of the Catalans in their language. The Catalans believe that theirs is a "language of culture, with an important literature and a significant number of scientific works published" (Coverdale 1979, 23-24). The language, Catalán, is a mixture of French and Spanish. Throughout Catalunya everything is written in this language primarily and then the Castilian language follows. Conversations on the street are normally held in Catalán. In addition, and this is true in many other areas of Spain, the greatest majority of citizens speak their regional language at home and over half speak it regularly in the workplace. In fact, "language is clearly a badge of Catalan identity: those who do not speak it find jobs difficult to get and the pressure to learn the language and become integrated into Catalan society is therefore almost irresistible" (Moxon-Browne 1989, 49). In other words, in order to preserve their culture, the Catalans not only use Catalán in their homes but also they force the immigrant community to learn the language and customs and, therefore, to be Catalanized (Gunther, Sani and Shabad 1988, 319).

The Catalans probably would not have such a dramatic influence over the immigrants in their region if they did not have such a strong economy. Immigrants come from regions all over Spain to take advantage of the monetary rewards to be had in the industrial and service sectors of the booming Catalan economy. Not only does this economy provide jobs to Spaniards but it also contributes a large percentage of revenue to the Spanish government. Therefore, it is important to the continued vitality of the Spanish state. The Catalans realize their vital role and take pride in their economic prowess. This economic prowess, for some, is an encouraging factor on the road to separatism because they believe that Catalunya is strong enough to survive as an independent state. Others also justify sepa-
ration based on economic prowess but for a different reason. These Catalans believe that they have been the victims of economic discrimination at the hands of the central government because of the "inegalitarian impact of Spanish taxation and spending policies. . . . Nationalist leaders have long maintained that revenues derived from the Basque area and Catalunya [to be used for the development of the poorer areas of Spain] have far exceeded the value of public services received by them" (Gunther, Sani, and Shabad 1988, 325). Therefore, pride in their economic prowess, culture, language, and history and feelings of economic discrimination play a major role in the justification by many Catalans of increased autonomy and/or separation from the Spanish state.

The Basque Country

The Basque country is a region of Spain which borders France to the west, the Bay of Biscay to the north, los Montes Cantábricos to the east and small mountains to the south. Because it is at the most northern point of the Iberian peninsula, the Basque country, like Catalunya, has been relatively isolated throughout a large part of her history. As a result, her history has been distinct from that of the rest of Spain.

At the time of the formation of the Spanish state by the Catholic kings, the provinces of the Basque country had already belonged to the crown of Castile for several centuries. According to Moxon-Browne, the Basques had been allowed to use 

fueros, local statutes, since the seventh century (1989, 51). In addition, they had been allowed to retain "their local customs, institutions, and languages throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries" (Coverdale 1979, 32) in exchange for their allegiance to Castile and their use of the Castilian language in both government and culture. Because of this arrangement, the centralization of the Spanish state did not affect the Basque country as terribly as it did Catalunya. During the nineteenth century, the Basque country was able to pursue regionalist policies and soon became the center of Spanish heavy industry and mining. As a result, the Basques were able to participate even more effectively in the economic and political life of Spain.

Basque autonomy was first challenged and eradicated when the liberals came to power in the early nineteenth century. The 

fueros were abolished in 1876 and customs posts on the Ebro were removed. Because of this, the Basques lost "an important symbol and component of economic autonomy" (Moxon-Browne 1989, 51). In order to reassert their independence, the Basques formed a nationalist party (PNV) in 1895 under the tutelage of Sabina de Arana. This party was based on a close identification with the Catholic church and a desire for ethnic purity, especially in the wake of the immigration brought on by the Basque industrialization process. The nationalist party renamed the Basque country Euskadi, made a new flag, and encouraged people to speak the Basque language. Although it did not receive much popular support initially, it became the forerunner to the intensely Basque nationalist party of today, the ETA.

The ETA (Euskadi ta askatasuna) was originally a simple nationalist movement in the 1950s. It began in response to the repressive policies pursued by the Franco dictatorship. Franco had deprived the Basque provinces of their economic and administrative autonomy, prohibited the use and teaching of the Basque language, burned Basque books, forbidden Basque musical
instruments and the wearing of the Basque national colors, removed the Basque language from tombstones and public buildings, and Castilianized all names and inscriptions. In response to this, the ETA organized and dedicated itself to the independence of the Basque country from Spain.

When it was first organized, the ETA did not advocate violence as an acceptable method of achieving change. However, the organization soon committed itself to armed struggle (1967) in response to the Francoist tactics it had to combat. Since 1968, over 600 murders of Spanish public officials and police officers have been committed in the name of regionalist nationalism (The Christian Science Monitor, January 31, 1989). ETA has justified its actions on the grounds that it must raise consciousness among the Basque people, protect the people against the repressive apparatus of the central government, and confront the government in the only language it understands (Moxon-Browne 1989, 55). Not even the concessions made in the Constitution of 1978 have stemmed the terrorist activities. Actually, the transition to democracy was accompanied by an "increase of violence--from 29 deaths in 1977, to 88 in 1978, to 131 in 1979" (Gunther, Sani, and Shabad 1988, 246). In 1988 alone, nineteen people were killed (Washington Post, February 26, 1989). Even though the ETA called a self-imposed truce for two months during 1989, the violence will probably not cease until the Basque country is granted independence from Spain. Although support for ETA's violent tactics is not widespread in the Basque country (only 42 percent of the extreme nationalists and 9 percent of the more moderate group sympathize with ETA), the organization does reflect the sentiments of a large section of the Basque population who want more autonomy or independence at any cost.

The desire for Basque independence is so strong (as shown in appendix three) because of the intense regionalist nationalism which is prevalent there among certain groups. This nationalism can be attributed to many factors, one of which is the influx into the Basque country of non-Basque immigrants and businessmen who have created social upheaval and have diluted the ethnic purity of the Basque people. Therefore, the Basques desire to disassociate themselves from further ethnic contamination through independence. Moreover, the Basque nationalist ideology is based on a "dedication to the Catholic faith, the belief that all Basques should be united across the Pyrenees, and the assertion that language should be the defining characteristic of the Basque race" (Moxon-Browne 1989, 52). Again, regionalist supporters assert that independence or more autonomy would aid the Basques in achieving these nationalistic goals.

Another reason for their separatist desires is that many Basques do not consider themselves to be Spaniards at all. Appendix two shows that at least half of the Basque people do not readily associate themselves with the Spaniards. Instead, the Basques "rest their claim to autonomy on their ethnic, cultural and, above all, linguistic distinctiveness" (Newton 1983, 112) from the rest of Spain. In other words, they believe they are a separate ethnic group whose language is an obvious manifestation of this. In reality, there is some truth to their assertions. The Basque language is distinct in that its origins are unknown and it has no connection with any other European language. Because of this, the Basques are able to guard the purity of their language and, with it, create a barrier for the mixing
of foreign blood with the ethnic purity of their race. Therefore, their language is an important factor in their struggle for autonomy, independence, and ethnic purity.

Another important factor is their economic prowess. Like Catalunya, the Basque country is one of the more developed regions of Spain. Therefore, it can be reasonably confident that, were it to gain its independence, it would be able to survive on its own. It too rallies around the idea of economic discrimination by the central government in its justification for separatism. Like Catalunya, it pays nearly a third of all taxes and receives only a small percentage of services in return. Therefore, pride in their economic prowess, culture, language, and history and feelings of economic discrimination play a major role in the justification by many Basques of separation from the Spanish state.

Other Regions

Although the separatist or autonomist fervor in other regions is not nearly so pronounced as it is in Catalunya and the Basque country, regionalist sentiments do exist elsewhere in Spain. During the drafting of the Constitution of 1978,

preferences for varying degrees of autonomy and even for independence, as well as support for regional parties, were present in other culturally and linguistically distinct regions, such as Navarra, Valencia, the Balearic Islands, Andalucía and the Canary Islands [who had] no previous aspirations for, or historical experiences with, self-government (Gunther, Sani, and Shabad, 382).

For example, one of the most startling results of the 1979 election was the success of the Partido Socialista de Andalucía (PSA). This party received 11 percent of the vote in Andalucía and obtained five out of the fifty-nine seats allotted to the region. "The meteoric rise of the PSA was the most dramatic instance of the spread of demands for autonomy in Castilian-speaking and indisputably 'Spanish' regions of the country" (Gunther, Sani, and Shabad 1988, 383). Support in the other regions for more autonomy and/or independence can be found in appendix three. Although most regions at this time do not advocate independence, many at least want limited autonomy from the central government. After experiencing the ability to control their own affairs it is possible that more regions will advocate greater autonomy in the future, especially if concessions are made in the Basque country and Catalunya.

The desires for autonomy in other regions are based on various factors. First, the existence of various languages other than Castilian, such as Gallego Portuguese, Andaluciano, Valenciano, etc., encourages an association with a region instead of with the state. Next, the geographical features which cut across the Iberian peninsula have isolated various regions from one another and, as a result, have resulted in distinct peoples with distinct histories. The historical differences are compounded by the cultural influences each region has had (such as the Arabs who settled southern Spain as opposed to the Romans, Christians, and Europeans who settled northern Spain). Furthermore, the economic discrimination which the poorer regions have suffered at the hands of the larger regions, especially under internal colonialism, has created a fierce loyalty to oppressed regions. And, finally, the historical lack of control over their own affairs has made many Spanish citizens desire more regional autonomy or independence. Each of these factors plays a certain role in the regionalist sentiment of
each area of the peninsula. Although this sentiment is not as pronounced in the other regions and those who strive for autonomy may be in the minority, regionalist sentiment of whatever degree or intensity is dangerous to the continued existence of the Spanish state.

The Central Government’s Response

To assert the overall authority of the state, the Spanish government declared in the Constitution of 1978 that Castilian was the official language of the state and that all Spaniards must know and use it. In addition, the central administration has been very protective of the rights guaranteed it by the constitution and has refused to grant more concessions to the regions (for example, it refuses to negotiate with the ETA separatists in the Basque country). To discourage further separatist fervor the Spanish Parliament has passed anti-terrorist legislation which gives the police the right to search homes of suspected ETA members without a warrant and to intercept mail and telephone conversations (Moxon-Browne 1989, 57-58). In addition, the government has offered amnesty to those individuals who will agree in writing to renounce terrorism. These are a few of the tactics the central government is presently using to quell the regionalist nationalism that is plaguing the Spanish state. However, all the evidence shows that "the process of devolving political power to the regions is far from complete and daunting problems remain to be surmounted" (Donaghy and Newton 1987, 117).

First, the central government needs to decide whether it wants a centralized, federal, or disunified governmental system. If it is not moving in the direction it desires, it should act accordingly. Regardless of which system the centralized government chooses, creative choices and innovative policies are required to ensure that the system is successful. For example, Lancaster suggests that the government lower the costs of staying with Spain for the highly separatist areas, such as the Basque country, through tax incentives (1987, 586). Whether or not the government considers this solution to be valid, it will soon need to come up with ideas of its own in order to win the war of devolution.

In addition to this, the government must impose limits to the autonomy of regions. Granting autonomous powers "may mean yielding some of the powers which central authorities themselves believe to be necessary to the uniform provision of effective government" (Moxon-Browne, 64). Already, a sense of identification with the Spanish state is intersected by strong ties of allegiance to regional governments. The concept of the Spanish nation inevitability risks being further diluted as voters look to regional governments for bread-and-butter services, and to regional flags and other symbols for expressions of cultural distinctiveness (Moxon-Browne, 63).

This problem is further exacerbated if the regional government, like that of Catalunya, provides superior services than those provided by the central government. If the central government does not move quickly to assert its influence in some way over its citizens in the various regions, it will soon be thought of as an incapable and outmoded institution. This process could take time but it will eventually lead to the total devolution of the Spanish state.

Second, the government must decide how it will be able financially to handle the process of devolution which seems to be
occurring. Paying for eighteen separate governments instead of only one is a very expensive proposition and will require much forethought. In addition, Newton believes that a major financial test of the current system will be the ability of the central government to,

tackle the serious economic problems faced by regions like Andalusia, Galicia, Extremadura, and Castile while not alienating the richer areas like the Basque Country, Catalunya, Asturias and Cantabria which will be obliged to contribute to their development through the Interterritorial Compensation Fund (125).

This will be a difficult task considering the fierce resentment of the economically advanced regions toward this system.

Finally, the government must decide how to deal with the lack of solidarity that exists between the differing regions which, at this point, threatens the continuance of the Spanish state. This problem is obvious in the constant fighting between the Basques and the central government and in the resentment of the Basque country and Catalunya to the uneven distribution of services under the Interterritorial Compensation Fund. Furthermore, interregional problems could occur between those regions who believe that they deserve preferential treatment because of their history and ethnicity, such as the Basque country and Catalunya, and those regions which are created simply because of geographical factors. The central government must devise a plan to ensure equality while, at the same time, abating the cries for preferential treatment (Donaghy and Newton 1987, 118). This, like all the other issues which need to be addressed, will be difficult to solve but it is vital to the survival of the current governmental system and the continuance of the modern state of Spain.

Conclusion

Although the problems I have just considered bode ill for the continuance of the Spanish state, the regionalist nationalistic sentiments by no means guarantee the total devolution of Spain. First, these sentiments do not necessarily represent the viewpoints of every citizen of Spain. In fact, in certain areas those with regionalistic sentiments are in the minority. For many others, a strong sense of state nationalism and pride in España exists which eclipses the regional nationalism. Second, despite varied cultures and histories, all Spaniards share certain experiences and elements of their culture with all other Spaniards. Ironically, argues Newton, one of the most prevalent characteristics common to all Spaniards is precisely their tendency to separatism. In other words, the more separatist a Catalan, a Basque, or an Andalucian is, the more Spanish he reveals himself to be. (1983, 127) If citizens focus more on the ties they have with their neighbors than on the ways in which they are different, this common culture could be the saving grace of the Spanish state. Finally, all regions must be willing to compromise. The Castilians must renounce the idea that the nation was created only by them and must, instead, accept the specific contributions of each region. It must also be willing to accept a more decentralized and diverse state. On the other hand, the regions, while enjoying their autonomy, must remember to demonstrate their loyalty to the whole, and must temper their own demands so as to achieve what is in the best interest for everyone involved. If many of these things do not happen, Spain as we know it will soon disintegrate into a collection of economically strong regional states and a unified nation comprised of
economically backward entities. If many of these important changes are made, Spain as a unified state will continue to rule effectively for centuries to come.
APPENDIX ONE

The Autonomous Communities of Spain

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Key:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Autonomous community</th>
<th>Executive body</th>
<th>Capital</th>
<th>Date statute approved</th>
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<td>Gobierno Vasco</td>
<td>Vitoria</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Barcelona</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Junta de Galicia (Xunta de Galicia)</td>
<td>Santiago de Compostela</td>
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<td>Junta de Andalucía</td>
<td>Sevilla</td>
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<td>Consejo de Gobierno</td>
<td>Oviedo</td>
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<td>Diputación Regional de Cantabria</td>
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APPENDIX TWO

National Self-Identification in Euskadi, Catalunya, and Galicia

Gunther, Sani, Shabad pg. 244

10% Euskadi

3% "Spanish only"

20% "More Spanish than... [Basque, Catalan, Gallego]"

30% "Equally Spanish and... [Basque, etc.]"

40% "More... [Basque, etc.] than Spanish"

30% "[Basque, etc.] only"

Catalunya

Key

Euskadi

Galicia
APPENDIX THREE

Proportions of Regional Populations Favoring Varying Degrees of Autonomy

Gunther, Sani, and Shabad pg. 248

[Map showing regional proportions with categories: Centralism, Limited autonomy, Extensive autonomy, and Independence.]
WORKS CITED


