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Power, Subjectivity, and Life in Spain: A Continuation of Elite Power

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1. Introduction

When speaking of a newly born child, the Spanish poet Antonio Machado once said, “May god protect you. One of the two Spains will freeze your heart” (Tremlett, 2006:366). Machado was referencing the historical divide of Spain along political lines that has been a source of conflict for centuries. Spain has been historically divided by territory, religion, war, and politics. The state is often viewed as the government and bureaucracy that maintains the power of sovereignty. On the other hand, the nation is the people, the culture, and the language. The controversy arises from the singular nature of the nation-state concept: one nation, one state. In a country that has multiple nations and various strong political ideologies, the idea of a one nation-state is undermined. Spain also has a long history of authoritarian rule making Spaniards well aware of the power the state can have on society and life. This age of globalism and neoliberal crisis has exacerbated the dividing lines of the country through class and nationalism. By the mass flow of people, capital, and ideas, previous ideas of the state and nation are being challenged (Appadurai, 1996). Combined with an era of neoliberal economics, the role of the state has changed. Spain in the context of the nation-state is no different.

One interpretation of the ‘Dos Españas’ for the current context is the double reality of Spain. On the one hand, there is the version of “La Marca de España” (The Spanish Brand) which is the one sold for the tourism industry that sells, promotes, and produces the image of the exotic Spain and the exotic Spaniard (Tremlett, 2006; Crow, 1985; Hooper, 2006; Torrecilla, 2009). On the other hand, there is the everyday reality of Spain, a country marked by class

conflict, historically poor governments, poor labor conditions¹, dominate oligarchy, wealth inequality², racism³, domestic violence, terrorism, and separatist movements.

“Yet all the while he will feel sad deep down inside, and he will realize at least that even the songs and dances of Spain are all sad songs. There is nothing really gay or picturesque about Spain when one sees it long enough to penetrate the mask. There is no such thing as ‘romantic’ Spain, which is the superficial reaction of a few visitors who never get to know how the people are”(Crow, 1985:367).

It is this mask that I will try not only to penetrate but explore who, why, and how the mask is produced, and even more importantly, what is behind the mask. In this thesis, I will argue that there is a continuation of elite power through Franquism to neoliberalism by way of the State which produces the social-economic conditions which form Spanish subjectivity and life.

Spain has always been a historical outlier in Europe. Spain was the country that first sailed to America and became one of the first world empires. Since then, it has gone in the opposite direction of the major social and economic movements in Europe. When the Protestant Reformation swept through Europe, Spain responded with the Counterreformation and the Inquisition. When the 18th century Enlightenment swept through Europe with ideas of liberalism and human reason, Spain responded with Romanticism. When the French Revolution promoted ideas of democracy, the rule of absolute monarchy became even stronger in Spain. When the Industrial Revolution led to the development of European economic powers, Spain remained a country based on agriculture with small areas of industry. When fascism was defeated by the Allied Forces at the end of World War II, Franco remained in power for the next 36 years (Crow,

¹ “Los jóvenes que no estudian ni trabajan ya triplican en España a los que sí,” Nov 8, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. http://www.eldiario.es/sociedad/Repuntan-jovenes-ninis-triplican-sisis_0_450055168.html

² Diego Narvaéz, “La población en riesgo de pobreza o exclusión en España crece hast los 13,6 millones de personas,” Publico, Oct 5, 2015, accessed on Nov 20, 2015. <http://www.publico.es/sociedad/poblacion-riesgo-pobreza-o-exclusion.html>

³ Helios F. Garcés, “Identidad española y racismo están muy unidos,” Diagonal Periodico, May 29, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. <https://www.diagonalperiodico.net/libertades/26866-identidad-espanola-y-racismo-estan-muy-unidos.html>

1985). Now, power is based on networks of sovereignty, capital, power, and communication (Hardt and Negri, 2000). Multinational corporations, international organizations, and governing bodies have a bigger role and relationship in the context of states and people's lives. This is even more so in the context of Europe and the European Union. The European Union has greatly influenced Spanish governance and sovereignty. My focus with this thesis will mostly focus on the Spanish state and people. Many Spaniards view the state as corrupt and lead by elites that do not represent the Spanish population. This is the relationship I want to focus on. There are multiple levels of governance in Europe. the European Union often dictates what the Spanish state can and cannot do. In many cases, it is a question of how the state internalizes the EU demands and what interests the state will favor. The austerity measures is a prime example. The Spanish government has implemented fully the austerity measures of the Troika that directly affects the lives of millions of Spaniards. For this reason, I will focus mostly on Spain.

Spain has been a highly structured (rigid) power structure for over 5 centuries. Even the last two centuries, the political power has been in the hands of political elites with very close contact with noble and aristocratic segments of society (Crow, 1985; Perez Garzón, 2003). The structure of Spanish society can be examined through a triangulation of power: the monarchy, aristocrats/nobility/politicians, and the population (the people/multitude). (Tremlett, 2006; Crow, 1985; Preston, 1995; Humlebaek, 2015; Hooper, 2006; Gallo, 2009; Frenandes, 2015; Tahmassian, 2012; Baena de Alcázar, 2002, Torrecilla, 2009) The 2008 crisis has produced a vacuum of power, where people are now questioning the current structure that has been in place since 1975 with death of the dictator Francisco Franco. With the ratification of the Constitution in 1978, referred to as the "Transition de 78", the transition from a decadent authoritarian dictatorship to a democracy is often viewed as the current political structure. I will argue that

this is nothing new in terms of power structure, the current power structure implemented by the transition is a continuation of two hundred years of rule controlled by political elites of conservatives and moderates. During these two hundred years, a few periods of republican rule but mostly dominated by a reactionary monarchy and military dictatorships. These two hundred years of rule controlled by elites are now being challenged by a new political parties and new political formations. The point of departure for challenging the economic and political establishment was the May 15, 2011 movements, where the multitude took over multiple cities and town squares. One of the slogans of 15-M “No Somos Mercancía en Manos de Políticos, Empresarios, y Banqueros”(We are not commodities in the hand of politicians, businessmen, and bankers).⁴ This slogan is telling of the form of subjectivity that is in place in Spain through the economic and political structure in Spanish society. “Free subjects” have the power to resist, and that resistance, a force of anti modernity, is key to understanding the movements of modern history... We should not think of power as primary and resistance as a reaction to it; instead, paradoxical as it may sound, resistance is prior to power” (Hardt and Negri, 2011:81). Podemos, is a new party that is gaining attention as a result of the economic crisis and the political corruption in Spain. *Podemos* represents the first political formation composed from non-elite sectors of Spanish society. In Gramscian terms, *Podemos* is attempting a passive revolution: “a social group comes to power without rupturing the social fabric (as in France) but rather by adapting to it and gradually modifying it” (Gramsci, 2000: 242). Change and regeneration are ideas that are marking the current political debates in Spain.

The landscape of Spanish society has changed dramatically in the last four years. The Partido Popular (PP) won the 2011 elections with an absolute majority. In October of the same

⁴ Ignacio Sáenz de Ugarte, El Diario “Por qué la enmienda triunfó en la totalidad del 15-M” 5/16/2015. http://www.eldiario.es/zonacritica/triunfo-enmienda-totalidad_6_388521145.html

year ETA announced the end of its armed activity. The conservative administration has implemented the neoliberal austerity measures of the Troika while being plagued by multiple corruption scandals reaching the highest levels of the government and the monarchy, King Juan Carlos abdicated the throne to his son and current King Felipe in 2014. In the same year a newly founded political party named *Podemos* won five euro deputies with over a million votes in the European elections. The crisis of 2008, often referred to as the Great Recession, provoked an economic crisis in Spain but it also provoked political and social crisis, forcing many to start to question the Spanish nation-state and Spanish society and politics as a whole. The 2008 crisis brought to light the modernity of Franco and the inherent fallacies and weaknesses of Spanish post-modernity.⁵ As a result of the neoliberal measures implemented by the PP such as spending cuts in public health and public schools, labor reforms, tax increases, salary freezes for public workers, freezes in social security pensions, and decrease in state spending. The economic and labor conditions in Spain have changed dramatically with an increase in precarious labor, unemployment, lower wages and more hours, young college graduates and professionals are forced to emigrate, and increase in the wealth inequality and sections of the Spanish population at greater risk of exclusion reaching 13.6 million Spaniards.⁶ These economic conditions and realities have led to, in many ways, a transformation in Spanish society. The crisis of 2008 was not only an economic crisis but a social crisis, one in which not only is society being changed and transformed but life itself is being reconfigured and transformed. Life is being transformed and reshaped through the economic conditions and social

⁵ Alberto Fernández Liria, "Un nuevo feudalismo," *Iniciativa Debate*, Aug 14, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. <http://iniciativadebate.org/2015/08/14/nuevo-feudalismo/>

⁶ Diego Narvaéz, "La población en riesgo de pobreza o exclusión en España crece hasta los 13,6 millones de personas," *Publico*, Oct 5, 2015, accessed on Nov 20, 2015. <http://www.publico.es/sociedad/poblacion-riesgo-pobreza-o-exclusion.html>

realities that are making it difficult to produce life. For example, lack of access to food, the mortgage crisis, suicide rates increase, unemployment, working full-time while living in poverty and emigration in search of a better opportunity for work and life (Brabero, 2015; Labrabor Mendez, 2014).

As a result, Spaniards are now calling for change.⁷ This leads to the main questions of this thesis project. What kinds of change do the Spanish want? A change in politics? The economy? The State? Over centuries the structure of Spanish governance and society has been a debate and controversy. Within this debate has been the State. For there to be a change in Spain, does the State need to change? Is the nation a part of the State? Can a change in society lead to a change in that State? In order for the change in Spain to occur, one has to analyze what needs to be changed. What are the powers that help form and maintain the socio-politico-economico conditions in Spain. And from this point of reflection, comes this thesis project. I will use theory, discourse analysis, interviews, and participant observation to provide an analysis of the current political, economic, and social situation in Spain.

How does Spain, as nation, state, and people interact in a post-modern world taking in consideration the historical process of formation of its institutions of power and society? If power shapes thought, bodies, and action, how does Spanish society with new post-modern forms of power, subjectivities, and realities challenge the historical processes that shaped the current Spanish subjectivity of the present? In many times the State and the nation-state are analyzed from the perspective of the liberal state or the bourgeois state from over centuries in Western Europe (Foucault, 1979). These concepts and analysis of the state explore where power is located in society, what kind of power, what is the relationship like with power and the rest of

⁷ Javier Rodríguez Marcos, "Democracia, la crisis de los cuarenta," El Pais, Oct 10, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. http://cultura.elpais.com/cultura/2015/10/09/babelia/1444396314_332898.html

the population, how is subjectivity produced and reproduced. In the major analysis power is looked at from a democratic perspective, the state in democratic political systems. But in the case of Spain, the question needs to be asked, how can these concepts and theories of the state, power, and population be applied to a political system based on fascism as opposed to democracy? Is power in democratic state systems and fascist systems the same? In theory, democracy is a dialectic between the 'people', 'multitude' and the 'state', 'government.' The relationship is one of antagonism, one of push and pull between the two entities (Hardt and Negri, 2000). But even this theoretical model blurs the reality of the situation, they are not two separate entities. It is more of intermixing and cohesion between two. Fascism, the relationship between the 'state' and the 'multitude' is destroyed by those in power. Fascism destroys the dialectic by the imposition of power on society. Instead of society having a say in the conversation of power, the conversation is completely one sided. The fascism is the imposition of ideology, thoughts, actions, behavior, philosophy, and history combined with a lack of civil liberties and freedoms. It is a dictated life. This imposition is often done through repression, violence, and coercion. This imposition of ideology without the space for dialogue creates an often passive subjectivity. It is not only through political power and ideology that subjectivity is formed but through the economic structure of the market and the people's place in the labor market that further forms and shapes subjectivity. But this leads to the question of, what is subjectivity?

Subjectivity is life within a social order, one's role or position in society and to authority. It is individual's relationship to power, whether it be political, economic, or social. It is through the everyday life encounters that subjectivity is produced. Hardt and Negri write on the production of subjectivity:

“Two aspects of this production should be highlighted. First, subjectivity is a constant social process of generation. When the boss hails you on the shop floor, or the high school principle hails you in the school corridor, a subjectivity is formed. The material practices set out for the subject in the context of the institution (be they kneeling down to pray or changing hundreds of diapers) are the production process of subjectivity. In a reflexive way, then, through its own actions, the subject is acted on, generated. Second, the institutions provide above all a discrete *place* (the home, the chapel, the classroom, the shop floor) where the production of subjectivity is enacted. The various institutions of modern society should be viewed as an archipelago of factories of subjectivity.” (Hardt and Negri, 2000: 195-196)

This was the modern social theory of production of subjectivities but Hardt and Negri argue that in the post-modern society or imperial society, the concept of place has broken down. They explain:

“The production of subjectivity in imperial society tends not to be limited to any specific places. One is always in the family, always still in school, always still in prison, and so forth. In the general breakdown, then, the functioning of the institutions is both more intensive and more extensive. The institutions work even though they are breaking down—and perhaps they work all the better the more they are breaking down. The indefiniteness of the *place* of the production corresponds to the indeterminacy of the *form* of the subjectivities produced. The imperial social institution might be seen, then, in a fluid process of the generation and corruption of subjectivity.” (Hardt and Negri, 197: 2000).

In the context of Spain, it is through the economic model in Spain, the Spanish concept of nation, and political power that produces subjectivities. Whether a person in Spain is a ‘Spaniard,’ a ‘waiter,’ a ‘construction worker,’ and a ‘apolitical citizen,’ it becomes a question of a determined subjectivity through society. From the Franco’s regime to the current Neoliberal two-party system, there is a structure of economy and politics of Spanish society that produces a determined subjectivity with the end of continuing elite power.

In the case of Spain, the new form of governance and control is through neoliberalism. Neoliberalism has received much scholarly attention in recent decades since it has become the global hegemonic political and economic ideology and model for this globalized era.

Neoliberalism not only being a direct challenge to Keynesian economic theory and practice, it has reshaped the role and the relationship of the state, the market, and society, in particular human life. Harvey defines neoliberalism:

“Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices. The state has to guarantee, for example, the quality and integrity of money. It must also set up those military, defense, police, and legal structures and functions required to secure private property rights and to guarantee, by force if need be, the proper functioning of markets. Furthermore, if markets do not exist (in areas such as land, water, education, health care, social security, or environmental pollution) then they must be created, by state action if necessary. State intervention in markets (once created) must be kept to a bare minimum because, according to the theory, the state cannot possibly possess enough information to second-guess market signals (prices) and because powerful interest groups will inevitably distort and bias state interventions (particularly in democracies) for their own benefit.” (Harvey, 2005: 2)

It is through the individual that neoliberal power targets. But the fundamental motive behind neoliberal ideology is based on elite power and control. Harvey explains:

For, as I have also already shown, there is abundant evidence that neoliberal theory and rhetoric (particularly, the political rhetoric concerning liberty and freedom) have also all along primarily functioned as a mask for practices that are all about the maintenance, reconstitution, and restoration of elite class power. (Harvey, 2005:188)

This is the key concept, that neoliberal ideology is one based on power and elite control. The relationship between the citizen and the state has changed, life is now being reshaped. Life is now within the market with the state as a referee looking on.

As a result I will use a cultural historic perspective to demonstrate the continuation of a semi-feudal order represented, maintained, and continued through Franco and his regime to the current two-party system. For this reason, I will explore the political and economic conditions which lead to the production of Spanish society and subjectivity. This thesis will have the following structure: In the literature review I will cover the main debates and authors on the

state and Spain used for this thesis. This section will cover what other authors have said and are saying about Spain and the state. It will have two sections, the theoretical interpretations and models of the state, with questions of what the state is and the role it has in terms of power in society and how it affects people's lives. The other portion of the literature review will explore what some of the authors are saying about Spain itself. The authors provided their own interpretation to what the state is in Spain, how it came to be, and what is the state's role now in Spanish society.

In the methods section I cover the various methods I have used for performing research for this thesis. I have used interviews, discourse analysis, a cultural historical perspective, and critical theory. I explain the process behind the interviews I conducted in Spain, the motives for performing interviews and the limitations that I experienced while performing them. It is also in the methods section I introduce and analyze the theoretical concepts that I use for my analysis on Spain. Some of these theories include Foucault's concept of biopower and biopolitics, Hardt and Negri's concept of Empire and multitude and the production of subjectivity through state power and the economy. These are just a few but it is these models, concepts, and theories that I use to analyze the history and current political, economic, and social situation in Spain. I try to answer: what is the role of the state in Spain? how does power produce society and lives? what is the historic processes that have formed the current structure of Spanish governance, economy, and society? The main authors I use always use a historical perspective to analyze and better understand the current context today. Foucault's method of archeology and genealogy are prime examples, as he once said, "it is not a history of the past but a history of the present."

In the analysis section I will explore the continuation of elite governance from Franco's regime to the current regime of neoliberalism through the control of political power and the

formation of the Spanish economy and market. In this section I provide a brief historical background of Spain to show a continuation of elite control of Spanish society and historical perspective of Spain. I analyze Franco's regime and his continuation of semi-feudal order through the civil war and during his reign. It is during this period where the foundation of modern Spanish society was established that provided the groundwork for Spain in the post-modern world. This includes the Spanish economy, form of politics, corruption, and irrationality of Spanish political subjectivity. It was through the transition to democracy in 1978 that maintained the economic model and the elite control of the major institutions and governance. It is this continuation of economic model and economic and political elites along with neoliberal ideology that has contributed to the crisis of 2008 and the social injustice and inequality defining Spain today. The current structure of Spanish society is shaped for the benefit of the political and economic elites, and as a result Spanish life and subjectivity is formed for this end. It is a combination of the two party system, corruption and the Spanish economy that shapes, reconfigures, and forms life in Spain.

In the conclusion section, I explore the so-what question of this thesis. Throughout this thesis I will argue that there is a continuation of elite power through Franco's regime to neoliberalism through Spanish economic and political structure that forms and produces Spanish subjectivity and life. This leads to the bigger question moving forward, what can people do to challenge a system that produces social and economic inequality? And this is the current context of Spain, where Spanish politics and society are going through a period of change, regeneration, and transformation. The economic crisis of 2008 has not only impacted the country economically in a drastic manner, but it has also provoked a social and political crisis in a biopolitical nature. Life is being formed, reshaped, and transformed. People in Spain are

beginning to challenge the status quo. The process of change began with the 15-M movement in 2011. It has taken on multiple forms, the biggest form being the rise of the new political parties *Podemos* and *Ciudadanos*. These new parties are trying to breach the control of political power that has been in the hands of the two main parties since the Transition of 78. The new parties are trying to create change at the institutional level, which is one level of power that can effect some form of change. By change, meaning a more democratic and just society. But what needs to change is Spanish society, specifically subjectivity? The problem is, in Spain, for centuries power has shaped and produced a particular subjectivity that has allowed the country to be plagued by injustice and inequality. What these new movements of change are going to face is a population with a subjectivity that was and has been produced by political and economic powers related to authoritarian fascism and the Catholic church and now neoliberal market ideology. In order for one to produce change, society and individuals need produce new forms of subjectivities. One thing Spaniards are realizing in these new movements for change is the freedom they pose already. One of Foucault main motives behind his work was his belief that individuals and society have a lot more freedom than is lead to believe (Foucault, 1980).

2. Literature Review

Foucault argues that in political theory one has “to cut off the head of the king” and no longer look for power in the sovereign and the state. Instead, what is needed is an analysis of power from the bottom and how power has been infused throughout society and people. “What we need, however, is a political philosophy that isn’t erected around the problem of sovereignty, nor therefore around the problems of law and prohibition. We need to cut off the King’s head: in political theory that has still to be done” (Foucault, 1979: 121). In the case of Spain, it still important to study the power from the top. The king (Franco) never had his head cut off, instead

he died with ‘las botas puestas.’ And the king’s (Franco) ministers, state, and socio-economic system remained in placed. And the ‘king’ was replaced by another king, Juan Carlos Borbon Borbon. In an examination of Spain, due to its elitist and classist political, social, and economic structure, studying how the ruling classes maintain and form the system is incredibly important.

The state in Spain has long been a point of contention. Different political perspectives and beliefs provide their expectations and opinions on the structure and the role state should have in Spain (Tremlett, 2006; Crow, 1985; Preston, 1995; Humlebaek, 2015; Hooper, 2006). The state is not just a static and dead institution of government apparatuses such as the military, government, public schools, transportation, and hospitals. The state has been used for other motives and intentions reflecting the political and economic interests in power. Often the elites use the state as a means to an end, or the protection and maintenance of the sociopolitical system that benefits the ruling classes. In Spain’s history, the state has been used as a mechanism for nationalist purposes, repression and political cleansing, fighting against terrorism (while at the same time resorting to terrorism itself (State terrorism)), the welfare state, and now the neoliberal state (Vaccaro, 2014; Da Silva Lopes, 2000; Fishman, 2010; Aretxaga, 2000; Salmon, 2001; Guillen, Alvarez, Adão E Silva, 2002). Furthermore, the state has been totalitarian, authoritarian, fascist, and catholic (Tremlett, 2006; Crow, 1985; Preston, 1995; Humlebaek, 2015; Hooper, 2006). As a result of this history, there are many feelings of contempt, mistrust, disgust, and fear towards the Spanish state.

In this moment of political ‘change’ and ‘regeneration,’ can the new politicians and political formations implement social justice and democracy through a mechanism of authoritarian tendencies? This is the task that faces *Podemos*. They are faced with a system that doesn’t want change. For the current establishment or system, there is no need for change

because the system for the ruling elites is working. As long as profits are made, they will resist any form of change from below. Ruling elites defined as the companies of IBEX 35, the traditional Spanish aristocracy, and the political elites (many with direct or indirect links to the Franco regime) (Fernandez Clemente, 2008; Baena de Alcázar, 2002). In the Basque Country and Catalonia, instead of referencing the name Spain, people often use the word, ‘el Estado.’ For many in the historic regions in Spain, the idea of Spain as a nation-state is a political construction of the Spanish right. The process of the construction of this concept of ‘Spain,’ has been of one conquest and repression. For these reasons, I will be exploring the relationship between the Spanish state and society.

One of the main points of focus of this thesis is the location of power. For this thesis, the state in Spain will be the point of focus. But the perspective of this analysis will not be directly the state itself but how the state, society, and people interact with one another and the how they influence each other. This thesis will be an exploration through an anthropology of the state. This literature review will have two sections exploring the literature on the state and Spain.

“An anthropological perspective allows us to pay careful attention to the cultural constitution of the State—that is, how people perceive the State, how their understandings are shaped by their particular locations and intimate and embodied encounters with state processes and officials, and how the State manifests in itself in their lives. Analyzing these cultural processes through which “the State” is instantiated and experienced also enables us to see the illusion of cohesion and unitariness created by states is always contested and fragile, and is the result of hegemonic processes that should not be taken for granted.” (Sharma and Gupta, 2006:11)

There has been a renewed academic focus on the state and its role in neoliberalism and post-modern globalization (Sassen, 1991; Appurdi, 1996; Hardt and Negri, 2000; Harvey, 2005; etc)

Even before this new focus on the state in the global age, the state has received extensive attention from some of the great minds, ranging and differing in scope and interpretation. Each theorist has defined what it is and how it came to be based on their interpretation. One of the

beginning points of reference in researching the state is Hobbes and his notion of the state. Hardt and Negri write on the the State as a transcendent political apparatus from Hobbes's "God on Earth," that has two components: firstly, civil war is the original state of human society, and secondly, humans must agree to a pact that assigns to a leader the absolute right to act, or really the absolute to do all expect take away the means of human survival and production" (Hardt and Negri, 2000:84). This state is often viewed in the relationship between political power and economic power, Marx's concept of the state demonstrates this relationship, "the executive of the Modern State is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie"(Marx, 1979:475). From Marx to Schmitt, as he defined the state forming through a process of 'bracketing of war' in Europe and through this process, state sovereign and territory were formed (Schmitt, 1950). Wallerstein described the process of state formation as an institution created to protect local and national merchants and markets (Wallerstein, 1979). Quijano defines the nation-state in his own terms as an institution of colonial formation. He writes, " It began as an internal colonization of peoples with different identities who inhabited the same territories as the colonizers. Those territories were converted into spaces of internal domination located in the same space of the future nation-state" (Quijano, 2000:558). Gramsci's interpretation of the state as two parts, on the one hand, a 'nightwatchman' State-politico-juridical organization-nightwatchman "safeguarding of public order and of respect for the laws. And on the other, the Interventionist state, "of economic origin— connected with tendencies supporting protection and economic nationalism, to attempt to force a particular state personnel, of landowning and feudal origin, to take on 'protection' of the working class against the excesses of capitalism"(Gramsci, 2000:235).

Some of the main through lines in these authors' concepts of the state is that of sovereignty, territory, power, and the economy. Moving forward, the focus of the State in this thesis is how the state forms, structures, and articulates society and people. Hardt and Negri write:

“Bureaucracy operates the apparatus that combines legality and organizational efficiency, title, and the exercise of power, politics, and police. The transcendental theory of modern sovereignty, thus reaching maturity, realizes a new ‘individual’ by absorbing society into power. Little by little, as the administration develops, the relation between society and power, between the multitude and the sovereign state, is inverted so that now power and the State produce society.” (Hardt and Negri, 2000:88)

This idea of society being produced will be crucial for this analysis moving forward in examining how the state helps in producing Spanish society.

One of the main authors that will be influential in this thesis is Foucault. His work on power and the state will provide a crucial base for the examining Spain throughout this thesis.

Foucault defines the State as:

“...nothing else but the effect, the profile, the mobile shape of a perpetual stratification or stratification, in the sense of incessant transactions which modify, or move, or drastically change, or insidiously shift sources of finance, mode of investment, decision making centers, forms and types of control, relationships between local powers, the central authority, and so on. The state has no heart but not just in the sense that it has no feelings, either good or bad, but it has no heart in the sense that it has no interior. The state is nothing else but the mobile effect of a regime of multiple governmentalities (Foucault, 2008:5)

For Foucault, the state is just one of many links in the chain of power extended throughout society and people.

Much of the scholarly work directed towards Spain and the government is most concerned with the transition from an authoritarian dictatorship to democracy (Fishman, 2010; Tahmassian, 2012; Da Silva Lopes, 2000; Fernandes, 2015; Gallo, 2009; Crow, 2005; Hooper, 2006; Tremlett, 2008; Humlebaek, 2015). Even within the debates on Spain and the state there is

a wide range of interpretations. Some of the basic questions still arise in this debate on Spain: What is Spain? Is it a single historic nation? What is the Spanish state and what is its role in society? When was the State developed? These are some of the questions that are at the forefront of the debate.

Some of the authors provide their own interpretations. For Ortega y Gasset, the state is a project for humans to live in common, “The State is always, whatever be its form, primitive, ancient, medieval, modern, an invitation issued by one group of men to other human groups to carry out some enterprise in common” (Ortega y Gasset, 1950:125). Some write of the weakness of the Spanish state in its inability “to mold society” (Hooper, 2006:203). Vincent claims Spain has long been a nation-state and the underlying issue has been legitimacy not institutional weakness.

“Political violence became endemic in Spain because victory could not be converted into legitimacy. Only in the late twentieth century did a form of state power develop that was overwhelmingly recognized as having the right to rule. By 2002- the year Spain joined the Euro—the country had legitimate, functioning, and effective state. But between 1833 and the late twentieth century, no regime, whether monarchical or republican, benign or repressive, dictatorial or even democratic, could claim to have had hegemonic legitimacy.” (Vincent, 2007:1)

Tordecilla explores the recent revisionist literature by Spanish historians of the Left and the Right in their attempt to redefine what Spain was and is for their political motives (Torrecilla, 2009). Tahmassian explores the Spanish state from the perspective of theories of the State and sovereignty developed by Carl Schmitt. She shows how the main political intellectuals and jurists of the Franco regime were heavily influenced by Carl Schmitt’s work. Concepts of the exception, the sovereign, the ‘other,’ and the error of parliamentary democracy helped ground the regime and major components of Franciosm have carried over into the current Spanish democracy and the Spanish Right. Carl Schmitt and his theories on sovereignty and the state

played a fundamental part on the formation of key Francoist political intellectuals. Using Schmitt's theory to legitimize the dictatorship in Spain was crucial to the regime. It was able to do this arguing the coup d'état was a state of exception and therefore necessary to do it in order to save the nation from communism. The example of the Basque conflict provides insight into the way the Spanish state and its use of Schmittian theory to perceive and construct "political enemies" of the nation and state. The Schmittian concept of locating and labeling political "others" or "enemies" is still very much part of the current conservative party in Spain (Tahmassian, 2012). Bruff uses Spain as an example of his interpretation of 'disciplinary neoliberalism,' "an authoritarian statism is a political response to capitalist crisis, which includes the crisis of capitalist state themselves as they struggle to manage the fallout from their own development. (Bruff, 2014:119) He goes on to write:

"...authoritarian neoliberalism is qualitatively distinct due to neoliberal tendencies, its punitive nature of penal and criminal policy. For example, constitutional and legal mechanisms in Spain such as Zapatero's constitutional amendment regarding the national debt and dación en pago- legally binding of debt and mortgage." (Bruff, 2014: 119)

These are the authors and debates that will provide the grounding and support moving forward.

The literature on the Spanish state also examines it from the historical process of its development (Vincent, 2007). There is still much debate on when is the starting point of the state but in the last century the state has defiantly developed (Torrecilla, 2009; Humlebaek, 2015; Pérez Garzón, 2003). Through this historical perspective, characteristics and trends can be seen in the context of the State. The state is not static or homogenous by no means. It is has multiple forms, functions, interests, capabilities, ideologies, and consequences. It helps in the process of shaping territory, society, and individuals. From the early the twentieth century of dictatorships, monarchs, republics, fascist dictatorships, European welfare State, and neoliberal state, there have been multiple forms of the Spanish state.

3. Methods

The methods used for this thesis project have been discourse analysis, critical theory, and interviews. The main component has been the use of the theory combined with discourse analysis to provide a better understanding of what is occurring Spain. With the use of theory in the context of Spain, I have tried to answer some of the key questions facing the country today: Where is power located? What is the role of the state? Why is there so much corruption? Why there so much economic and social injustice and inequality? Theory can be an incredibly powerful tool in better understanding a particular phenomenon (Burawoy, 1998). It attempts to provide reason to what appears as chaos. It attempts to provide structure to something that appears to be structureless.

For this thesis project, I interviewed 12 people in Spain over a month long period. The people I interviewed were friends and colleagues from my time in Spain from 2011-2014.⁸ The ages of the participants ranges from 23 to 55. The interviews took place in the Basque Country in the cities of San Sebastian, Zarautz, and Ondarroa, and in the city of Granada in the south of Spain. The interviews lasted from 1 to 2 hours and they were conducted in Spanish. The reason for conducting the interviews in Spanish are multiple: First, the participant feels more comfortable and confident in expressing their thoughts and opinions, second, for the use of concepts and institutions that are not translatable to English. With the interviews, I covered the basic political, social, and economic topics facing Spain: the crisis, corruption, Franco, PP, PSOE, *Podemos*, *Ciudadanos*, 15-M, the monarchy, Catalonia, and social change. The reason for performing the interviews was to gather more information on Spain, but also to listen and

⁸ I lived in Spain for three years working for the North American Cultural Ambassadors program teaching English.

understand the perceptions of individuals in Spain on what is currently happening. One of the main limitations of the interviews was that I was not able to interview anyone from the major cities that have new political parties in power, such as Madrid, Cadiz, Valencia, or Barcelona. On a similar note, Spain is a country of multiple ethnicities, languages, cultures, and localities, as a result it is difficult to get a global perspective of Spain from only interviewing people from two (very distinct) regions of Spain. One of the common answers that came up for the question of how to better understand Spain and Spaniards, was locality and age. The Spanish population is very generational, meaning the period when one is born marks and shapes that individual drastically compared to the older generations. Someone born during the Franco regime will have a very different perspective and outlook on Spanish politics and society as compared to someone who is born after the transition of '78.

In this section I will focus on the use of critical theory as a principal method. Theory is interpretation of reality or an attempt to describe reality. Theory can provide answers to questions for contexts and situations that seem chaotic. Theory can provide order to chaos, it can provide structure to an analysis for a more in-depth perspective. One of the main motives for using theory is provide answers to a somewhat chaotic context. Applying some of the best theoretical models to the case study of Spain, not only enriches the theory by applying concrete examples but it also gives a different picture or framework to view Spain itself.

One of the main theorist in this analysis will be Michel Foucault, with his work on power and biopolitics and his genealogy of sovereignty and the state. One of Foucault's main analysis on power is a historical review of the evolution of the regimes of power in Europe since the Middle Ages. For Foucault, power in the Middle Ages was primarily held by the sovereign king. The sovereign was ruler of law, the people, and the land. By the seventeenth and eighteenth

centuries the Modern State begins to take shape and new forms of power, and its relationship with the people and the sovereign begins to change. Foucault calls this period based rule of right and disciplinary power. While at the same time, law takes in a new role in the Enlightenment period. Instead of law being the basis of the sovereign, which provides the ground for his rule. Law in the Enlightenment becomes a mechanism that is used to limit the power of the sovereign over the people. During the Enlightenment, the bourgeois State was formed in relationship with the evolution of industrial capitalism in the Northwest part of Europe. After World War II, the state went through another period of transformation in which neoliberalism becomes the new ‘reason of state.’ For Foucault, this new period of power, sovereignty, and the state is defined by the relationship between the market, society, life, and the state (Foucault, 1980).

“In other words, instead of accepting a free market defined by the state and kept as it were under state supervision—which was, in a way, the initial formula of liberalism; let us establish a space of economic freedom and let us circumscribe it by a state that will supervise it the ordoliberals say we should completely turn the formula around and adopt the free market as organizing and regulatory principle of the state, from the start of its existence up to the last from of its intervention. In other words: a state under the supervision of the market rather than a market supervised by the state.” (Foucault, 2008:116)

This Foucaultian analysis of the transition of the structures and forms of power in Europe must be analyzed differently in the context of Spain. Due to Spain’s own historical development, or lack of development, the semi-feudal rule and society was maintained in Spain up until the middle of the twentieth century. The main institutions of the Middle Ages and the Classical period were the Catholic church, the monarchy, and the nobility. These main institutions still have a major influence on the form and structure of governance and society in Spain today. The structure of society and government have been the major source of conflict in Spain for the last two centuries starting with French invasion of Spain in the early 1800s (Pérez Garzón, 2009; Marx, 1854; Torrecilla, 2009; Humelbaek, 2015). This was the major cause of the Spanish Civil

War, the Republic wanted to install a modern democratic state. While the military coup de etat led by Franco represented the continuation of the semi-feudal order based on the monarchy, the Catholic church, and the large landowners. As a result, Franco imposed a form of rule and power based on his own sovereignty over the Spanish territory and the Spanish people (Preston, 1995). It is not until Franco's death in 1975, that Spain transitioned to democracy. It should be noted that this period of transition is now coming under major scrutiny starting due to the current political situation marked by corruption, injustice, and economic crisis (Tahmassian, 2012; Frenandes, 2015)

I will also use the theories of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri focusing on their concepts of Empire and the Multitude. One of the main and general concepts of Hardt and Negri's work is that humanity is by nature free and is constantly seeking freedom away from the power, cruelty, and restraints of capital and State power. Furthermore, their work provides one of the best theoretical models for viewing and understanding the current global post-modern world of affairs, in particular *Empire* (Hardt and Negri, 2000). Building from Foucault and his concepts of 'biopower' and 'biopolitics,' Hardt and Negri build on these concepts to provide a key theoretical lens for this thesis. I will use their interpretation of 'biopower' meaning 'the power of life' and 'biopolitics' meaning 'the power of life to resist' (Hardt and Negri, 2011). Using this interpretation the Spanish political, social, and economic crisis is a crisis of biopolitics, where life itself is the target of power and is being formed and reshaped. Hardt and Negri write:

“the great industrial and financial powers thus provide not only commodities but also subjectivities. They produce agentic subjectivities within the biopolitical context: they produce needs, social relationships, bodies and minds,—which is to say, they produce producers. In the biopolitical sphere, life is made to work for production and production is made for life. It is a great hive in which the queen bee continuously oversees population and reproduction. The deeper the analysis goes, the more it finds at

increasingly levels intensity the interlinking assemblages of interactive relationships.”
(Hardt and Negri, 2000:32)

These theories and concepts will be the lenses that I will use to analyze Spain to provide answers to what is occurring and why.

Moving forward, to understand the current political and social situation in Spain, it is fundamental to have basic understanding of Spanish history. Even in recent times, to understand the economic crisis it is important to understand the economic boom of 2000s. In 2008, with the world market crisis due to the subprime mortgage crisis of Wall Street, this provoked a series of events in Spain that has led to the current state of possible change or regeneration. The economic crisis revealed many of the weaknesses, the lies, and the inherent instabilities in Spanish society and politics, and Spain as a nation-state. The irony of the current state of Spain, is that many of the political and social debates taking place center around basic concepts of: what is Spain? Is Spain a single nation or multi-national? Should there be a monarchy or a Republic? What form of government? Federal or decentralized? After centuries, these fundamental questions are still at the forefront of the debate in Spain. The debates or questions are taking place in totally new world context, where the concepts and the institutions themselves are changing and being reevaluated. This is all taking place in the context of globalization, where the state is being reshaped and reformed, the nation is becoming more fluid rather than fixed, and the forms of power are founded in networks of sovereignty, capital, media, and military institutions (Hardt and Negri, 2000). In many ways, Spain is still trying to figure out what it is in an ever changing world. In the following chapter I will explore the analysis section of this thesis.

4. Analysis

A prisoner to its history

One of the main components of this thesis is how history forms, shapes, and effects the present. Marx once said that, “The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living.”(Marx, 1979:595) This could be no truer than in the case of Spain. As one friend told me, “Spain is a prisoner to its history.” This is not only limited to the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939, but to the economic, political, cultural, religious, and philosophic processes that have formed and shaped current Spanish society. These process have molded a society of customs, practices, and traditions that form the political and power structures of today and the future.

“European ‘tradition’, European ‘civilization’, is conversely, characterized precisely created by the ‘richness’ and ‘complexity’ of past history. This past history has left behind a heap of passive sediment produced by the phenomenon of the satirization and fossilization of civil service personnel and intellectuals, of clergy and landowners, piratical commerce and the professional and army. One could even say that the more historic a nation the more numerous and burdensome are these sedimentation of idle and useless masses living on ‘their ancestral patrimony’, pensioners of economic history” (Gramsci, 2000: 277).

It was through the centuries that Spanish society has been formed and came about. These historical social, political, and economic formations and institutions are currently in place, shaping and forming Spanish society and people. For this reason, I will briefly explore some key themes in Spanish history: Franco, Civil War, formation of economy and society, and continuation of political power.

The crisis of 1898, when Spain lost the Spanish-American War in Cuba and lost its remaining colonies in the Philippines, set off a period of economic and social depression. The loss of its remaining colonies marked the end of an empire that never saw the sun set, stretching from the Asian Pacific to the European continent. The following period was almost thirty years

of political and social unrest. This unrest was marked by liberals, conservatives, and republicans that had marked Spain for over a century. The liberals being comprised of intellectuals, workers, trade unions, and communists and anarchists. On the other hand the conservatives consisted of the monarchy, big land owners, and the Catholic church (Crow, 1985; Preston, 1995). The clash of these forces led to a period of political turmoil resulting in various changes in government. This all led up to the outbreak of the Civil War in 1936. A coup de tat was led by sections of the Spanish military coming out of Morocco. Francisco Franco led the military coup with the support of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. When the war ended in 1939, Franco consolidated his power and starting his reign as dictator. “Origin of political power and the definition of sovereignty consist in the victory of one side over the other, a victory that makes the one sovereign and the other subject.” (Hardt and Nergi, 2000: 98). In the case of the Spanish civil war, it was Franco and the Nationalist side that defeated the Republic and was able to continue the semi-feudal structure of the Catholic church, large landowners and aristocracy, military, and the monarchy. As a result of the civil war, the Nationalist side became the sovereign with Franco as the ‘Leviathan God on Earth.’(Gallo, 2009)

Spanish society can be examined through a triangulation of State (Monarchy)- Church (Aristocracy)- Population (multitude). Another way to examine the structure is through a pyramide model with the Monarchy on top, followed by the Aristocracy and Church in the middle level, and on the bottom crushed by the top two forms of power, is the people (el pueblo)(Tremlett, 2006; Crow, 1985; Preston, 1995; Humlebaek, 2015; Hooper, 2006; Marx, 1854; Wright, 1957). Quijano writes on Spanish society at the end of the empire:

“In its beginnings, Spain was much richer and more powerful than its peers. However, after the expulsion of the Muslims and Jews, Spain stopped being productive and prosperous and became a conveyor belt for moving the resources. At the same time, after the violent and successful attack against the autonomy of the rural communities and cities

and villages, it remained trapped in a feudal-like seigniorial structure of power under the authority of a repressive and corrupt monarchy and church. The Spanish monarchy chose, moreover, a bellicose politics in search of an expansion of its royal power in Europe, instead of hegemony over the world market and commercial and finance capital, as England and France would later do. All of the fights to force the controllers of power to allow or negotiate some democratization of society and the state were defeated, notably the liberal revolution of 1810-1812. In this way the combined internal colonization and aristocratic patterns of political and social power proved to be fatal for nationalization of Spanish society and state, insofar as this type of power proved to be incapable of sustaining any resulting advantage of its rich and vast imperial colonialism. It proved, equally, that it was a very powerful obstacle to every democratizing process, and not only within the space of its own domination.” (Quijano, 2000:559)

This is what was fought over in the Spanish Civil War, the structure of Spanish society. It was Franco and his regime that won which represented the traditional pyramid model of imperial Spain.

This was the society Franco imposed on the Spanish population during his reign with one exception.

“The Spanish ruling classes abdicated power to Franco and the other generals in 1936, just as their Italian counterparts had done with Mussolini and the Fascists in 1922 and the German ruling classes with Hitler and the Nazis in 1933, convinced that once working-class challenges to the existing system were crushed, power could be taken back. Franco, with his reverence for the bourgeoisie, the aristocracy and the crown, seemed a good choice, a certainty to restore the monarchy at the earliest opportunity. That for thirty-nine years after his elevation to the provisional headship of the wartime state he blocked the return of the rightful heir to the throne and managed to remain in power is the measure of his remarkable political skill.” (Preston, 1995:783)

Franco replaced the Spanish monarchy with himself, in an attempt to restore the days of the Spanish empire of the “Reyes Catolicos” and Phillip II (Preston, 1995).

Political power has historically been in the hands of the elite in Spain. Throughout the centuries the establishment has never entrusted the powers of the government to the people. Whether it be the Spanish monarchs, liberal and moderate political elites, or the dictator regimes. In only a few brief periods of Spanish history have the people been able to access the political

process (Tremlett, 2006; Crow, 1985; Preston, 1995; Humlebaek, 2015; Hooper, 2006; Marx, 1854; Wright, 1957; Pérez Garzón, 2009; Gallo, 2009). There are multiple reasons for this historic reality. First, the Spanish population has been historical rural and uneducated, not allowing them means and capacities for self-rule. Second, if the Spanish people did have an opportunity to rule, they would have most likely overthrown the elites that had governed the country for centuries. A prime example of this is the period of 1931-1936 when democratic elections were held and the Second Republic was installed. A sign of mistrust and dramatic change in the structure of Spanish society and power was the coup de'état led by the Spanish military which led to the Franco regime. Which was an reactionary movement against the Spanish republic to maintain the semi-feudal in place at the time. And throughout the Franco dictatorship, the Spanish authorities were extremely repressive in dealing with any form of political or social dissent. Political parties, labor unions, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, and sexual freedoms were all banned (Tremlett, 2006; Crow, 1985; Preston, 1995; Humlebaek, 2015; Hooper, 2006; Tahmassian, 2012). This form of expression, though very violent and cruel in nature and may appear as a sign of strength maintained by the Francoist regime, are actually signs of the weakness of the State and society. A healthy state and society is one based on dissent, debate, and diversity. A society needs to have spaces available for the development of multiple ideas and ways of being.

Francisco Franco ruled Spain for the next 36 years under authoritarian government until his death in 1975. Franco maintained power by an innate ability to survive, manipulation, cunning his political enemies and very authoritarian style of rule.

“In other words, his rule would be that an all-powerful military colonial ruler. The enemy, the defected Republicans would be savagely crushed. The “family” of the Nationalist coalition would be manipulated like friendly tribes, bribed, enmeshed, in conception among themselves, involved in corruption and repression in such a way as to

make them suspicious of one another but unable to do that the supreme arbiter” (Preston, 1995:327).

He manipulated and controlled the major social institutions at the time which consisted of the Catholic church, the fascist party (the Falange), the wealthy upper class, and the military. Franco ruled Spain like a true general trained and hardened in the colonial wars.

Spain’s last ditch efforts to maintain its remaining territory in Morocco in the early decades of the twentieth century would help a generation of soldiers and military leaders to bring to Spain five centuries of dehumanization through the process of colonization. Césaire explains the process of dehumanization of colonialism and its boomerang effect:

“... colonization, I repeat, dehumanizes even the most civilized man; that colonial activity, colonial enterprise, colonial conquest, which is based on contempt for the native and justified by that contempt, inevitably tends to change him who undertakes it; that the colonizer, who in order to ease his conscience gets into the habit of seeing the other man as an animal, accustoms himself to treating him like an animal, and tends objectively to transform himself into an animal. It is this result, this boomerang effect of colonization that I wanted to point out.” (Césaire, 1972:41)

The target of Franco and his regime was no longer the ‘savage’ indian or the ‘savage’ moor but ‘el rojo’(red, communist). The Spanish civil war was the culmination of a cycle of the ‘Other’ (Torrecilla, 2009: 217). Beginning with the defeat of Granada in 1492 and the expulsion of the Jews and Muslims. Then in America with the indigenous tribes, later on to the Philippines, the Caribbean, Morocco, and in the end, back to Spain. Where the dehumanization of Spanish colonialism was turned on to Spaniards themselves. The victory of Franco continued the governing through the conquest of the ‘Other’ for another 36 years. But Franco’s legacy will not simply go away. Franco’s use of violence and terror marked generations of Spaniards and society.

“Against his enemies, he was ruthless in the use of state terror, the effects of which reverberated for decades after its scale had been significantly reduced. It was a kind of political investment, a bankable terror, which accelerated the process of Spain’s

depoliticization, pushing the mass of Spaniards into political apathy.” (Preston, 1995:783)

The effects of Franco’s violence still impacts Spanish society and lives today (Hooper, 2006). In many ways, the social movements and political movements calling for change in Spain will have to confront the past of Franco. For many sectors of Spanish, it is a past that wants to be forgotten.

The Spanish Civil War was a conflict with multiple complexities, realities, ideologies, and paradoxes but in many ways the war was fought over life and the form of life. Franco and his military coup represented a vision of Spain based on Castilian language and ethnicity, the monarchy, the military, Catholicism, and Spanish nationalism that produced a form of society that created a determined form of life in Spanish society. For the ‘good Spain’ to survive, the ‘other’ Spain had to be destroyed. For Foucault, this is a fundamental characteristic of modern states and sovereignty. States are now administrators of life. Foucault writes:

“...now presents itself as the counterpart of a power that exerts a positive influence on life, that endeavors to administer, optimize, and multiply it, subjecting it to precise controls and comprehensive regulations. Wars are no longer waged in the name of the sovereign who must be defended; they are waged on behalf of the existence of everyone; entire populations are mobilized for the purpose of wholesale slaughter in the name of life necessity: massacres have become vital. It is as managers of life and survival, of bodies and the race, that so many regimes have been able to wage so many wars...But the existence in question is no longer the juridical existence of sovereignty; at stake is the biological existence of a population. If genocide is indeed the dream of modern powers, this is not because of a recent return of the ancient right to kill; it is because power is situated and exercised at the level of life, the species, the race, and the large-scale phenomena of population.” (Foucault, 1976:137)

The Civil War was a conflict that centered on life and what kind of life for the Spanish population. For almost four decades, the Franco regime dictated life in Spain in almost every aspect, much of it through the Catholic church. It is now through the economy that much of life

in Spain is formed and shaped. It is the political structure of the two-party system of 1978 that maintains the economic structure to continue.

Transition of 78'

The death of Franco in 1975 began a period that is referred to as the 'Transition of 78.' Before Franco died, he named prince Juan Carlos Borbon as the next ruler of Spain. In a decision made by Juan Carlos, he determined Spain would be a Democracy. One of the major ironies of Spain is that in the context of post-WWII Western Europe, the Spanish democracy was implemented by a king chosen to rule by a fascist dictator (Tremlett, 2006). In 1978, the Spanish constitution was adopted through reform between the Francoist ministers and liberal elites which formed Spain as a constitutional monarchy (Tahmassian, 2012; Frenandes, 2015; Vincent, 2007). It became a decentralized state with seventeen autonomous communities and two city territories in Morocco, Ceuta and Melilla. The adoption of the constitution is often viewed as Spain entering the era of modernity, however this period is still controversial. Much of the Francoist bureaucracy was left in place. Humlebaek writes on the reform process of the transition rather than rupture:

“The fact that the transition to democracy was characterized by the transformation through reform does not mean that there was no struggle between rupture and reform as guiding principles for the political change. The main options, however, were to either see the new democracy as something radically new in Spanish history (rupture) or to see Spain as one of the oldest nations in Europe and the successful democratization as only one small step in the long history of Spain (reform). It was thus not based on rehabilitating the Franco regime, but rather on constructing continuity with the distant past of Spain's grandeur.” (Humblebaek, 2015:162)

Another major point of contention was the amnesty given to much of Franco's regime for crimes committed during and after the civil war (Tremlett, 2006). Still today, various leftist and

nationalist groups do not recognize the Spanish Constitution (Tahmassian, 2012; Humelbaek, 2015). Since the adoption of the constitution, the country has gone through social, and political transformation (Hooper, 2006; Tremlett, 2006).

One could argue that it is easy to blame Franco and his regime for all the problems Spain faces today. In part, there is some truth to this argument. The vast majority of the problems in any society are complex and cannot be reduced to one cause. One of the main points I want to focus on is that the Spanish State was formed and consolidated under the Franco regime and this State continues to this day. It is not only the state and bureaucracy that continued in place but the economic structure, the people in the institutions, the discourses, and the subjectivities.

“Spain’s pathway to democracy was not only guided from above, it was mainly oriented towards basic institutional and political change. Elites simply had no plan for altering the basic social and economic structures of society; nor was there any opportunity to be taken by popular-sector civil society organizations. In order for the transition to be viable, Suárez had to convince the political and economic elites of the dictatorship that they would be able to prosper in the new regime. The project of political reform was accepted only after the deputies (many of whom would be re-elected in the first free general elections in 1977) received guarantees of continuity and a general amnesty was extended to the officials of the dictatorship. At the levels of local politics, public administration, state schools, army, police, and the judiciary, the personnel of the dictatorship were left intact. And the basic contours of the existing capitalist system remained unchanged.” (Fernandes, 2015: 1087)

The Spanish institutions and those who have power today in Spain have many direct and indirect links to the Franco regime. It is through the State apparatus that continues to produce to a particular Spanish society and subjectivities. Now, the State is not what it was during the years of Franco but many of the mechanisms and ways of interacting with the population remain the same.

The current conservative administration and its political party, Partido Popular, was founded by a key Francoist minister, Manuel Fraga. Many members of the Partido Popular have direct links or inheritors of *Franquismo*. This in many ways perpetuates the system structured on

the Church, large landowners, monarchy, and military which Franco represented when he and other military generals led the coup in 1936. These institutions were allowed to continue to form a major role in shaping Spanish society and subjectivities over the past century. This social and political structure implemented by Franco laid the groundwork for many of the institutions and structures that are causing many of the injustices and inequalities today. Even the current symbols of the nation are controversial. Torrecilla writes:

“In theory, according to the Constitution of 1978, the flag and the national anthem represent all Spaniards, but in practice, the flag and national anthem are generally identified with conservative, if not fascist, groups. To explain this fact we must consider the country’s recent history. Even though the Constitution is informed by a progressive sensitivity that has inspired an open and tolerant society, the symbols that define the Spanish nation are a slightly modified version of those associated with Franco’s regime, and clearly different from those in use during the Second Republic. Therefore although in the last three decades Spain has managed to disassociate itself from tyranny and intolerance, its symbols (rather paradoxically) still have negative connotations of repression and fanaticism.” (Torrecilla, 2009:205)

Under the Franco regime, Spain experienced a defiant increase in the material living standards due to the economic development in the 1950s and 1960s. In the Franco and his regime brought Spain a form of modernity full of irrationalities, inequalities, and injustices that were permitted because of the desire for modernity and increase in the living standards by the Spanish population. (Tremlett, 2006; Crow, 1985; Preston, 1995; Humlebaek, 2015; Hooper, 2006, Gallo, 2009; Frenandes, 2015; Tahmassian, 2012; Baena de Alcázar, 2002).

To explore a brief history of Spain is done for two motives: firstly, as mentioned previously to understand Spain fully in the present context, it is key to have a general background of Spanish history and secondly, one of the main arguments of this thesis is that one of the principal causes of the current situation of social inequality and injustice is that power in Spain has been in the hands of political and economic elites for centuries. It has been a process

of continuation of maintaining power of the the decades and as a result the socio-politico structure in Spain is asymmetrical and based on a gap between the wealthy and the rest of the population. And through this process of continuation, the state has been one of, if not the key, institutions in the maintaining, forming, and shaping of Spanish society. In the following sections, I will focus on the three different components of Spanish society in relation to the State and change: economy, society, and politics. But I will first explore a concept that has long been a point of contention in Spain, the concept of the nation.

España: Una, Grande, y Libre?

The concept of the nation is often a highly debated concept in Spain (Torrecilla, 2009; Vincent, 2007; Humelbaek, 2015)⁹. It was Franco that established the hegemonic construction of the Spanish nation. The nation is often viewed as the glue between the society and the state. Or it is defined as an ‘imagined community’ (Anderson, 1983). This concept of the nation allows the state to rule in the name of the nation or that the state is a representation of the nation. The nation-state concept is a pure European formation coming about during sixteenth and seventeenth century through what Carl Schmitt called, the ‘bracketing of war’(Schmitt,1950:100). The process of controlling wars within territories gave rise to the state and within the state a nation. Spain defies Schmitt’s idea because the state was not able to bracket the fighting within its territory. Wars continued within Spanish borders up until the twentieth century. This is due to historical political differences, gross social inequalities, and multiple nationalities within the territory. Arjun Appadurai calls the relationship between nation and state “an embattled one”(Appadurai, 1996). The conflict is a question of representation,

⁹ Jose Luis Barbería, “Recrear España,” Nov 7,2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. http://politica.elpais.com/politica/2015/11/06/actualidad/1446839634_148933.html

problems occur when the nation does not feel represented by the state. This “embattled relationship” is clearly seen throughout the history of Spain and currently continues.

“Spain could have constituted itself as a nation in many different ways: as a political entity encompassing the entire Iberian Peninsula; as the product of the union between Castile and Portugal; as a nation with three religions and two languages, or five languages and three religions; as centralized, federal, authoritarian, tolerant, fanatic, or democratic country...However, among the many possible outcomes, the Christians who monopolized the concept of Spain forged a country with specific characteristics defined by a culture that was Latin and a religion that was Christian; a country, also, where purity of blood became a national obsession.”(Torrecilla, 2009:213)

This conflict between nation and state, is very clear in the Catalan independence movement. On September 27, 2015, Catalonia held regional elections marking a crucial moment in the relations between Madrid and Barcelona. The Catalan independence parties were given a parliamentary majority through a coalition. Meanwhile in Madrid at the Plaza del Sol, a mobilization formed by Franco supporters and neofascist groups were protesting the Catalan election results and the Catalan independence movement.¹⁰ This shows the paradox of the Spanish nation. The current concept of Spain is based on Castilian ethnicity and language, one nation with one state. The interpretation of the Spanish nation is the same interpretation of the Franco regime. The current idea of Spain as one nation was one of the founding principles of the Franco regime and the transition of '78. The separatist movements in Catalonia and the Basque Country are direct challenge to the national conception of the Spanish nation-state.

“Only one thing was more important to this discovery than the ancient origins of Spain, namely the unity of the Fatherland. There is room for an infinite number of sub-national identities as long as they do not call themselves nations and question the sacred unity of Spain. This essentialist attitude was extended to the transition and the Constitution. Both the Constitution and the transition were thus consecrated and worshipped not only for the democratic values of tolerance and consensus, but also as a kind of expression of the essential health of the Spanish nation, which links them directly with the Catholic

¹⁰Beatriz Guillén, “Decenas de personas se reúnen en Sol para defender la ‘unidad nacional,’” El Pais, Sep 28, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015.
http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2015/09/27/madrid/1443386747_427275.html

Monarchs, the Visigoths and the Celtiberian resistance against the Roman Empire.”
(Humblebaer, 2015:152)

The situation in Catalonia and the Basque Country is source of major social and political conflict in Spain. Each region has its own motives and reasons for wanting independence from Spain. The current situation in Catalonia and its process of succession lies at the heart of the concept of nation-state. “If you want to avoid civil war, you must become imperialists... Nation-states transfers their national conflicts abroad in order to preserve order and sovereignty at home.” (Hardt and Negri, 2000: 232) For example, the situation in Catalonia, there is no imperial outlet, so the problems of the nation-state remain within the territory and are turning on themselves. Meanwhile the conflict between Catalonia and the Spanish state are occurring, the youth emigration is in the same line. The emigration of many of the young and educated is reliving possible of conflict and inner tension with the state. If the young and educated stayed jobless, it would be reasonable to see even more conflict within the country. The emigration in Spain is a pressure valve for the political and economic elites.

The regional separatist movements of Spain are major threats to the stability of the nation-state in Spain. These movements are located in the Basque Country, Catalonia, and Galicia. The more prominent are the Basque and Catalan movements. The separatist movements have their own particular history and characteristics. These regions experienced brutal repression during Franco’s dictatorship. These are nations without a state of their own and this is the major point of conflict. They believe they have the right to decide for themselves. While the central government defends their claim that the regions are Spanish territory. Language used in this debate is very telling of the situation. For example, words like Catalanofobia, Espanolofobia, and Vascofobia provide insight into the situation in Spanish society. In the Basque Country and Catalonia, they do not recognize the existence of Spain.

They refer to it as the Spanish state. This is also symbolized by the fact they refer to the language as 'Castilian' rather than 'Spanish'. The reasoning behind this is based on historical debates of whether Spain is a real nation or whether it is a creation of monarch rule through war and invasion. This tension in these separatist conflicts is well expressed by Appadurai, he writes (1996:39):

In general, separatist transnational movements, including those that have included terror in their methods, exemplify nations in search of states. Sikhs, Tamil Sri Lankans, Basques, Moros, Quebecois—each of these represents imagined communities that seek to create state of their own or carve pieces out of existing states. States, on the other hand, are everywhere seeking to monopolize the moral resources of the community, either by flatly claiming perfect coevality between nation and state, or by systematically museumizing and representing all the groups within them in a variety of heritage politics that seem remarkably uniform throughout the world (Handler:1988; Herzfeld 1982; McQueen 1988).

It is important to mention that not all citizens in Basque Country and Catalonia identify themselves as Basque or Catalan. There are portions of the population in these regions that view themselves as Spanish. This fight over identity was exemplified by the Minister of Education, José Ignacio Wert's comments during a debate about education in Catalonia. He said, "Nuestro (el gobierno) interés es españolizar a los alumnos catalanes. Y que se sientan tan orgullosos de ser españoles como catalanes." (Our interest is to hispanicize the Catalan students. And that they feel just as proud being Spanish as Catalan).¹¹ In many cases, the movements for independence are politicized by politicians to achieve personal and political objectives. This is, in many ways, the current case between the Spanish state and Catalonia. Both have been devastated by neoliberal economic policies, affecting the social conditions for many throughout the Iberian peninsula. On the Catalan side, the move towards independence is a dangerous move to cover up the social conditions a result of neoliberal policies. On the Madrid side, the Catalan

¹¹ J.A. Aunión, "Wert Quiere 'Españolizar' Cataluña" El Pais, October 10, 2012, accessed on September 25, 2014. http://sociedad.elpais.com/sociedad/2012/10/10/actualidad/1349859896_604912.html

movement is used by the conservative administration to appeal to the more nationalist voters in Spain. Both sides are using nationalism to hide the real effects of neoliberalism and to maintain power.¹²

Politics

In November of 2011, the conservative party, the Popular Party, won the presidential elections in a landslide victory against the Spanish socialist party, PSOE, attaining a majority in parliament. The conservative prime minister, Mariano Rajoy, faces multiple crises on various fronts. He and his government face a major fiscal crisis that has led to major pressure coming from the European Union. Many have blamed Rajoy and the PP for the handling of the austerity measures to the economic recession.¹³ Due to the economic situation, social and economic inequality has led to social unrest. This unrest led to social movements which prompted the PP government to pass a controversial law known “Ley Mordaza,” which financially and criminally penalizes public protests.¹⁴ Along with a media culture often influenced by government pressure on media outlets and manipulation of information on the Spanish national tv and radio.¹⁵ Rajoy also has his hands full with the Basque and Catalan independence movements. These two regions are the most prosperous regions in Spain, containing most of the major industries in the country. If the other issues were not enough for Rajoy, he and his party are being investigated

¹² Vicenç Navarro, “Las causas reales (y ocultas) del subdesarrollo social de Catalunya,” Blog: Pensamiento Crítico, Sep 14, 2015, accessed on Nov 23, 2015.

¹³ “Nobel de Economía: ‘El PP es uno de los causantes de que España esté en bancarrota,’” RT, Oct 21, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. <https://actualidad.rt.com/actualidad/189147-pp-causante-espana-bancarota>

¹⁴ “Spanish political parties urged to strengthen free expression,” International Press Institute, Nov 5, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. <http://www.freemedia.at/newssview/article/spanish-political-parties-urged-to-strengthen-free-expression.html>

¹⁵ Raphael Minder, “Spain’s News Media Are Squeezed by Government and Debt,” New York Times, Nov 5, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/06/world/europe/as-spains-media-industry-changes-rapidly-some-worry-about-objectivity.html?_r=0

for possible illegal party financing and having an illegal party slush fund. Rajoy often does not help his situation by his lack of charisma, press conferences through plasma tv's, and unwillingness to debate and appear before the public facing criticism about the measures his government passes and the charges of corruption. These are just a few of the issues facing Mariano Rajoy and the rest of the country.

El PP

One of the interesting debates on Spain, still in the 21st century, is the identity of the nation-state. In many ways, these debates show the inherent fallacies of the concept of the nation-state as a fixed reality. The nation-state is a social construction and each one has been forged through history filled with struggles over the control and identity of the nation-state. The problem facing Spain today and primarily the Spanish right, is that the concept of Spain as one nation, one language, and one religion is the same concept that was fought over during the civil war, defended by Franco and then, imposed on the Spanish population for almost 40 years. This concept of one nation, one language, and one religion is by definition Spanish conservatism's own.

The political culture in Spain is dominated by the Spanish right. The right is represented by the Partido Popular (PP). The founders of the current conservative party were all members of the Franco regime. During the transition, the party was founded under a different name, Alianza Popular, but later changed its name to Partido Popular. The founders of the party known as "Siete Magnificos": Gonzalo Fernandez de la Mora, Manuel Fraga Iribarne, Licinio de la Fuente,

Laureano Lopéz Rodó, Cruz Martínez Esterulas, Federico Silva Muñoz, and Enrique Thomas de Carranza.¹⁶

“Given that Francoist nationalism had at its centre the identification of the nation with Catholicism, traditionalism and Castilian ethnicity,...Despite efforts to the contrary since then, Catholicism and the right are still linked to a unitary conception of the Spanish nation... In fact, the PP is by history and ideology a Spanish centrist party that believes that the nation in Spain is one and indivisible and that Catholicism and the Castilian language are among the essential features of the Spanish nation (Alonso and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2015: 38).”

The PP is viewed as the inheritors of the Franco regime. Many current of its members and high-ranking officials are related to Franco ministers and members of the Francoist bureaucracy. In some cases the state is providing money grants to the Fundación Franco, an organization dedicated to the memory of the former dictator.¹⁷ The PP still defends and blocks motions to provide justice for the victims of Franco. In the supposed exemplar transition to democracy, there was never a rupture from the Franco regime, the transition was a reform based on negotiations between the Francoist elites and a selected few opposing parties. Many of the writers of the 1978 Spanish constitution were Franco ministers, one day fascists the next day founders of democracy (Tremlett, 2006; Crow, 1985; Preston, 1995; Humlebaek, 2015; Hooper, 2006; Gallo, 2009; Frenandes, 2015; Tahmassian, 2012; Baena de Alcázar, 2002).

Corruption: A Few Bad Apples¹⁸

¹⁶ Luis Egea, “El origen franquista del Partido Popular,” Eco Republicano, Jan 30, 2012, accessed on Nov 24, 2015. <http://www.ecorepublicano.es/2012/01/el-origen-franquista-del-partido-popular.html?m=1>

¹⁷ “Rajoy dice desconocer la subvención a la Fundación Franco en los PGE y habla de Rato como ‘un buen amigo,’” Público, Oct 28, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. <http://www.publico.es/politica/rajoy-dice-desconocer-subvencion-fundacion.html>

¹⁸ “Spanish corruption: A lot of bad apples,” The Economist, Nov 8, 2011, accessed on Nov 24. <http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21631126-wave-arrests-upends-political-establishment-lot-bad-apples>

For Foucault, old government was the “King with a direct hold of power in the form of the sovereign in the power in the form of his ministers, a direct hold of government over things and people (Foucault, 2008:45). This old form of government is compared to new government “which can longer intervene or hold power,” Foucault continues, “it can only exert a hold.”

Foucault further explains that new government is only interested in interests, writing:

“It (new government) deals with the phenomena of politics, that is to say, interests, which precisely constitute politics and its stakes; it deals with interests or that respect in which a given individual, thing, wealth, and so on, interests other individuals or the collective body of individuals” (Foucault, 2008:45).

Many of the current debates in Spain focus on interests, particularly the interests of those who are in power. For many who are calling for change say the government only works for the interest of the economic powers, the banks, the wealthy class, and the companies of IBEX 35. Furthermore, the the traditional political parties, PSOE and PP, are facing heavy criticism and their power is being directly challenged because of the view by Spaniards that the politicians have only been working for the interests of the parties and for themselves individually in terms of personal financial gain. The government and those in power are being challenged because their inability to balance the interests of the whole Spanish society. This can be seen in various cases. The rampant corruption between politicians and the private sector, the housing crisis and the rate of evictions, and the legal system in its treatment of the powerful facing charges. It is a result of the political reforms and measures that continues the process of the state power and capital power that continues to produce a certain form of subjectivity. Furthermore, it is the interaction between society and the state that influences the process. The law know as “La Ley

Mordaza” is a response to public protest and social discontent towards the austerity measures implemented by the government.¹⁹

An issue that has always undermined the authority of the state is corruption. Spain has a long history of corruption. One of the continuations of Franco’s regime is corruption(Preston, 1995).²⁰ In many ways it has become accepted as a normal part of the state and society. It is corruption that challenges the legitimacy of a State. There are various factors causing the corruption which include: low levels of socio-economic and political development; extensive bureaucracy and red tape; trade restrictions and governmental regulation of economic activity; and low salaries for civil servants (Heywood, 2007,2002). This has led to a general mistrust of social and private institutions. The culture of corruption has a number of different forms, from kickbacks for public works contracts to nepotism in the private and public sectors. Two current high profile cases are examples. One involves a former Popular Party treasurer, Luis Barcenas, who was discovered having a Swiss bank account with a speculated 22 million euros.²¹ An ongoing investigation has uncovered possible illegal party financing and a slush fund covering almost 20 years. The investigation has linked many high ranking members of the conservative party to accepting kickbacks, including Prime Minister Rajoy. The other current case of corruption, is the investigation of the King Felipe’s sister and his brother-in-law for embezzlement of public funds.²² Through state and economic corruption fallacies and illusion of

¹⁹ Rut De Las Hernas Bretín, “La ‘ley mordaza,’ protagonista del cuarto aniversario del 15-M,” El Pais, May 15, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015.

²⁰ Tereixa Constenla, “El gran negocio de Franco con la guerra,” El Pais, Sep 5, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. http://cultura.elpais.com/cultura/2015/09/05/actualidad/1441482173_263106.html

²¹ Alba Torbella, “Barcenas, en el ‘caso Gürtel”” El País, June 27, 2013, accessed on on September 27, 2014. http://politica.elpais.com/politica/2013/06/27/actualidad/1372337868_466968.html

²² Andreu Manresa, “Caso Nóos: La infanta Cristina declarará la última en el juicio del ‘caso Nóos,”” El Pais, Nov 12, 2015, accessed on Nov 24, 2015. http://politica.elpais.com/politica/2015/11/12/actualidad/1447340925_523621.html

the state and the elites are unveiled. The inequality and classist society is shown through the corruption where politicians rarely ever resign when facing corruption charges and the handling of high-profile cases. It is often said that there is two legal systems in Spain, one for the rich and powerful and one for everybody else. As result of the recent corruption cases, more is known about the processes of conducting business during the boom, the link between the public administration and private corporations. In Spain, the line between the private and public sector is often very thin.

The Spanish Model²³

In this section, I will focus on the economic structure of Spain. I examine the Spanish economy to show how it structure Spanish society and produces a Spanish subjectivity. Based on the concept of Hardt and Negri, how they show the production of subjectivity through labor and the economy. Hardt and Negri explain:

“The politics of biopolitical production of subjectivity helps us understand better the economic process of the metamorphoses of the common, which we analyzed earlier. The biopolitical production of ideas, codes, images, affects, and social relationships directly treats the constituent elements of human subjectivity: this terrain is precisely where subjectivity is born and resides. One might still conceive of economic production as an engagement of the subject with nature, a transformation of the object through labor, but increasingly the ‘nature’ that biopolitical labor transforms is subjectivity itself. This relation between economic production and subjectivity thus cuts out the ground from under traditional notions of the labor process and creates a potentially vertiginous loop. We can cut through some of these seeming paradoxes, though, by approaching the production process in terms of metamorphoses of the common. And it should be obvious that this kind of economic process, central to biopolitical production, is also an ontological process through which nature and subjectivity are transformed and constituted.” (Hardt and Negri, 2011: 172-173)

Therefore, to better understand Spain and current Spanish subjectivity it is crucial to examine the Spanish economy. The economy in Spain is just another continuation from the Franco’s regime

²³ This is the title of an article in the New Left Review by Isidro López and Emmanuel Rodriguez, “The Spanish Model,” 2011.

of maintaining elite economic and political power. The recent neoliberal measures are the latest in maintaining the hierarchical Spanish order. To return to Foucault and to build on his concept of neoliberalism as not only a new composition of capitalism but as a new form of controlling, regulating, and administrating society through the market. (Foucault, 1979)

Spain is currently experiencing some recovery from the economic recession due to the global recession of 2008 and the housing market crash that started the same year. This led to a banking crisis and current fiscal crisis. Following the orders from the European Union, Rajoy has followed the European answer to the global recession in the form of economic austerity measures (Fishman, 2012; Moreno, 2013; Palley, 2013; Matthijis and McNamara, 2014; Stein, 2011; Lopez and Rodriguez, 2011). The conservative administration has used the recession as a pretext to implement neoliberal reforms in social services, deregulation, and limiting the size of the central government (Vaccaro: 2014). The government has implemented major spending cuts in education, health care, and social security pensions as well as increases in income and sales taxes, and various reforms aimed at cutting state spending. Recently the Spanish government has promoted economic recovery, the consequences of austerity measures are still being felt.²⁴ These reforms have mostly affected the middle and lower classes. Employment opportunities have become much more difficult, leaving the country with an unemployment rate of almost 21.2%.²⁵ And drastic increase in precarious labor such as ‘minijobs.’²⁶ Youth unemployment is

²⁴ Suzanne Daley, “For Many in Spain, a Heralded Economic Recovery Feels like a Bust,” The New York Times, Aug 10, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/11/world/europe/for-many-in-spain-a-heralded-economic-recovery-feels-like-a-bust.html?_r=0

²⁵ Maria Tadeo, “Spanish Unemployment Rate Falls to Lowest Level Since 2011,” Bloomberg Business, Oct 22, 2015, accessed on Nov 30, 2015. <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-10-22/spanish-unemployment-rate-falls-to-lowest-level-since-2011>

²⁶ Pilar Álvarez and Manuel V. Gómez, “Spanish youths take longer than average to find first job,” El Pais, Sep 22, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. http://elpais.com/elpais/2015/09/22/inenglish/1442915877_117797.html

almost 50%, forcing many to emigrate to other European countries in what is called, la fuga de los cerebros (brain drain)(Chislett, 2015).²⁷

Through a long process after the end of the Franco regime towards Europe greatly mutated the Spanish economic structure. During the Franco regime the state controlled the major companies after the transition of 1978, the public companies began to be sold off to the private sector (Salmon, 2001).

“... the Spanish transition to neoliberal politics has been smoother, especially owing to the State’s Hobbesian configuration under Franco. As argued by Holman, Franquism enabled the different sections of the bourgeoisie to develop a ‘national’ mindset, and to work out comprehensive projects at the national level. In other words, the long experience of an authoritarian developmental State brought about a substantial modernization and a unification of the upper and the middle classes.” (Gallo, 2009:267)

The transition led the way for the liberalizing of the Spanish market which set the foundation for the current economic model.

The Spanish model was based on housing and construction. The model expanded the major cities of Spain and the throughout the Spanish coastline.

“The huge investment in transport infrastructure, which has given Spain proportionately more miles of motorways and high-speed railway networks than any country in Europe, has played an important role in opening up large areas of urbanizable land that were previously lacking in real market value. If to this is added a lax environmental policy, little inclined to put obstacles in the way of urbanization, and subsidizing for squandering energy and water on inefficient property developments, the circle is closed, with the state guaranteeing and regulating the smooth running of the financial property development circuit.”(Lopez and Rodriguez, 2011:10)

In the Spanish model, the link between the state and the development sector was crucial. The state provided the laws and reforms in regards to the land to be developed and allowing a financial system the atmosphere to provide the finance to keep the construction motor running.

²⁷ [eldiario.es](http://www.eldiario.es), “Los jóvenes que no estudian ni trabajan ya triplican en España a los que sí,” Nov 8, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. http://www.eldiario.es/sociedad/Repuntan-jovenes-ninis-triplican-sisis_0_450055168.html

Pan para Hoy, Hambre para Mañana

The Spanish economy is one not only defined by general neoliberal capitalism but it is one with particular philosophies and realities characteristic of Spain. It is an economic system based on crisis, unemployment, lack of productivity, poorly structured tax system, and lack of investment, research, and innovation (Humblebaek, 2015; Lopez and Rodriguez, 2011).

“We see increasing signs throughout the world today, in fact, that capitalist relations of production fetter the abilities of ever greater portions of the population. In the dominant regions one often hears of ‘growth without jobs,’ while in the subordinate regions an increasing number of people are becoming ‘disposable,’ useless from the perspective of capital... And it is a significant symptom of illness in an economic system that it cannot take advantage of existing productive forces and foster their growth, that it wastes the talents and abilities of the population.” (Hardt and Negri, 2011:298-299)

This describes the Spanish economy as a complex and paradox market functioning with large portions of the Spanish population being in a labor market, at one end workers are overqualified for their occupation and at the other end, large amount of unskilled labor.²⁸ How could these numbers be possible and these rates maintain themselves over the years? The answer lies in the economic structure of Spain. Spanish society and economy is one dominated by the Spanish oligarchy²⁹: Amancio Ortega (Inditex), Rafael del Pino (Ferrovial), Juan Roig (Mercadona) Isak Andic (Mango), Ana Patricia Botin (Santander) and more specifically the banking, construction, energy and tourism sectors.³⁰ Spain’s economy for the last fifty years has been based on tourism, finance, and construction. This Spanish Model of the economy, explains in various ways why

²⁸ James Badcock, “I don’t believe that this country has a 26 percent unemployment rate,” El Pais, Jan 13, 2014, accessed on Nov 23, 2015.

http://elpais.com/elpais/2014/01/12/inenglish/1389548804_952039.html

²⁹ Angel Pascual-Ramsey, “Oligarchy at the core of Spain’s Scandals,” Financial Times, Feb 14, 2013, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/d6c6bd4c-769e-11e2-8569-00144feabdc0>

³⁰ Cristina Delgado, “Lista Forbes: Amancio Ortega, Rafael Pino y Jaun Roig, los más ricos de España,” El Pais, Nov 2, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015.

http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2015/11/02/actualidad/1446469554_551977.html

Spain has been so devastated by the 2008 economic crisis. Large amounts of profits were being made and the economy ran on the development sector, banking and consumption.³¹ While the system was working the political and economic elites has no motive to change the model and invest in other sectors of the economy. “The history of capitalist forms is always necessarily a reactive history: left to its own devices capital would never abandon a regime of profit. In other words, capitalism undergoes systemic transformation only when it is forced to and when its current regime is no longer tenable” (Hardt and Negri, 2000:268).

This is in part due to a mentality of ‘pan para hoy, hambre para mañana (bread today, hunger tomorrow).’

“But a part of it is also explained by the structures of Spain’s economy and the fact that this model has not been updated sufficiently to make Spain competitive in the globalized economy. Traditionally Spanish products and services have been competitive due to low prices rather than a high level of innovation, technology or design. This model depends, obviously, on low wages and a large supply of workforce to keep wages low and historically, since the early structural adjustments of the Spanish economy following Franco’s death, the Spanish labor market was characterized by structurally high unemployment. (Humblebaek, 2015:211)

This concept of taking advantage of the moment and not planning ahead for tomorrow describes very much the philosophy of the Spanish business class. Spain is one of the European countries that invests the least in research and development throughout the private nor public sector (Humblebaek, 2015). This philosophy often leads to quick profits, poor treatment of labor, and low quality of work.

This economic model has led to a formation of a society that is not based on innovation and research as has become the major economic sectors of the post-industrial states in the North. This explains why the “generación mejor preparada en la historia de España” has been forced to

³¹ Joaquín Estefanía, “Del capitalismo familiar al financiero,” El País, Oct 25, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2015/10/20/actualidad/1445342254_062887.html

emigrate to other countries looking for opportunities for a job and a better life. Spain's economic structure doesn't require college degrees to serve tourists in La Costa del Sol.³² The construction sector does not need an educated labor force to be able to produce wealth. Houses are produced on the cheap and corners are often cut to limit costs. To show that the government and the economic powers in Spain do not have to change the economic structure because as a result of the crisis the number of the wealthy Spaniards has increased while the numbers of people entering into poverty has increased as well.³³ The economic inequality gap has widened throughout the economic crisis.³⁴ The current conservative government has enjoyed an absolute majority in the Spanish parliament since the end of 2011. They have had enough time and opportunities to find creative ways of addressing the unemployment rate and lack of growth in the economy. The PP government does not take the measures to correct the current Spanish economy because they do not need to. The Spanish economic powers are still making their money, so they are content with the current status quo. Gramsci explains this further in regards the state:

“...every State is ethical in as much as one of its most important functions is to raise the great mass of the population to a particular cultural and moral level, a level (or type) which corresponds to the needs of the productive forces of development, and hence to the interests of the ruling classes. The school as a positive educative function, and the courts as a repressive and negative educative function, are the most important State activities in this sense: but, in reality, a multitude of other so-called private initiatives and activities tend to the same end—initiatives and activities which form the apparatus of the political and cultural hegemony of the ruling classes.” (Gramsci, 200: 78)

³² Cristina Delgado, “What do foreign tourists spend their money on in Spain,” El Pais, Aug 27, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. http://elpais.com/elpais/2015/08/20/inenglish/1440090145_983960.html

³³ Europa Press, “En España hay 360,000 millonarios,” Diario Público, Oct 13, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. <http://www.publico.es/economia/espana-hay-360-000-millonarios.html>

³⁴ Fernando Gualdoni, “Más ricos y menos iguales,” El Pais. October 25, 2015. Accessed on 11/04/15.

As long as profits are being made, this economic model will continue.³⁵ As a result, the economy will structure society and education to fit the needs of the economic model.

History has a way of repeating itself and in a country like Spain that in many ways has been shaped and formed by its history, there are many reoccurring themes. Like the Spanish monarchy becoming decadent as a result of the Spanish empire in the Americas with the extraction of gold and silver. As a result, the Spanish monarchy became far too dependent on the American colonies and did not look into renovation or progressing like other Western European nations. This situation of decadence is somewhat similar with the regime of 1978. Starting with the Franco regime and the economic technocrats, the Spanish economic model was developed all the way through the economic crisis of 2008. The Spanish model was based on housing and construction, all in all, property. The model expanded through the major cities of Spain and the throughout the Spanish coastline. Through a long process after the end of the Franco regime towards Europe greatly mutated the Spanish economic structure.

In Hardt and Negri's "Empire," they analyze the process by which labor and capital in the United States, and other Western industrial states, were transformed as a result of the social movements taking place during the 60s and 70s leading to the crisis of capital in the late 70s. During this period, the industrial societies in the West underwent major transformations due to the civil rights movement, labor movements, feminist movements, counter-culture movements and the sex revolutions. For Hardt and Negri, these movements transformed the composition of labor. College students in the West were more educated than the generation of their parents and did not want a job in a factory. They, the youth, wanted employment to be able to apply more

³⁵ Vicente Clavero, "Tres grandes bancos han ganadado en nueve meses más que en todo 2014," *Publico*, Nov 17, 2015, accessed Nov 22, 2015. <http://www.publico.es/economia/tres-grandes-bancos-han-ganado.html>

knowledgable and cognitive activities in the workplace. As result, labor was leaving ‘the factory.’” Capital as a response adjusted to these social transformations by capitalizing on new forms of immaterial labor, an example being the foreground of the tech revolution of the coming decades. During this transformative period, Spain was still under the control of Franco and his regime, which very little of the social movements were able to plant themselves in Spanish society. This by no means over looks the struggles made by the anti-fascist movements, the labor movements, and the student movements during the dictatorship. The movements of the 60s greatly challenged the powers that formed society in that period, a relationship of power and resistance. A relationship of one that resistance (life) moves forward, to put it in certain terms, and power reacts. The point I want to explore is lack of social change from these movements in Spain during that period. The movements completely transformed the composition of labor and capital, in the case where labor dictates and capital reacts. This transformation did not occur in Spain. “Although the ‘economic miracle’ changed almost everything about Spain—from how and where people lived to the way in which they thought and spoke—one of its paradoxes was that what it changed least was the economy itself” (Hooper, 2006: 23). This is due to the economic and social conditions and realities of Spain at that time. In Spain, the main economic powers still dictate the sectors of labor: construction, cheap exports, banking, and tourism. Some sectors of the Spanish economy are based on immaterial labor but it is not knowledge based labor. This in many ways produces the new exodus of young educated Spaniards that are leaving the country in search of employment outside of Spain. Spain invests very little in research, innovation, and development. As a result, these sectors are do not provide major emphasis in research universities. In Spain, it is still the elites and major sectors of the economy that dictate what kind of labor will be hegemonic. While most young college graduates and professions

want to make a living in their particular field or area of interest, if it does not fit into the Spanish model, they will mostly likely have to look for work elsewhere. Another example of a certain subjectivity being imposed on the individual.

This lack of investment and the consequences from the lack of development and innovation challenges Hardt and Negri's main argument of a biopolitical economy. An economic system in which life is produced (Hardt and Negri, 2011). One of the major characteristics of "La Crisis" in Spain, is the economic system is failing to produce life. Life in Spain is being reshaped, reconfigured, and transformed. Those affected by the crisis have difficulty accessing housing, food, employment, and a livelihood. As a result, the affected can't develop and pursue their hopes and dreams. A prime example of this are the young adults who are now entering the work force and in many cases, forced to emigrate to other European countries in the north or other countries throughout the world.

"Biopolitical goods—such as ideas, affects, codes, knowledge, information, and images—still have to circulate to realize their value, but that circulation is now internal to the production process. The biopolitical circuit is really all contained in the production of the common, which is also simultaneously the production of subjectivity and social life. The process can be understood as both depending on one's perspective, the production of subjectivity, through the common and the production of common through subjectivity. Crises of the biopolitical circuit should be understood, then, as a blockage in the production of subjectivity or an obstacle to the productivity of the common." (Hardt and Negri, 2011: 299-300)

For Hardt and Negri, the new stage of capitalism, as they refer to as 'immaterial labor' or cognitive labor' has shaped a new form of economy in which life is produced. But in Spain as a result of economic model and the 2008 crisis, life is not being produced or it is but at a bare minimum.

For many Spaniards accessing housing, food, and work is a daily struggle. Almost 13.6 million Spaniards are in poverty or at-risk of social exclusion. It is more common for a full time

worker to be living in poverty. In fact almost a third of the work force does not earn a 1000 euros a month.³⁶ Unemployment creates a situation where workers have to accept poor wages and longer hours because there are millions of Spaniards without jobs. It creates a vicious circle of life between unemployment and work. From the outbreak of the 2008 recession to 2014 there have been more than 350,000 families evicted.³⁷ This is product of the housing boom, cheap loans, and harsh bankruptcy laws. In particular, the concept of ‘dación en pago,’ which legally binds the homeowner to pay the mortgage even when filing for bankruptcy.

“Unlike the United States, however, Spanish law does not consider the asset underlying the mortgage, —i.e. the dwelling—to be sufficient guarantee in the event of default by the borrower. This means that the guarantees securing loans might include the home of the mortgages’ relatives and friends. This would result in alarming chain reactions of repressions after the property bubble burst.” (Lopez and Rodriguez, 2011: 16)

This has led to the Spanish phenenom of ‘casas sin gente, gente sin casas’ (homes without people, people without homes). As a result, a breakdown in social conditions and many families not having access to shelter. Another major social and political debate is the issue of offering school cafeteria in the summer for children with limited access to food at home.³⁸ The number of people accessing food banks has increased over recent years.³⁹ The concept of ‘pobreza energetica’ is one which families cannot afford the cost of electricity to heat up their homes during the winter has become more prevalent.⁴⁰ In the midst of the crisis, there were even

³⁶ Diaro Publico “Un tercio de los trabajadores no llegan a ‘mileurista’ 11/6/2015.

<http://www.publico.es/economia/tercio-trabajadores-espanoles-no-llega.html> accessed on 11/18/2015

³⁷ Agencia Sinc, “¿Cómo para más desahucios?” Diario Público, April 30, 2015, accessed on Nov 23, 2015. <http://www.publico.es/sociedad/parar-mas-desahucios.html>

³⁸ Pedro Murillo/Antonio Jesús Mora Caballero, “Clases de verano...en alimentación,” El Pais, Aug 17, 2013, accessed on Nov 23, 2015.

http://sociedad.elpais.com/sociedad/2013/08/17/actualidad/1376769879_053535.html

³⁹ Camilo S. Baquero, “Bancos de alimentos sin vacaciones,” El Pais, June 8, 2014, accessed on Nov 24, 2015. http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2014/06/08/catalunya/1402255253_413245.html

⁴⁰ Clara Gil Del Olmo, “Colau exige cumplir la ley y que no se corten los suministros por impago,” El Pais, Nov 4, 2015, accessed on Nov 24, 2015.

http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2015/11/03/catalunya/1446565750_838238.html

proposals to change the Spanish work schedule to a more ‘anglo-saxon’ work schedule of 9 AM-5 PM to incentivize productivity.⁴¹ It is through the ‘Spanish model’ that produces these social conditions and society but also a form of life and a form of subjectivity. It is a subjectivity that is determined and defines and shapes one’s life. In the next section I will explore briefly the concept of Spain and the Spaniard.

Spain and the Spaniard

The crisis in Spain is not only an economic crisis but a crisis of Spanish society. The crisis has forced Spain to re-examine its role in Europe and as a nation itself. After centuries in decadence due to absolute monarchs, rigid social structure, and an extremely conservative Catholic church, Spain fell behind other Western European nation-states. This has caused a major sentiment of inferiority in relation to the other nation-states in Northern Europe. In the first decade of the twenty-first century Spain was growing at an extremely high rate. Spain was constructing more houses than France, England, and Germany combined (Hummelbaek, 2015). With the crash of 2008, it not only directly impacted the Spanish economy but Spain’s concept of itself in the context of Europe and the World. Spain, in many ways still longs and looks back to the days of the Spanish empire that never saw the sun set.

“In the case, imports by the southern countries, mainly from Germany, were partially financed by northern purchases of property and financial assets in those countries, particularly in Spain. In this context, it is not surprising that the general perception in Spain was of having left peripheral status behind, once and for all. For the younger generations, it was enough to travel around Europe to realize that the differences had become marginal and the prosperity and modernity, if they existed at all, were to be found as much on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees as beyond” (Lopez and Rodriguez, 2011:9).

⁴¹ Daniel Mediavilla, “Un horario laboral adecuado al reloj interno es beneficioso para la salud,” El Pais, March 14, 2015, accessed on Nov 23, 2015.
http://elpais.com/elpais/2015/03/12/ciencia/1426183870_758702.html

The economic crisis of 2008 was a major blow to the Spanish ego. As a result of an economic model, that provided an illusion of wealth and comfort to many in Spain, many of the weaknesses and fallacies of Spanish modernity were ignored and forgotten. The economic crisis unveiled the harsh realities of the ‘Spanish Model,’ the two-party system of 1978, and the ghost of four decades of a military dictatorship. Spain is now having to face itself and see all the irrationality, corruption, incoherencies, and paradoxes of Spanish post-modern society.

In the previous sections I have analyzed the historic and current conditions of economic and political conditions in Spain. The socio-economic structure of Spain along with the political power and institutions have formed a certain type of subjectivity. “Culture shapes bones. This does not mean that there is no such thing as nature, but rather nature is constantly transformed by social and cultural interactions.” (Hardt and Negri, 2011: 170) Many authors have written about the ‘Spaniard.’ (Hooper, 2006; Wright, 1957; Tremlett, 2006; Madariaga, 1928)

“Let me start by telling you something quite frankly... Don’t take us Spaniards too seriously. We aren’t worth it. We have created empires with a sleight-of-hand, and then we frittered them away like smoking a cigarette. All the wars we ever fought were fought for the wrong reasons; we have never been able to tell what our real interests were. Every time we have ever had a chance, we grabbed for the shadow and let the substance go. We were great at a time when greatness was easy... Yes; everybody today wants to know what makes a Spaniard a Spaniard... (Wright, 1957: 239)

Crow provides his own interpretation on what is a ‘Spaniard’:

“The Spaniard will die bravely for his country or for his belief; he will, indeed, die at the barricades of Oviedo, Madrid, or Córdoba for universal justice and liberty but he is unable to subordinate his personal beliefs in a collective and progressive political endeavor.” (Crow, 2005: 11)

These are just a few examples of the discourses on what is a ‘Spaniard.’ The various tropes of the ‘Spaniard’ range from lazy, passionate, stubborn, apathetic, incompetent, selfish, quixotic, exotic, etc. But it is through the interaction with the structures and institutions of power and society that help forge a particular subjectivity. The lack of political participation in the

governing process, or better said a democratic society leads to the population not holding the state powers accountable for their actions but also not having a hand in the process of their own subjectivity.

In Spain, this is a major issue, a lack of critical thought or analysis. Spaniards often confuse the act of complaining with the act of being critical. To criticize and to complain might appear to be similar but they are different. To complain is to describe a situation and have a poor and emotional opinion about the situation, thing, or topic. To criticize is to express disapproval of a thing, situation, and event but at the same time provide some form of analysis to the situation. Also, in Spain the fascist production of a passive subjectivity is seen by the acceptance of injustice, corruption, and the irrational. Spain has been cursed by centuries of poor leaders, marked by the monarchy, dictators, and now the political class (Crow, 1985). Through this process, it has become accepted as 'normal' the poor leadership. For example, it is commonly said that all politicians are corrupt and thieves who steal from the people. This has become accepted as the norm. This irrationality is not only visible in the acceptance of the quality (or lack of quality) in Spanish politics but also in the economy. Ortega y Gasset writes on Spanish irrationality and governance:

"It would be interesting and even useful to submit to this test the individual character of the average Spaniard. However, the operation would be an unpleasant one, and though useful, depressing, so I avoid it. But it would make clear the enormous does of personal demoralization, of degradation, which is produced in the average man of our country by the fact that Spain is a nation which has lived for centuries with a false conscience in the matter of commanding and obeying. The degradation is nothing else than the acceptance, as a normal, constituted condition, of an irregularity, of something which, though accepted, is still regarded as not right. As it is impossible to change into healthy normality what of its essence unhealthy and abnormal, the individual decides to adapt himself to the thing that is wrong, making himself part of the crime or irregularity. It is a mechanism similar to that indicated by the popular saying, 'One lie makes hundred.' All countries have passed through periods when someone who should not rule has made the attempt to rule over them, but a strong instinct forced them at once to concentrate their energies and to crush that irregular claim to exercise power. They rejected the

passing irregularity and thus reconstituted their morale as a people. But the Spaniard has done just the opposite; instead of resisting a form of authority which his innermost conscience repudiated, he has preferred to falsify all the rest of his being in order to bring it into line with that initial unreality. As long as this continues in our country it is in vain to hope for anything from the men of our race. There can be no elastic vigor for the difficult task of retaining a worthy position in history in society whose State, whose authority, is of its nature a fraud.” (Ortega y Gasset, 1950: 103).

A government that sells a economic recuperation with unemployment at 23% and over four million unemployed, while at the same time, many sectors of the population accepting this a normal or acceptable is irrational. This lack of critical thought and holding the representatives in power acceptable can be linked to the period of Franco, when everything in life was decided and dictated from the authorities above. Even during the economic boom in the first decade of this century, unemployment hovered around 8%. In most ‘western developed’ countries, these unemployment rates, would have led to riots in the streets. But in Spain, only to a certain degree until 15-M.

No todo lo que brilla es oro

Spain is a country of contrasts and contradictions. What is sold to the international community about Spain, basically for the tourism industry, is that Spain is an exotic place of sun, beaches, bullfights, good food, flamenco, and sangria. These are the typical images or ideas that often comes to one’s mind of Spain in the so-called Western world. This image sells and it attracts millions of visitors to Spain looking for an exotic vacation. Torrecilla writes on the different images of the ‘Spain’ and ‘the Spaniard,’ “ traditional Spain immediately evokes images of mystics and conquerors, fanatical friars, and serious and proud people, whether true or not. Exotic Spain evokes images of gypsies and bandits, bullfighters, and guitars, violence and unleashed passions, spontaneity and primitivism” (Torrecilla, 2009:217). Even in present context, these images and stereotypes are repeated and reified. One example is in films, such as

films by Pedro Almodovar, which Torrecilla calls “the modernization of the old exotic image: a perpetuation of exotic tropes framed by a modern and postmodern sensitivity” (Torrecilla, 2009: 217). Many of these stereotypes and images portrayed of Spain mask the realities facing much of the Spanish population. Much of the production of the myths and stereotypes of Spain and Spaniards is used to sell the country for economic motives based on tourism. Some of the interviewees, mentioned the quality of tourism being offered in Spain. In the recent years of the crisis, many towns and cities have created ‘low cost tourism’ or ‘drunken tourism’, offering many northern Europeans sun, beach, discotecas, and cheap alcohol.

It is again through the crisis that Spain arrives at a crossroads. Spain is in a moment of change and regeneration. New debates are taking place on all aspects of Spanish society, politics and economy. For true change to occur that produces a new society of social justice and inequality, in part, it needs to come from Spanish society and Spaniards. New concepts of Spain and the Spaniard need to be formalized and articulated to reflect the current reality many Spaniards face today. Torrecilla argues “...neither the Spain of the Reconquest and the Empire, nor the Spain of Carmen and Lagartijo does justice to the country’s current reality. The inclusive and dynamic Spain of today needs to develop an image that more accurately reflects its nature”(Torrecilla, 2009). For many, change in Spain has already begun. The 15-M movements of 2011 sparked a change in Spanish society and Spaniards, that has led to the creating a foundation for change in Spanish society (Sanchez Cedillo, 2015). It is this concept of change and regeneration I will explore in the conclusion.

5. Conclusion

Up to this point, I have focused on the power structure in Spain. I have focused on the economic and political structures and institutions that are shaping Spanish society. In this thesis,

I have argued that there is a continuation of elite power through Franquism to Neoliberalism as a result of an economic and political structure that produces Spanish subjectivity and life. My thesis explores the post-modern socio-political environment of Spain as a case study to help explore the larger question of how members of any group can effect change on a corrupt system that does not effectively serve their needs. It is the Spanish model of the economy and the new political elites of the two-party system that have been hegemonic for the last four decades. This hegemony is now being challenged as a the result of the economic crisis of 2008. I have argued throughout this thesis, the crisis of 2008 was not only an economic crisis but a social and political crisis. It is a crisis of Spanish post-modernity. The Catalan independence movement has challenged the concept of ‘Spain’ as a nation-state provoking a national identity crisis.

Furthermore, Spain has been experiencing a major social, political, and economic crisis for the past 6 years. This has led to social indignation and discontent which has manifested into various social movements. These social movements are products of an economic, social, and political crisis popularly referred to as ‘La Crisis’. This crisis is a compound of an economic recession, fiscal crisis, and repressive austerity measures demanded by the Troika (European Union, European Central Bank, and the IMF). Adding to the popular indignation, there have been multiple high profile corruption cases in the governing party, PP, and Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy, the opposition party, and the monarchy. While the government is asking the Spanish people to make economic and social sacrifices to weather the economic recession, the Spanish politicians have been implicated in crimes such as receiving kick back money for public contracts and embezzlement of public funds. To make matters worse, lack of jobs and a seemingly hopeless future for many Spanish youth has led to massive indignation, anger, and frustration.

One of the main underlying factors of the crisis is a lack of trust in the entire system of government. Spaniards no longer trust politicians to make any changes or to work for the betterment of the Spanish citizen. Citizens have lost faith in the ability of the legal system to ensure justice. Many feel the legal system is just as corrupt as the politicians, and therefore part of the problem, rather than part of the solution. “The frustrations of expectations among important sectors of the middle classes and the salariat, as a result of the ‘structural reforms,’ is one of the most decisive factors for understanding the political possibilities of the present (Iglesias, 2015:8).” Many sectors of Spanish society are demanding change due to rampant economic and political corruption, austerity measures, and declining labor and social conditions. A new wave of online media outlets are trying to challenge the main Spanish newspapers’ control of information in Spain.⁴² In response, sections of the Spanish population have started to mobilize to challenge the status quo. This form of social resistance and protest is symbolized by the 15-M of 2011. The indignados movements mark a point of departure in Spanish politics and society.

“Power can be exercised only over free subjects, and thus the resistance of those subjects is not really posterior to power but an expression of their freedom, which is prior. Revolt as an exercise of freedom not only precedes but also prefigures the forms that power will take in reaction. If we are to understand better the nature of the emerging Empire, then, we need to investigate the antagonisms, revolts, and rebellion that press against it. These struggles for freedom determine the entire development of the structure of power.” (Hardt and Negri, 2011:235)

It is through this resistance now is at the base of current Spanish politics and the December 20 elections. These elections will be another watershed moment in Spanish history. Spain is approaching a crossroads. The December 20th elections will mark the path Spain will take in the

⁴² Bécquer Seguín and Sebastian Faber, “The Spanish Media Are the Worst in Europe. These Upstarts Are Trying to Change That,” *The Nation*, Sep 15, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. <http://www.thenation.com/article/the-spanish-media-are-the-worst-in-europe-these-upstarts-are-trying-to-change-that/>

future, whether to continue with reforms of the regime of 78 or rupture and take an uncharted course in constructing new political, social, and economic institutions as well as new conceptions of the Spanish nation-state.

One of the main themes of Spanish politics today is ‘change’ or ‘regeneration.’ This is a direct attack at the establishment of the two-party system that has been governing since the transition to democracy in 1978. Often, the establishment has been called the ‘Casta’ or ‘Caste’ in reference to the political and economic elites that control and form a major part of the power structure of the country.⁴³ The new political party that has created a new challenge to the status quo in Spain is Podemos led Pablo Iglesias.⁴⁴ Iglesias uses Gramsci’s concept of hegemony and organic crisis to describe the current political situation in Spain.

“Hegemony is the power of the leading elites to convince the subaltern groups that they share the same interests, including them within a general consensus, albeit in a subordinate role. Loss of that hegemony created an organic crisis, which can manifest itself in the failure of the ruling institutions—including the mainstream political parties—to prevent and renew their legitimacy. In Spain, as in other Eurozone countries, the economic meltdown and the measures imposed to ‘save the single currency’ raised the specter of an organic crisis, which had a political and social system that emerged from the post-franco transition. The principal social expression of this regime crisis was the 15-M movement, the vast indignado mobilization which, starting on 15 May 2011, occupied city squares across for weeks on end. Its principal political expression has been Podemos.” (Iglesias, 2015)

As a result, new political parties have been forming and gaining amongst the Spanish voters. The municipal elections of May this year in major cities such as Barcelona, Madrid, Cadiz and Valencia, are an example of the changing political landscape in Spain⁴⁵.

⁴³ Miguel del Río, “La política tradicional, por definición, decepciona,” [eldiariocantabria.es](http://www.eldiariocantabria.es/articulo/politica/politica-tradicional-definicion-decepciona/20151024182542004204.html), Oct 24, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. <http://www.eldiariocantabria.es/articulo/politica/politica-tradicional-definicion-decepciona/20151024182542004204.html>

⁴⁴ Manel Barriere, Andy Durgan, and Sam Robson, “The challenge of Podemos,” *International Socialism*, Jan 5, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. <http://isj.org.uk/the-challenge-of-podemos/>

⁴⁵ Jairo Vargas, “Guía definitiva (o no) para no perderse por la izquierda,” *Publico*, Nov 5, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015. <http://www.publico.es/politica/guia-definitiva-o-no-votante.html>

Multiple parties have formed from the Spanish left but the two new main parties are: Podemos, a party founded out of the 15M movement of 2011, and Ciudadanos, a Catalan party that represents a new political force of the Spanish right. Podemos is based on the concept of change and a direct challenge to the Spanish establishment. The party, led by co-founder and political science professor Pablo Iglesias, is offering to the Spanish electorate a political force that wants to use institutional power to reform and transform Spanish politics and society. Podemos is a direct challenge to the hegemonic regime of 78'. It not only challenges the two party democracy and neoliberal economic system but also challenges the hegemonic conception of the Castilian Spain as one nation, one language, and one religion. On the other hand, Ciudadanos represents a party that offers itself as a cleaner and more effective system party. System, is meant has the Western democratic neoliberal capitalist system. Ciudadanos offers the Spanish voters an alternative to the current Spanish parties full of corruption and an economic system plagued by crony capitalism. Ciudadanos party is pro-free market and pro-Spanish unity.

The constant antagonism between power and resistance in Spain is clearly seen throughout its history. Even in the present day context, a prime example is the rise of new political parties. Podemos, a party founded in the political science department of the Complutense University of Madrid and the by product of the 15-M movement of 2011. It is a direct challenge to the establishment of the economic and political elites, the companies of the IBEX 35 and the two parties of transition of 78'. Now, in the period of transition 2.0, the conservative party, Ciudadanos, has been the elites' answer to the challenge of Podemos. The leader of Ciudadanos, Albert Rivera, a Catalan banker. The Spanish media has done their part in selling Rivera and his party, as the reasonable and responsible choice in the period of change. In the end, like the Spanish expression "Aunque la mona se vista de seda, mona se queda" ('putting

lipstick on a pig’).” Ciudadanos, has voted against or opposed measures for gender income inequality, domestic violence, justice for victims of Franco, condemning Franco and the removal of street names of Franco and his regime, and granting non-documented immigrants health care coverage⁴⁶. The orange party is a neoliberal party offering as solutions to Spain’s economic problems more market based measures. They propose the market will provide the solutions, it’s just a question of getting rid of crony capitalism and corruption in Spain. The transition of 78 was controlled by Adolfo Suarez and King Juan Carlos. Will the transition 2.0 be dominated by Albert Rivera and King Felipe?⁴⁷

The Transition of 78 is often remarked as a period of fear and uncertainty somewhat similar to the current political situation facing the country today. But the fear is different and among different sectors of society. The conservatives almost by definition are fearful in the face of change and progress especially in Spain, the Spanish right has been historically reactionary and opposed to any form of democratization of society for centuries. But now in this possible moment of regeneration, the progressive forces no longer have to fear the Spanish military which as a long history of defending the classist society in Spain. The Spanish military played a fundamental role in the transition of 1978, always in the background of performing a coup d’etat if not getting their way. And there was an eventual coup in 1981 and a show of force to the principle politicians of the transition.

Fear seems to be a constant theme. People want change but are afraid of the possible consequences of change. People often complain about how bad the situation is in terms of

⁴⁶ “Rivera dice que C’s no apoyó quitar la medalla de Catalunya a Franco por no abrir debates ‘sobre memoria historica,’” [eldiario.es](http://www.eldiario.es), Nov 3, 2015, accessed on Nov 20, 2015.

http://www.eldiario.es/aragon/politica/Rivera-Cs-Calatayud-Franco-historica_0_448305351.html

⁴⁷ Javier Gallego, “Operación Ciudadanos,” [eldiario.es](http://www.eldiario.es), Nov 2, 2015, accessed on Nov 22, 2015.

http://www.eldiario.es/carnecruda/lo-llevamos-crudo/Operacion-Ciudadanos_6_448015234.html

opportunities and political corruption but are afraid of change. They are more willing to contend with a broken system and the corrupt politicians that produce injustice rather than be willing to try/experiment with a new system or new people in charge. Over time people and families have been able to carve out their spot under the sun and form a life within the current Spanish society. Even though the system is often criticized and talked about, little is done to change. People want to protect their interests in the system and are afraid of what change can produce. Fear of change will be the underlying theme throughout the election campaign and the elections on December 20th. Are the people of Spain willing to change and allow change to occur? Most people who have been affected by the crisis are willing and wanting to change because the system does not work for them. Their hopes, dreams, and more importantly their lives are not being met by the current political and economic structure. Are Spaniards willing to sacrifice or willing to overcome the fear of the unknown to a search for a new society? History plays a crucial role, Spanish society has historically been afraid of change, this fear is epitomized by the expression, "*Vivan las caenas*," (long live the chains). Can Spain break free of its chains? Does it want to?

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