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# The Peculiarities of the Spaniards: Historical Approaches to the Early Modern State

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*This chapter offers a brief overview of how distinctive national historiographic traditions have affected the study and broader understanding of institutions, law and the state in early modern Spain. After reviewing some of the factors influencing the study of the Hispanic Monarchy – specifically its unparalleled geographical and institutional breadth and the peculiar problems of terminology to which this gives rise – three major historiographical controversies are examined. These are: the question of absolutism in Castile; the nature of the Spanish state; and the diverse sources of unity and stability within this far-flung empire. It closes by mentioning certain points of comparison with the study of other European monarchies, and identifies some of the more persistent peculiarities of the Spanish case, especially the unusual protagonism of historians of law in recent Spanish historiography, and the singular tendency to deny altogether the existence of an early modern state.*

The title of this chapter is borrowed from the late English historian E.P. Thompson, who published a famous essay in 1965 on the – only partly historiographical – peculiarities of the English<sup>1</sup>. It serves to frame the following cursory overview of how distinctive national historiographic traditions have affected the study and broader understanding of the state, institutions, and law in early modern Spain. ‘Early Modern’ here is limited by and large to the period of the Habsburgs. This era begins, broadly speaking, in the reign of their immediate precursors, the so-called “Catholic Kings” Isabel and Ferdinand, who married in 1469. It lasts to the death of the last Habsburg king, Charles II, in 1700, and the subsequent arrival of the new Bourbon dynasty from France. Its focus will be on several promising, if problematic dimensions of the interpretative framework within which the Spanish Monarchy of the 16th and 17th centuries has been studied.

One useful starting point involves the recognition of difference. There were obviously many ways in which Spain differed from its neighbors in the rest of early modern Europe. Many of these features moreover played a considerable role in shaping the distinctive conceptual frameworks within which its study has unfolded. Two are of particular importance in this regard. First, there is the sheer geographical and institutional breadth of the subject. ‘Early modern Spain’ or the ‘Spanish Monarchy’ or ‘Spanish Empire’ was an entity that comprised at least five component parts. These included:

1. The kingdom of Castile, the heartland of what was increasingly referred to as ‘Spain’. At that time it covered not only Old and New Castile – known presently as the regions of Castile-León and Castile-La Mancha – but also most of the Iberian peninsula. It was moreover the part of the Monarchy that experienced the most notable accretions during the early modern period. These included the military conquest of the kingdoms of Granada (1492) and Navarre (1512). By far the greatest expansion involved the incorporation of a vast number of overseas possessions beginning with the Columbus voyage of 1492. Initial settlement in the Caribbean was quickly followed by expeditions of conquest into Mexico (1519), the Philippines (1521), Central America (1522), Peru (1532), and elsewhere.
2. The eastern part of the peninsula known as the Crown of Aragon, whose mainland territories included the kingdoms of Aragon and Valencia and the Principality of Catalonia, as well as the Balearic Islands.
3. Moving further eastward, the portions of the Italian peninsula and islands under the direct dominion of Castile and Aragon. These comprised the kingdoms of Naples (broadly, the whole *Mezzogiorno*), Sicily, and Sardinia, the duchy of Milan following its infeudation into the Empire in 1535, and a number of lesser entities, including a string of fortresses in coastal Tuscany known as the *Presidios*.
4. The kingdom of Portugal, from the (contested) accession to its throne of Philip II in 1580 to the 1640 revolt that restored its independence under the Bragança dynasty.
5. The many different cities, provinces, and other jurisdictions known as the Low Countries. This proved to be an extremely complex institutional berth, especially since it included non-contiguous territories such as the Franche-Comté, which was ruled administratively from Brussels.

That no other ‘country’ in early modern Europe stretched over so much of the planet leads among other things to endless confusion over exactly what was ‘Spain’, and how this Spain differed (if at all) from its empire. What cannot be doubted, however, is that the Hispanic Monarchy was the most extensive political body in western Europe, or rather, which had its base in western Europe, because this monarchy, needless to say, extended far beyond the confines of the continent. It is equally obvious that the evolving nature of Spanish rule overseas has long been one of the central themes of early modern Spanish political historiography. Judgments of the impact of Spanish expansion have been largely polarized between the harsh condemnation (mostly by northern European Protestants) of the Spanish conquerors as uniquely cruel oppressors of the native peoples of the New World – the so-called “Black Legend” – and its opposite, the apologetic “White Legend” which highlights instead Spain’s noble intentions and “civilizing” missionary role. Whatever one’s position in this frankly musty debate, all commentators agree on the importance of the empire for the future history of Europe as well as the Americas. Above all, it was here, in this Monarchy, where one first saw the transition from the traditional European-bound understanding of empire, to empire

in the more modern sense of centralized rule over distant, and especially overseas territories<sup>2</sup>.

The second difference was less unique, but still exceptional, and involved the propriety of speaking of ‘Spain’ at all in the Habsburg era. That is, Spain’s identity as a country, monarchy, political system, or even place on the map was beset by a sort of existential uncertainty not found in, say, England or France during this period. Simply put, if one defines Spain in terms of a single national territory bearing that name, then Spain did not exist under the Habsburgs. Spain in the sense of a unified nation-state did not come into being until 1714, when the victory of the Bourbon candidate to the throne, Philip V (1700-1746), at the end of the War of Spanish Succession led to the abolition of the Crown of Aragon and the absorption of its territories into the institutional and legal framework of Castile. For this reason many scholars prefer to use the archaic-sounding but historically accurate terms the ‘Spanish’ or ‘Hispanic Monarchy’, and even the ‘Spanish Empire’, to refer to a state that oversaw and tried its best to harness the resources and loyalties of many different nations.

One problem is what to call this hodge-podge; another is how to characterize it. One formula much favored of late is a term adopted by the leading student of early modern Spain, John Elliott: “composite monarchy”<sup>3</sup>. While the aptness of this designation has generated some debate<sup>4</sup>, the following pages will focus less on terminology and more on the specific characteristics historians have attributed to this political system. To that end three major controversies will be pressed into service to introduce the main concern of this chapter, that is, the more influential historiographic frameworks in which the political, institutional, and legal development of early modern Spain has been studied.

## ABSOLUTISM IN CASTILE

The traditional view – which was consolidated in Spain during the nineteenth century, although it did not lack for significant precedents beforehand – was that Castile was a paradigm of absolutism in early modern Europe. *Nota bene*: not *the* paradigm. That honor belonged to Louis XIV’s France or Frederick the Great’s Prussia, not to mention the Ottoman Empire. But certainly Castile made a strong claim on the historical imagination in this respect, not least for reasons of chronological priority. For of the three main projects in state-building known as the ‘new monarchies’, whose rise began in the later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the Castile of Ferdinand and Isabella (1469-1516), and then of Charles V (1516-1555) and especially Philip II (1555-1598), was the first to acquire a reputation as an exemplar of absolutism in the sense of unfettered royal rule<sup>5</sup>.

In historiographic terms, the lack in early modern Castile of effective external, institutional control on the royal will was demonstrated through two comparisons. The first looked beyond the Iberian peninsula to other European powers. The most persistent contrast here was with England, whose political history during the sixteenth and sev-

enteenth centuries centered, it was argued, around an increasingly rough entanglement between the crown and Parliament which ended, as is well known, in victory for the latter. Castile, on the other hand, witnessed the opposite. There the national parliamentary assembly known as the *Cortes* went down to an early defeat during the so-called *Comunero* revolt of 1520-21 – a movement of unquestionable importance that would later become a central episode in the Spanish national narrative<sup>6</sup>. According to prevailing interpretations, the triumph of Charles V and his aristocratic allies over the cities so enfeebled this institution that it ceased to meet from the mid-seventeenth century onward – that is, precisely the period in which the English Parliament prevailed over Charles I following the Civil War of the 1640s.

The second comparison looks not outward, but inward, within the Iberian peninsula, to Castile's longstanding rival, the crown of Aragon. Here the standard wisdom emphasizes the contrast between absolutist Castile and the constitutionalist kingdoms to its east. Once again, the disadvantage lay with the former. Thus, while the king milked Castile dry through ruinous taxation, he was able to get very little out of his Aragonese possessions, which successfully defended the privileges and exemptions that formed part of their impressively solid constitutionalist framework. The latter was especially true of Catalonia. There clumsy efforts in the 1620s and 30s by the Count-Duke of Olivares, the favorite of Philip IV from 1621 to his fall in 1643, to expand royal power and increase tax receipts led to open revolt and secession from the Monarchy in 1640<sup>7</sup>. What is more, the distinction between absolutist center and constitutionalist periphery is still a very central part of historical understanding in contemporary Spain, and continues to influence political debates in the present (more on this below).

More recent generations of historians – both Spaniards and foreigners working on early modern Spain – have done much to modify the aging construct of Castilian absolutism, in a way somewhat parallel to the rethinking of the earlier Whig and Marxist interpretations of early modern English history known as 'revisionism'. The centerpiece of this rethinking has involved a major shift in considering the role of parliament in Castile, along with a reappraisal of the capacity of urban elites in particular to manipulate monarchical institutions and practices to their advantage<sup>8</sup>. The highly influential historian Antonio Domínguez Ortiz may have overstated the case when he affirmed that in early modern Spain almost all the powers one thinks of as belonging to the central government were run by the cities<sup>9</sup>. However, there can be no question that virtually no one now dismisses the municipalities of early modern Castile as chastened and inert pawns of the central government. Rather, they are credited with wide powers, thanks above all to their deep involvement in state administration and the collection of taxes at a local level. The latter in particular endowed them with impressive leverage when negotiating with the king, whose dependence on the cooperation of the urban elites in order to sustain the royal treasury considerably reduced his own room for manoeuvre.

Closely allied to this new vision of the balance of power between center and locality within Castile is a parallel rethinking of Castile's role as the administrative – and particularly financial – as well as geographical center of the Spanish empire. The tradi-

tional wisdom is that Castile assumed this role – to its ultimate misfortune – thanks to its absolutist polity. That is, its inability to defend itself against the encroachments and demands of its monarchs led to its populace and resources being bled dry in its rulers' futile pursuit of hegemony in both Europe and the Americas. In this script, Castile appears as much a victim as a beneficiary of pan-Hispanic imperialism. Recent work has begun to question this point of view, above all by emphasizing the way certain groups – once again, the local and regional elites centering on cities loom especially large – profited from the creation and consolidation of the complex political, economic, and social structures through which the empire was financed and managed<sup>10</sup>. That the same elites would prove so successful in transferring the burden of rising taxes to the middle and lower classes under their aegis merely rounds off what seems to be a growing consensus regarding a monarchy that, while absolutist in theory, turned out to be far from such in practice.

### THE NATURE OF THE STATE

This brings up a second and closely related question, that of the nature of the state in early modern Spain. Rethinking Castilian absolutism has had many corollaries, especially in regard to the structure and power of the state. The older view of Ferdinand and Isabella's major achievements having rested on the creation of a powerful centralized state is now seen in a radically different light. In fact, an influential current in the history of Spanish politics and law has gone so far as virtually to deny the existence of a state altogether. This position has been identified with three scholars in particular: the legal historians Bartolomé Clavero and Antonio M. Hespanha, and the political historian Pablo Fernández Albaladejo<sup>11</sup>. At the risk of oversimplification, one can summarize their line of argument as follows: that the state did not exist in early modern Spain, at least in terms of a state defined by the claim and exercise of the sovereign powers enumerated by the classic legal-institutional history of the nineteenth century exemplified by Savigny and later by the historical sociology of Max Weber. Rather, what existed was a confusing plethora of competing jurisdictions presided over by the figure – actually, a legal fiction – of a monarch. The latter's patrimonial practices moreover betrayed all too little Weberian rationality, and all too much of the personalism, considerations of family and dynastic strategy, and other restraints on central power familiar to modern-day students of the political anthropology of what used to be called “traditional” societies and cultures.

Such a hasty overview may seem more a caricature than a summary. Suffice it to note that the main purpose of this revisionist erasure of the state has been the very laudable desire to battle the anachronism of applying later categories of legal, bureaucratic, and institutional rationality that simply do not fit either early modern realities of power or the cultural frameworks that shaped these realities. This historicizing effort is exemplified by Hespanha's identification of the fundamental paradox of power of the early modern period: that while the image of political organization tended toward centralization, through (often rather literal) incarnation in the figure of the monarch, reality

headed in the opposite direction, toward considerable administrative decentralization. The result of this paradox was, to use his term, a system of 'preeminent monarchy', credibly represented and read as both unitary and pluralist at the same time<sup>12</sup>.

## THE SOURCES OF UNITY

A third issue involves a fundamental question to be asked of any multiple monarchy: what kept this agglomeration – and such a widely dispersed one in particular – together? Posing the question this way may seem at first sight somewhat anachronistic. After all, why should one suppose that any form of political organization tends naturally toward its undoing? That the question is framed in this manner doubtless reflects the fact that political disaggregation is very much on Spanish minds these days. Indeed, arguably the single most influential tendency in Spanish politics at the present is what one could call a centrifugal questioning of, and challenge to, state centralism. The so-called peripheral nationalisms in present-day Spain – which include not only the formal political movements of the Basques, Catalans, and Galicians, but also a far less articulated yet very real sense of hostility to central government elsewhere in the country – have developed a strong historiographical component. This is so much in evidence that a good part of political debate now consists of arguments concerning the history of the relations between 'state' – understood invariably as the centralization of political and administrative power – and 'society' at large, depicted as individuals and communities whom the state has – according to many – largely deprived of powers and rights. Needless to say, such a vision places overriding emphasis on the instances of conflict and hostility between the Monarchy's center and various peripheries – geographic, social, even religious and ethnic<sup>13</sup>. Explicitly or implicitly, one winds up dwelling on the same question: what held – or holds – the Spanish monarchy together?

In the terrain of early modern history, it is clear that many contemporaries took a dim view of the possibilities of stability within multinational monarchies. Giovanni Botero, for example, one of the most attentive observers of such polities in early modern Europe, argued that the cards were stacked against such states, thanks to the monarch's inability simultaneously to satisfy its individual members<sup>14</sup>. In such circumstances, he and others believed, stability could hardly be taken for granted. Rather, its pursuit involved a predictably broad range of factors. While it would be difficult to try to sort out their varying order of importance, at least four deserve mention.

- First, the question of military force. Obviously, coercion played a role in encouraging loyalties; this was especially true in the non-peninsular parts of the Monarchy, above all Italy and the Low Countries. Yet over the long run what stands out are the limits to the deployment and influence of military power. Even though beginning in the 16th century the Spanish monarchy created the largest and most effective military administration in Europe, the actual force at its disposal was minimal, especially within the Iberian peninsula itself. And, looking closely at some recent figures for troop strengths, one can say much the same for Italy as well<sup>15</sup>. Above all, the case

of the Low Countries suggests that where the military intervention was required to enforce political unity, it proved not only a failure, but also a highly counter-productive one. Indeed, one could argue that the costs of the eighty-year struggle to subdue the rebellious provinces of the North led in the end to the Monarchy's undoing.

- It is equally clear that within the Spanish Monarchy, the power of attraction of a centralizing court culture was fairly limited. This is not to say that the question of dynastic loyalty, much less a focus on various figures hovering around the political center, was unimportant<sup>16</sup>. Rather, it is simply to suggest that Norbert Elias's Versailles-centric model of political loyalty generated by a trickle-down court culture is not of great help in understanding the Spanish case<sup>17</sup>.
- Religion was a different matter. José de Pellicer, a royal chronicler and propagandist writing in the middle decades of the 17th century, when the system was under its greatest strains, argued that the two sources of strength of the Spanish Monarchy were religion and justice<sup>18</sup>. One way to read a bald statement like this is to take it at its word: the militant international (and domestic) defense of the Catholic faith, joined with a political culture firmly committed to depicting monarchical authority in providential, even messianic terms, provided the glue which bound together the widely disparate parts of a supranational monarchy. Political unity thus rested on confessional unity. As long as the latter held, the former would continue in place, despite its growing string of failures in international politics and diplomacy. Hence the widespread conviction that thanks to the vigilance of the monarchy and its institutions, especially the Inquisition, confessional division did not cause the same political trouble in the Spanish Monarchy that it did elsewhere<sup>19</sup>. Once again, that the sole exception to this rule, that of the Low Countries, led to truly disastrous results for Spain, merely confirmed for contemporaries the wisdom of taking strong measures against heterodoxy.
- One can look at the same structure from a far less spiritual angle. While shared religious beliefs may have provided the ideological underpinnings for unity, other arrangements helped to shore up the main pillars of the edifice of empire. Foremost among these was the acquiescence in, and even enthusiasm for empire on the part of different strata of social and political leaders. Seen from this perspective, the Hispanic multiple monarchy boasted a singularly successful history of integrating its leading political actors into a common structure. The centerpiece of this edifice of stability was a clubbish condominium of interests between the king and court on the one hand, and regional and national elites on the other. Insuring a substantial degree of autonomy for the local privileged classes brought – or rather, bought – their continued assent to the fiction of multiple monarchy. The latter was a fiction in two senses. First, that for these regional and national elites, the monarchy most worth thinking about was their own polity, not the supranational conglomerate. Second, the monarch's part of this monarchy retained the form but not the substance of power. The latter remained in essentially local hands. In such a reading, it would be a gullible historian indeed who would take the constant complaints



of peripheral elites about the monarch's absence at face value. Historical reality seems to have been the contrary: it was the very absence of the monarch that made the system work. Such would help explain such curious episodes as the widely-held sentiment among the Catalans that the hapless Charles II was the best king they had ever had<sup>20</sup>. His very ineffectiveness left them to their own devices, and this was what they most wanted.

Whichever way one looks at it, giving primacy either to shared loyalties and beliefs or to extremely pragmatic workings of power, there seems to be fairly widespread agreement among historians that there was one overriding cause of the effective functioning – or its absence – of the Monarchy. The key was the relations between central government, focused around but hardly limited to the figure of the monarch, and a wide range of elites located at both the center and the multiple peripheries of the imperial system. This 'wide range' should moreover be taken quite literally, as it comprises groups as diverse as urban oligarchies; all levels of the territorial aristocracy, whose principal bulwark of power continued to be the seignorial regime; state bureaucrats; the Church; merchant and financial interests; and the military, among others<sup>21</sup>.

One thing is to acknowledge the power – often manifested as a capacity for resistance – of these varying elites and interest groups. It is another thing altogether to make them virtually the sole protagonists of the politics of the period. Structural analyses of this sort nevertheless tend to do precisely that. By placing overriding emphasis on the long-term satisfaction or discontents of regional and national elites as the determining variable of power, several crucial dimensions of history are lost from sight. Foremost among these is the impact of change within an uncertain and evolving political system.

Many patterns of contextual change need to be kept in mind when analyzing the Hispanic Monarchy of the 16th and 17th centuries. Five will receive brief mention here. First, and quite obviously, there is the question of political conjuncture. This involved, more specifically, Spain's rise to, and eventual loss of, political and military preeminence within the concert of European states. Second, one should keep in view transformations in the balance between the diverse, even contradictory geopolitical and economic interests of this very heterogenous empire. Such was manifested in, for instance, the shifts between the Mediterranean and Atlantic orientations of foreign policy. This breadth of conflicting interests was, needless to say, the principal factor leading to the over-extension of Spain's commitments far beyond its capacity to mobilize resources<sup>22</sup>. Third, there is the contradiction between the construction of political power thanks to the mobilization of these resources – which was impressive by any standards, despite its long-term failure – and what was widely perceived, and still is largely seen, as Spain's domestic economic 'failure'<sup>23</sup>. And fourth, it must be kept in mind that many if not all roles and positions within this political system were not fixed. Of course, Spain's, or rather Castile's place at the center did not alter during the Habsburg era. However, the same cannot be said for other members of the Monarchy, many of whom showed considerable capacity for movement. Recent work on the Italian dependencies, for example, has begun to distinguish between different levels of contribution to and status

within the empire. Of particular importance in this regard was the kingdom of Naples's crucial loss of standing during the sixteenth century, when it moved from what has been dubbed a semi-peripheral to a fully peripheral position<sup>24</sup>.

The fifth and most curious pattern of change is actually a sort of anti-pattern, in that longterm attempts to strengthen monarchical authority did not proceed in a markedly regular fashion. Rather, what might be called the political project of centralization experienced considerable variations in intensity<sup>25</sup>. This is best seen when considering the crisis years of the mid-seventeenth century. As Elliott and others have taken pains to emphasize, one could find throughout Europe during the 1620s a sense of a new generation of rulers on the rise. This new leadership differed from its elders in being less patient with existing arrangements, and markedly indifferent or hostile to local constitutionalism. In the Spanish case, the royal favorite the count-duke of Olivares looked to greater unity within the Monarchy as an indispensable preliminary to his plans to increase the extraction of resources upon which international military and diplomatic success depended. In the end, the rising fiscal pressures which threatened to erode the differences between the privileged and non-privileged classes combined with military reverses and then the 1640 revolts in Catalonia and Portugal to bring the Olivares regime to a disastrous end. Such an outcome not surprisingly led to recognition by the next generation of rulers and political analysts that the survival of the system depended on respect for diversity, not futile attempts at heightened unity<sup>26</sup>. While this was evidently rather different from what Olivares envisioned, it was arguably in deeper consonance with what had been the logic of imperial success up to that point.

Obviously many other considerations need to be kept in mind when considering the longterm characteristics and rationale of the early modern Spanish Monarchy. But these are precisely the sort of patterns of change that reveal the inadequacies of any approach that limits its focus to the single issue of the accommodation of local elites within what was a hopelessly complex polity. And there is one final question to consider. As suggested above, by far the most work along these lines has examined the sorts of relations that tied the more distant members of the Monarchy to the political center<sup>27</sup>. Much less attention has been devoted to what made for political stability within Castile itself. Since Castile has habitually been seen as the main beneficiary of the imperial system, given the overseer role it played within the Monarchy, its loyalty – just like its absolutist character – has been taken for granted. However, this has changed as of late. Recent studies have begun to ask why the heavy political, demographic, and economic costs of empire for Castile did not provoke a stronger and more negative reaction. Some of the more interesting work in Spanish political history is now devoted precisely to trying to answer this admittedly perplexing question.

## PRESENT AND FUTURE ISSUES

A few words could be said about where this historiography is headed. It surely comes as little surprise in these post-modern times to find emphasis being placed on complex-

ity and contradictions, and on the many ironies and paradoxes attending the Spanish Monarchy and its modes of functioning. Some of these new lines and emphases of research include:

1. **Strength through Negotiation.** The creation and maintenance of political and dynastic loyalty in the Spanish Monarchy was a process, not a given. This process moreover involved constant negotiation, not just among highly-placed individuals, but also among familial, corporative, and other collective interests<sup>28</sup>. Hence the crucial importance of mediation in general, and patron-client ties in particular, in – quite literally – holding the system together. In regard to the latter, Spain and its monarch enjoyed a considerable advantage over its rivals. The Spanish crown had vast resources of patronage at its disposal. The clearest example involves the military orders, along with control over clerical appointments, both of which were made possible thanks to a wide range of papal concessions. Attentive monarchs took care not to delegate the awarding of patronage to subordinates outside the court, such as the viceroys. Rather, they reserved this all-important power to the apex of the system. The king's ample ability to be generous is now increasingly regarded as *the* key hidden strength making for loyalties both near and distant.
2. **Overlapping Identities.** The Monarchy presided over a world of strong local identities, of the sort which, when challenged, could become sources of instability. Yet recent work has underscored how these identities were not incompatible with wider allegiances. This is merely one of many points of interest suggested in Peter Sahlins's important case study of the interplay of local, regional, and national identities in the Catalan Pyrenees, and many other examples could be adduced<sup>29</sup>.
3. **Weighing Conflict.** These identities and interests were defined and represented in varying and conflicting ways. One result of this agonistic situation was that conflict, or what might be more accurately called "micro-conflict", was an inevitable, even fairly normal byproduct of this system. Under such conditions stability was predicated on another process, that of the informal as well as formal resolution of seemingly infinite conflicts which, once again, involved ongoing forms of arbitration and negotiation among many different historical agents.
4. **Dramatis Personae.** As suggested earlier, the system's functioning depended on its embracing a broad range of actors. In certain contexts, this breadth extended considerably beyond the various elites involved. Thus, alongside the classic 'aristocratic constitutionalism' of the period, one can also glimpse the importance of middling and even popular political currents and tendencies<sup>30</sup>. This was a fact of life clearly recognized by political leaders themselves. For example, viceroys in Italy – more often than not Castilian aristocrats – often tried to increase their leverage by playing off different social groups against each other. Thus in Naples, where the viceroy named the *Eletto del Popolo*, or popular representative to the municipal government, there was a strong inclination to reinforce this position as a sort of check on the local barons<sup>31</sup>. Such efforts could backfire, of course. Hence in Lombardy, the attempt

of the Governor, the Count of Fuentes, to alleviate the tax burden in the rural areas under Milanese jurisdiction in the early seventeenth century got him in hot water with the civic oligarchy, which successfully conspired to neutralize Madrid's support for his policies<sup>32</sup>. In any event, non-elite political perceptions and practices pulled their weight within the Monarchy, and not just during moments of instability and revolt.

## SUMMARY

This brief overview has sought to convey an impression of historiographic dynamism and creative flux, as much of what has passed for traditional wisdom in Spanish political, legal, and institutional history is being subjected to critical examination. In such a situation uncertainty – or rather, questioning former certainties – is very much the order of the day. The main result is the retreat in certain strategic sectors away from many of the classic lines of interpretation of the political history of early modern Europe as a whole. The new positions being taken up tend to stress the need for nuance and the recognition of complexities, and thus gravitate toward a sort of interpretative middle ground. There are, to be sure, exceptions to this trend, especially in the more politicized reaches of historical argument. But the ground of politics is not what it used to be. It has to a large extent shifted away from the ideological polarizations of the past, which pitted the self-defined 'progressive' history of the left against the avowedly traditionalist and often confessional history of the right. Nationalism, or rather the diverse Iberian nationalisms, is now the question that most self-consciously injects political passion into historical debates. Not by accident, this is the arena where nuance seems to hold less sway, and where methodological and conceptual renovation is less in evidence.

Equally visible are recent attempts to see the evolution of Spanish politics and institutions in closer connection with happenings elsewhere in Europe<sup>33</sup>. This trend merits emphasis. To state that much recent work, and especially the more innovative studies, is undertaken in consonance with political history in the rest of Europe may sound banal. Yet it is worth pointing out that this is very much a novelty. Until just recently, Spanish historiography had been largely self-contained. Such a state of isolation meant that little systematic reference was made to history outside the Iberian peninsula. One could moreover argue that this was especially true of political and institutional history, whose framework was more decidedly national – indeed, nationalist – in character than that of, say, economic or social history. Hispanic historiography is presently undergoing a process of Europeization or, to use a term much in vogue these days, 'normalization', that involves replacing an older *Sonderweg* for a new perception of the close parallels between Iberian experience and developments elsewhere. Not surprisingly, the new political history has identified several transnational consonances as especially relevant to the Spanish situation.

Three foci of comparison appear of particular interest. Regarding British historiography, what has attracted most attention has been the rich debate surrounding the causes

of the Civil War and the relations between monarchy and Parliament. It is rather ironic that one senses at present the existence of numerous direct parallels between two political systems that have for so long been presented as polar opposites. Perhaps the most striking similarity is the shared condition of 'multiple monarchies,' a parallel that eventually became so close as to produce the coincidence within a single decade of their respective acts of union (1707 in the case of the United Kingdom, and 1714 in the case of Spain)<sup>34</sup>. As far as France is concerned, the natural point of comparison is absolutism, a concept under query in both historiographic traditions. Here French plenitude vies with Castilian precocity. The Spanish case seems to have been one of early development in a formally absolutist direction that was eventually arrested by a combination of factors, many of which were linked to the multinational character of the monarchy<sup>35</sup>. Finally, it is in regard to Italy where one detects some of the closest similarities in terms of political history. It is yet another historiographic irony that there should be so many points of overlap between the legal, administrative, and institutional practices of what was reputed to be the most powerful monarchy in Europe and the collection of petty and quarrelling states under its control. However, there can be little doubt that much of the 'daily life' of politics in early modern Spain closely resembled that of Italy<sup>36</sup>. One among these many similarities – perhaps better thought of as borrowings and lendings? – was the existence of substantial jurisdictional hinterlands organized around and by the major cities in each peninsula. While the comparative evolution of the Italian *contado* and Castilian *alfoz* still awaits its historian, one can intuit substantial common ground between their respective lines of development<sup>37</sup>.

Yet European convergence and offshore comparisons are not the whole story. The easiest way to get a sense of the changes that have recently taken place in virtually all fields of Spanish historiography is to pick up a standard history book from, say, just after (or even before) the Spanish Civil War (1936-39) and compare it with its present-day counterpart. One immediately notes a world of difference. First, there is now remarkably little of the agonized metaphysics of what it means to be 'Spanish' that so obsessed the generations of historians who lived through the trauma of the loss of the last vestiges of the American empire in 1898, or who struggled their way through the hazards of political conflict that finally issued in the war itself. Despite the fact that the identity of Spain and its component parts is very much on everyone's mind these days, such debate tends to focus more on concrete issues, and leaves the essentializing rhetoric of the past to the politicians. (Needless to say, there are exceptions to this rule among professional historians, but in most cases they garner little credit with their colleagues for their indulgence in the sort of nationalist banter – either 'centralist' or 'centrifugal' – that was common coin in the not so distant past). Another major marker of change is style. Traditional Spanish history writing was characterized by idealist generalizations, much empty rhetoric, and a tenuous regard for facts. All this is very much a thing of the past now. If anything, recent generations of Spanish historians have bent over backward to avoid the vapidness and abstraction of their forebears. So fierce is their commitment to empiricism, in fact, that postmodern trends have made remarkably little headway in

the discipline of history. Professional history writing in Spain now is fact driven, and a historian who does not make visible substantial archival expertise receives relatively little credit from his or her peers<sup>38</sup>.

Having said that, certain historiographic peculiarities persist into the present. For example, understanding of the imperial past still suffers from the gap that separates historians of early modern Spain from their counterparts working on the 'history of America' – an intellectual divide inherited from longstanding institutional separatisms. Spanish political history moreover continues to show less interest than, say, British historiography in questions of political culture. And although some exceptions suggest that this is now changing, the extremely rich political thought of early modern Spain is still largely unexplored territory. One could also remark the singular protagonism of historians of law in many if not most of the recent innovations in early modern political historiography. While the same could be said to some degree of Italy, there seem to be few parallels elsewhere, where legal historians by and large keep to their own bailiwicks. Finally, as noted above, what has produced the loudest noise of late within this historiography has been a strident questioning of the relevance of the concept of the 'state' for understanding early modern politics. There has of course been a great deal of rethinking of the statist preconceptions of the traditional political history of most early modern European countries. Nevertheless, one has the impression that Spanish historiography is the only one to witness so thorough a rejection of the existence of the state altogether. Most historians now would probably think that such a position has shifted the pendulum too far in the wrong direction. It is not that something called and perceived as the 'state' did not exist in early modern Spain. What did not exist – and here the scholars supporting this view are quite correct – was what 19th and 20th century political and legal theorists thought a state was. Arguably a consensus could be found around the view that getting rid of the state altogether would mean throwing the baby out with the bathwater. And in the end, what such a position probably signals is a new sense of self-confidence among recent generations of Spanish historians whose professional success has coincided with the remarkably successful transition to democracy. That the very existence of the state should be debated in this terms is, of course, especially ironic when one considers that just a generation or so ago, Spain, or rather Castile, was a historiographic paradigm of an absolutist state. If one thing is for sure, it is that no longer.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> See E.P. Thompson, *The Peculiarities of the English*, in his *The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays*, New York 1978, pp. 245-301 (originally published in "The Socialist Register" in 1965). I am deeply indebted to Xavier Gil Pujol for his characteristically incisive comments on an earlier draft of this chapter.
- <sup>2</sup> For a particularly suggestive overview, see H. Kamen, *Empire: How Spain Became a World Power, 1492-1763*, New York 2003. Other recent studies of interest include: C.J. Hernando Sánchez, *Las Indias en la Monarquía católica. Imágenes e ideas políticas*, Valladolid 1996; S.J. Stein - B.H. Stein, *Silver, Trade, and War: Spain and America in the Making of Early Modern Europe*, Baltimore 2000; J. Hart, *Comparing Empires: European Colonialism from Portuguese Expansion to the Spanish-American War*, New York 2003; C. Martínez Shaw - J.M. Oliva Melgar (eds.), *El sistema atlántico español, siglos XVII-XIX*, Madrid 2005; and A.-M. Bernal,

- Los costes/beneficios del Imperio*, Madrid 2005. For the historiography of the “Black Legend”, see in particular W.S. Maltby, *The Black Legend in England: The Development of Anti-Spanish Sentiment, 1558-1660*, Durham 1971, and R. García Cárcel, *La leyenda negra. Historia y opinión*, Madrid 1992.
- <sup>3</sup> See his *A Europe of Composite Monarchies*, “Past and Present”, 137, 1992, pp. 48-71. As Elliott noted, Helmut Koenigsberger had referred to “composite states” in “*Dominium Regale* or *Dominium Politicum et Regale*”, in his *Politicians and Virtuosi: Essays in Early Modern History*, London 1986, pp. 1-25, while Conrad Russell, when discussing the British situation, spoke of “multiple kingdoms” in his *The Causes of the English Civil War*, Oxford 1990. The latter designation was not unknown during the early modern era, when political commentators such as Jean Bodin and Giovanni Botero distinguished between “simple” and “multiple” monarchies. For more details, see X. Gil Pujol, *Visión europea de la Monarquía española como Monarquía compuesta, siglos XVI y XVII*, in C. Russell - J. Andrés-Gallego (eds.), *Monarquías del Antiguo Régimen: Monarquías compuestas?*, Madrid 1996, pp. 65-95. For an illuminating recent comment on the terms applied to the Spanish case, see I.A.A. Thompson, *La Monarquía de España: la invención de un concepto*, in F.J. Guillamón Álvarez - J.D. Muñoz Rodríguez - D. Centenero de Arce (eds.), *Entre Clío y Casandra: Poder y sociedad en la Monarquía Hispánica durante la Edad Moderna*, Murcia 2005, pp. 31-56.
- <sup>4</sup> See, for example, P. Fernández Albadaledo, *El problema de la ‘Composite Monarchy’ en España*, in I. Burdiel - J. Casey (eds.), *Identities: Nations, Provinces and Regions, 1550-1900*, Norwich 1999, pp. 185-201.
- <sup>5</sup> Needless to say, this label was applied outside Castile as well. For a characterization of the relations between crown and subject elsewhere in the empire as encroaching “absolutism”, see for example Lucien Febvre’s classic study *Philippe II et la Franche-Comté: Étude d’histoire politique, religieuse et sociale*, Paris 1912.
- <sup>6</sup> The revolt of the *Comuneros* of 1520-21 has long been seen as a turning-point in the political and constitutional history of Castile. The most detailed treatment can be found in J. Pérez, *La revolución de las Comunidades de Castilla, 1520-1521*, Madrid 1977; the best account in English is S. Haliczzer, *The Comuneros of Castile: The Forging of a Revolution, 1475-1521*, Madison 1981, although the older study by H.L. Seaver, *The Great Revolt in Spain: A Study of the Comunero Movement of 1521-1522*, London 1928, provides an excellent narrative of events.
- <sup>7</sup> It is precisely at this point that the two comparisons meet. It is no accident that the Catalan revolt and the English Civil War of the 1640s figure as two of the six revolts featured in the comparative study by the American historian R.B. Merriman, *Six Contemporaneous Revolutions*, Cambridge MA 1938. For the Spanish crises of 1640, see A. Domínguez Ortiz (ed.), *1640: La Monarquía Hispánica en crisis*, Barcelona 1992, and the review article by J.-F. Schaub, *La crise hispanique de 1640. Le modèle des ‘révolutions périphériques’ en question (Note critique)*, “Annales HSS”, 49, 1994, pp. 219-239.
- <sup>8</sup> For the *Cortes* of Castile, see: C. Jago, *Habsburg Absolutism and the Cortes of Castile*, “American Historical Review”, 86, 1981, pp. 307-326, as well as his *Philip II and the Cortes of Castile: The Case of the Cortes of 1576*, “Past and Present”, 109, 1985, pp. 24-43, and the review article *Crown and Cortes in Early Modern Spain*, “Parliaments, Estates and Representation”, 12, 1992, pp. 177-192; I.A.A. Thompson, *Crown and Cortes in Castile, 1590-1665*, “Parliaments, Estates and Representation”, 2, 1982, pp. 29-45; J.M. Carretero Zamora, *Cortes, monarquía, ciudades: Las Cortes de Castilla a comienzos de la época moderna, 1476-1515*, Madrid 1988; *Las Cortes de Castilla y León en la Edad Moderna: Actas del Congreso... abril 1987*, Valladolid 1989; J.L. Castellano Castellano, *Las Cortes de Castilla y su Diputación (1621-1789): Entre pactismo y absolutismo*, Madrid 1990; and J.I. Fortea, *Monarquía y Cortes en la Corona de Castilla: Las ciudades ante la política fiscal de Felipe II*, Fuensaldaña 1990.
- <sup>9</sup> A. Domínguez Ortiz, *El Estado de los Austrias y los municipios andaluces en el siglo XVII*, in M. Lambert-Gorges (ed.), *Les Elites locales et l’Etat dans l’Espagne moderne du XVIIe au XIXe siècle*. Table ronde internationale, Talence, 13-15 décembre 1990, Paris 1993, p. 140.
- <sup>10</sup> The most extensive recent statement of this position can be found in B. Yun, *Marte contra Minerva: El precio del imperio español, c. 1450-1600*, Barcelona 2004.
- <sup>11</sup> For the debate over the state in early modern Spain, see: B. Clavero, *Tantas personas como estados: Por una antropología política de la historia europea*, Madrid 1986, and his *Debates historiográficos en la historia de las*

- instituciones políticas*, in *Problemas actuales de la historia: Terceras jornadas de estudios históricos*, Salamanca 1993, pp. 199-209; A.M. Hespanha, *Visperas del Leviatán: Instituciones y poder político, Portugal, siglo XVII*, Madrid 1989; S. de Dios, *El Estado Moderno, ¿un cadáver historiográfico?* in A. Rucquoi (ed.), *Realidad e imágenes del poder en España a fines de la Edad Media*, Valladolid 1989, pp. 389-408; B. Clavero - P. Grossi - F. Tomás y Valiente (eds.), *Hispania: Entre derechos propios y derechos nacionales*. Acti dell'incontro di studio, Firenze-Lucca, 25-27 maggio 1989, Milan-Florence 1990; P. Fernández Albaladejo, *Fragmentos de monarquía: trabajos de historia política*, Madrid 1992, and his *Les traditions nationales d'historiographie de l'État: L'Espagne*, in *Visions sur le développement des États européens*, Rome 1993, pp. 219-233; J.-F. Schaub (ed.), *Recherche sur l'histoire de l'état dans le monde ibérique, 15e-20e siècle*, Paris 1993, and J.-F. Schaub, *La península ibérica nei secoli XVI e XVII: la questione dello Stato*, "Studi storici", 36, 1995, pp. 9-49; and C. García Monerris - E. García Monerris, *Fragmentos de monarquía: la possibilitat d'una història política sense estat*, "Recerques", 32, 1995, pp. 103-111.
- <sup>12</sup> Hespanha, *Visperas del Leviatán* cit., pp. 440-442.
- <sup>13</sup> To cite merely one example among many, see M. Pérez Latre, *Entre el rei i la terra: El poder polític a Catalunya al segle XVI*, Vic 2003.
- <sup>14</sup> Gil Pujol, "Visión europea" cit., p. 80. Maria Antonietta Visceglia also emphasizes Botero's ambivalence toward Spain in her *Mito-antimito, spagnolismo-antispagnolismi: note per una conclusione provvisoria*, in A. Musi (ed.), *Alle origini di una nazione. Antispagnolismo e identità italiana*, Milan 2003, p. 417.
- <sup>15</sup> L.A. Ribot García, *Las provincias italianas y la defensa de la Monarquía*, in A. Musi (ed.), *Nel Sistema Imperiale: L'Italia spagnola*, Naples 1994, pp. 67-92. See also, more generally, G. Muto, *Percezione del territorio e strategia del controllo nel Mediterraneo spagnolo, secoli XVI-XVII*, in R. Villari (ed.), *Controllo degli stretti e insediamenti militari nel Mediterraneo*, Rome 2002, pp. 169-190, and M. Rizzo - J.J. Ruiz Ibáñez - G. Sabatini (eds.), *Le forze del principe: Recursos, instrumentos y límites en la práctica del poder soberano en los territorios de la Monarquía Hispánica*, Murcia 2003. Major studies of Spanish Italy include: R. Villari, *La rivolta antispagnola a Napoli: Le origini*, Bari 1973; G. Galasso, *Napoli spagnola dopo Masaniello: Politica, cultura, società*, Florence 1982; J.M. García Marín, *Monarquía católica en Italia: Burocracia imperial y privilegios constitucionales*, Madrid 1992; M. Rizzo, *Centro spagnolo e periferia lombarda nell'impero asburgico tra Cinque e Seicento*, "Rivista Storica Italiana", 104, 2, 1992, pp. 315-348; P. Fernández Albaladejo, *De 'llave de Italia' a 'corazón de la monarquía': Milán y la Monarquía católica en el reinado de Felipe III*, in his *Fragmentos de monarquía*, Madrid 1992, pp. 185-237; G. Signorotto (ed.), *L'Italia degli Austriaci: Monarchia cattolica e domini italiani nei secoli XVI e XVII*, Mantua 1993; A. Musi (ed.), *Nel Sistema Imperiale: L'Italia spagnola*, Naples 1994; A. Spagnoletti, *Principi italiani e Spagna nell'età barocca*, Milan 1996; E. Brambilla - G. Muto (eds.), *La Lombardia spagnola: nuovi indirizzi di ricerca*, Milan 1997; A. Musi, *L'Italia dei viceré: Integrazione e resistenza nel sistema imperiale spagnolo*, Cava de' Tirreni 2000; T.J. Dandeleit, *Spanish Rome, 1500-1700*, New Haven 2001; A. Anatra - F. Manconi (eds.), *Sardegna, Spagna e stati italiani nell'età di Carlo V*, Rome 2001; L. Ribot, *La monarquía de España y la guerra de Mesina, 1674-1678*, Madrid 2002; and A. Musi (ed.), *Alle origini di una nazione: Antispagnolismo e identità italiana*, Milan 2003.
- <sup>16</sup> As recently emphasized by, among others, Giuseppe Galasso, in his *Alla periferia dell'impero: Il Regno di Napoli nel periodo spagnolo, secoli XVI-XVII*, Turin 1994.
- <sup>17</sup> See, for example, A.M. Hespanha, *La Gracia del derecho. Economía de la cultura en la edad moderna*, Madrid 1993, pp. 13-14.
- <sup>18</sup> Cited in X. Gil, *'Conservación' y 'defensa' como factores de estabilidad en tiempos de crisis: Aragón y Valencia en la década de 1640*, in *1640: La Monarquía Hispánica en crisis*, Barcelona 1992, p. 100.
- <sup>19</sup> For a recent study of the political valences of religion in early modern Europe that pays close attention to the case of Spain, see P.K. Monod, *The Power of Kings: Monarchy and Religion in Europe, 1589-1715*, New Haven 1999. It goes without saying that the Inquisition has been one of the interpretive touchstones of the history of early modern Spain, written within and outside of Iberia. For a recent overview of this uniquely controversial subject, see D. Moreno, *La invención de la Inquisición*, Madrid 2004.



- <sup>20</sup> The Catalan historian Narcís Feliu de la Peña wrote in his *Anales de Cataluña* (1709) that Charles II “was the best king Spain ever had”; quoted in H. Kamen, *La España de Carlos II*, Barcelona 1981, p. 612.
- <sup>21</sup> The complexity of this “wide range” of political actors merely deepens when one further notes that each of these groups was divided into competing factions, families, and other sub-groupings. Especially relevant here is Francesco Benigno’s call for a broad definition of “faction” as “not a mere derivation of feuds among noble clans, but an informal mechanism that organizes... political participation... and thus aligns nobles, bureaucrats [*togati*], merchants, clerics, the military, groups of *popolo*, in organized groups to compete for control over resources and for the representation of interests”. See his “Conflitto politico e conflitto sociale nell’Italia spagnola”, in Musi (ed.), *Sistema Imperiale* cit. p. 124.
- <sup>22</sup> This is one of the main themes of Geoffrey Parker’s *The Grand Strategy of Philip II*, New Haven 1998.
- <sup>23</sup> For a recent summary of the causes of this failure, see B. Yun Casalilla, *Las raíces del atraso económico español: crisis y decadencia, 1590-1714*, in F. Comín - M. Hernández - E. Llopis (eds.), *Historia económica de España, siglos X-XX*, Barcelona 2002, pp. 85-119.
- <sup>24</sup> See, for example, Galasso, *Periferia* cit., and A. Musi, *Nápoles y España en lo siglos XVI y XVII: Estudios y orientaciones historiográficas recientes*, “Pedralbes”, 16, 1996, p. 247.
- <sup>25</sup> Especially noteworthy here is I.A.A. Thompson’s notion of the seventeenth-century decentralization or “devolution” of state power. See in particular his *War and Government in Habsburg Spain, 1560-1620*, London 1976.
- <sup>26</sup> The fundamental study of the Catalan uprising is still J.H. Elliott, *The Revolt of the Catalans: A Study in the Decline of Spain, 1598-1640*, Cambridge 1963, though see also his *The Count-Duke of Olivares: The Statesman in an Age of Decline*, New Haven 1986. Elliott highlights the appearance in the 1620s of a “new generation” of politicians in his *Europe of Composite Monarchies* cit., p. 63. For a broad survey of revolts throughout the Monarchy, see W. Thomas - B. De Groof (eds.), *Rebelión y Resistencia en el Mundo Hispánico del siglo XVII. Actas del Coloquio Internacional, Lovaina, 20-23 de Noviembre de 1991*, Leuven 1992.
- <sup>27</sup> Francesco Benigno’s studies of Sicily have placed special emphasis on this dimension of long-distance political interaction and conflict within the Spanish Empire. See above all his broader analysis, *La sombra del rey: validos y lucha política en la España del siglo XVII*, Madrid 1994.
- <sup>28</sup> For an initial exploration of the different modes of social organization in Spain, see J. Casey, *Early Modern Spain: A Social History*, London 1999.
- <sup>29</sup> P. Sahlins, *Boundaries: The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees*, Berkeley-Los Angeles 1989.
- <sup>30</sup> Studies of middle-class and popular involvement in politics include: F. Benigno, *Specchi della rivoluzione: Conflitto e identità politica nell’Europa moderna*, Rome 1999; L.R. Corteguera, *For the Common Good: Popular Politics in Barcelona, 1580-1640*, Ithaca 2002; and J.S. Amelang, *The Flight of Icarus: Artisan Autobiography in Early Modern Europe*, Stanford 1998, especially pp. 196-237.
- <sup>31</sup> As mentioned by Benigno in his *Conflitto Politico* cit., p. 128.
- <sup>32</sup> See F. Albaladejo, *Fragments de monarquía*, p. 207, along with M.C. Giannini, *Città e contadi dello Stato di Milano nella politica finanziaria del conte di Fuentes, 1600-1610*, in E. Brambilla - G. Muto (eds.), *La Lombardia spagnola: nuovi indirizzi di ricerca*, Milan 1997, pp. 191-208.
- <sup>33</sup> Examples include: J.H. Elliott, *Richelieu and Olivares*, Cambridge 1984; F. Ruiz Martín (ed.), *La proyección europea de la Monarquía hispánica*, Madrid 1996; J.H. Elliott, *Unas reflexiones acerca de la privanza española en el contexto europeo*, “Anuario de Historia del derecho español”, 67, 2, 1997, pp. 885-899; J.H. Elliott, *España en Europa: Estudios de historia comparada*, Valencia 2003; and J.-F. Schaub, *La Monarquía hispana en el sistema europeo de estados*, in A. Feros - J. Gelabert (eds.), *España en tiempos del Quijote*, Madrid 2004, pp. 97-128. To be sure, one cannot fail to mention in this regard the pioneering – and truly exceptional – contribution of the Catalan historian Jaume Vicens i Vives. His remarkable paper delivered at the Tenth International Congress of Historical Sciences in 1955 – later published as *The Administrative Structure of the State in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* in H.J. Cohn (ed.), *Government in Reformation Europe, 1520-1560*, New York 1972, pp. 58-87 – continues to be one of the central texts of early modern European political historiography.

- <sup>34</sup> For comparisons with England, see: C. Russell, *Monarquías y asambleas en Inglaterra, Francia y España, c. 1580 - c. 1640*, "Revista de las Cortes Generales", 6, 1985, pp. 231-63; P. Croft - I.A.A. Thompson, *Aristocracy and Representative Government in Unicameral and Bicameral Institutions: The Role of the Peers in the Castilian Cortes and the English Parliament, 1529-1664*, in H.W. Blom - W.P. Blockmans - H. de Schepper (eds.), *Bicameralisme, s'Gravenhage* 1992; I. Burdiel - R. Church (eds.), *Viejos y nuevos imperios: España y Gran Bretaña, S. XVII-XX*, Valencia 1998; B. Yun Casalilla, *La 'crisis' de la aristocracia en España e Inglaterra. Una visión comparativa*, in *Las crisis en la historia*, Salamanca 1995, pp. 77-99; and F. Fernández Albaladejo, *De Hispania a Britannia: Avatares de un noventa y ocho historiógrafo*, in H. Kearney, *Las Islas Británicas: Historia de cuatro naciones*, Madrid 1999, pp. 315-336.
- <sup>35</sup> The profound debt of Louis XIV's France to the "Spanish model" of absolutism is the main subject of J.-F. Schaub, *La Francia española: las raíces hispanas del absolutismo francés*, Madrid 2004.
- <sup>36</sup> This point is made in V.I. Comparato, *Barcelona y Nápoles en la búsqueda de un modelo político: analogías, diferencias, contactos*, "Pedralbes", 18, 1998 [2000], vol. II, pp. 439-452.
- <sup>37</sup> See M. Berengo, *L'Europa delle città: Il volto della società urbana europea tra Medioevo ed Età moderna*, Turin 1999, pp. 111-170.
- <sup>38</sup> For some recent studies of modern Spanish historiography, see: G. Pasamar Alzuria, *Historiografía e ideología en la postguerra española: la ruptura de la tradición liberal*, Zaragoza 1991; C.P. Boyd, *Historia patria: Politics, History and National Identity in Spain, 1875-1975*, Princeton 1997; J.S. Pérez Garzón (ed.), *La gestión de la memoria. La historia de España al servicio del poder*, Barcelona 2000; and I. Peiró Martín - G. Pasamar Alzuria, *Historiadores españoles contemporáneos, 1840-1980*, Madrid 2002.

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