

“Becoming Europeans:” Examining the case of educational policy production in  
Catalonia

DRAFT: Please Do Not Cite Without Author’s Permission

Laura C. Engel (lcengel@uiuc.edu)  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

EUSA Conference: Montreal, May 2007

## Introduction

In recent decades, Spain has been engaged in a process of massive and dramatic transformation, particularly with respect to democratization and decentralization of most of its public institutions, including education. The nature and scope of these efforts have been influenced largely by policy pressures emanating from supranational (European Union-EU) and global processes, as well as local, regional<sup>1</sup>, and national state imperatives. This paper focuses specifically on one of Spain's *comunidades autónomas* (autonomous communities), Catalonia, in order to examine these dynamic processes in the context of educational policy formation. Drawing on empirical resources, including data generated through semi-structured interviews with key educational actors<sup>2</sup> in Barcelona and Madrid, and document analysis of key policy documents collected in Barcelona, Madrid, and Brussels, this paper focuses on contemporary shifts in educational policy production concerning decentralization in Catalonia with respect to a range of multiscalar pressures. First, I broadly discuss the literature on globalization and educational governance and the need to extend beyond binary oppositional frameworks often used in literature on educational decentralization. Next, I provide a background on Spanish democratization and the various pressures surrounding the development of a mass educational system. The last two sections of the paper move from micro to macro

---

<sup>1</sup> The term region is purposefully used to signify national regionalist communities within and across nation state territorial and political boundaries. Terms, such as sub-nation and “nations without states” (Guibernau, 1999), have similarly been used in the literature. In the case of Catalonia, I refer to it as both a nation without a state and to remain consistent with European and EU Studies literature, as a region.

<sup>2</sup> All direct quotes from participants and referred to as personal communications, followed by the date of the interview. In some cases, I have refrained from classifying the date of the interview to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

perspectives to highlight the complex shifts in governance across regional, national, and EU political spheres.

### Globalization and Educational Governance

In recent years, modern states have been increasingly influenced by a range of political and economic forces stemming from the agendas of intergovernmental and supranational organizations, and what states now perceive as the demands of new global economy. This has deep implications for educational policy production. Indeed, the role of the nation state in education appears to have shifted, as national education systems around the world face significant global and supranational pressures on the development and negotiation of educational policy, and seek to reconcile these with local and regional traditions and priorities. Scholars have focused on the nature and scope of these broader global processes, and their bearing on education (Burbules & Torres, 2000; Dale & Robertson, 2002; Morrow & Torres, 2003). This includes the development and impact of a European educational policy space (Nóvoa & Lawn, 2002).

Often, studies of globalization and educational policy production primarily highlight the influence of global pressures “from above” in national education systems and the relationship between the global and the nation state (Brenner, 2004; Telò, 2002). This is also illustrated in studies of educational policy production in Europe, which have generally focused on the impact of European educational priorities on Member State education systems. However, as the state negotiates global and supranational pressures, new modes of educational governance are being produced, which place greater importance on local and regional scales in terms of the direction of policy development.

In light of these developments, Catalonia is an interesting and instructive case of study given the numerous pressures that face the Catalan educational system. These pressures stem from simultaneous efforts in the post-Franco era of democratization, decentralization, globalization, and Europeanization with Spain's 1986 accession into the European Community (EC). Consequently, educational policy, particularly in relation to educational decentralization, is being produced within a cross-section of multiscalar policy pressures.

Notwithstanding the wide array of multiscalar pressures and embedded tensions in educational policy, models used to assess these issues have continued to hold up simplistic binary oppositions. These analyses generally followed a center-periphery or margin-center model of educational governance and policy production. These models' underlying assumption is that the central government acts as a central power force over the less powerful peripheries, maintained from a distance. However, in the current era of globalization, these frameworks inappropriately assume that the periphery is at a distance from the power center, thus implying a level of passive disadvantage for the periphery. In applying these models to the case of Catalonia, the center-periphery framework essentializes the interrelatedness of political spheres into a linear, top-down model. This largely overlooks the tensions, contradictions, and consistent negotiations involved in the overlap of political scales, out of which public policy is produced.

Both the center-periphery and nation state-global and nation state-EU constructs appear to remain focused on what Brenner (2004) has called "spatial fetishism" and "methodological nationalism." This refers to the presupposition of the exclusivity and the static territorial, political, and economic stronghold of the nation state in policy

production. In these frameworks, the nation state is conceived as a fixed container of social relations that has clear boundaries dividing the inside from the outside. In her recent work, Saskia Sassen (2006) noted that to study globalization and its implications, we have to “engage the most complex institutional architecture we have ever produced: the national state” (p. 1). However, Sassen (2006) went on to argue that much of the literature on globalization “leads to comparisons of the national and the global and easily falls into the trap of assuming that if the global exists it is in spite of the national” (p. 9). By bringing Catalonia to the center of analysis, I focus on the nature of global transformations by “moving inside the national state apparatus as it becomes the site of its own partial disassembling” (Sassen, 2006, p. 10). Ultimately, Catalonia provides an in-depth and rich perspective into the current status of the nation state transformations, and still maintains a focus on the nature of EU and global policy influences.

In a foregrounding of Catalonia, center-periphery and nation state-global and nation state-EU frameworks appear to operate under suppositions about the state’s exclusive control over policy production, ultimately overlooking the dynamic overlap of local, regional, national, supranational, and global forces operating in policy production processes. Furthermore, there is mounting evidence that regions are becoming significant in EU politics as regions are finding the EU as a viable means of gaining political recognition and acting as key players in the project of European integration (Applegate, 1999; Giordano & Roller, 2002; Roller, 2004; Wright, 2000). As Catalonia endorses the EU as a means for greater autonomy and recognition outside the Spanish state, the EU has emphasized decentralization and the utilization of its local levels, cities, and regions for greater European integration and the pursuit of greater economic growth.

Against this backdrop, it appears that global processes have sparked the reconfiguration of the state in educational policy formation, and reconstituted the relations between regions, nation states, and supranational entities. Consequently, the production of educational policy is occurring within “a form of ‘territorial complexity’ defined by the interaction of four levels of government (EU, national, regional or local)” (Closa & Heywood, 2004, p. 86). This paper attempts to better understand how the resulting political complexity of such changes impact Catalan educational policies and policy priorities. These complex processes of policy production at local, regional, national, EU, and global scales must not be overlooked, but rather examined more critically.

### Spanish Democratization

Over the past thirty years, Spain’s democratization efforts have vastly changed the structure of the Spanish state and brought about a modern mass education system. These efforts come at the end of a 40-year Fascist dictatorship, lasting from 1939 to 1975, with the death of General Francisco Franco. Spain’s transition into one of the EU’s core democracies is often cited as a successful, miracle model, most recently for Central and Eastern EU countries once behind the Iron Curtain of communism. The adoption of the *Constitución Española* (Spanish Constitution) into law in 1978 is regarded as a cornerstone of Spain’s democratization efforts and the legal embracing of a democratic organization and set of civic values.

Throughout the process of democratization, Spain has undergone vast and dramatic processes of transformation and reinvention, including the recognition of 17

autonomous communities (CCAA). The Constitution recognized the various national communities, particularly Catalonia, the Basque Country, and Galicia, while also simultaneously labeling Spain as a “sole collective entity to have full sovereignty” (Núñez Seixas, 2005, p. 122). Catalonia has the status of one of the historical nations in the establishment of the State of Autonomies in Spain. It is located in the northeastern region (just slightly larger than Belgium) of the Iberian Peninsula, bordering the Mediterranean Sea, France, Andorra, Aragon, and Valencia. Catalonia is made up of four provinces: Barcelona (its capital), Gerona, Leida, and Tarragona. According to the Catalan Institute of Statistics, Catalonia has the second largest population out of the 17 CCAA in Spain (the largest is Andalusia), with over 7 million inhabitants reported in a 2006 census. The population of Catalonia makes up 16% of the total population of Spain. While discussed in detail in this section, it is noteworthy that Catalan cultural and linguistic identity is not limited to the territory of Catalonia described here. Balcells (2006) pointed out

Catalan identity is not confined to Catalonia proper since the Catalan language is spoken in a much larger area inhabited by a total of 11 million people and comprising Catalonia itself, the Kingdom of Valencia, the Balearic Islands, the Principality of Andorra, and the Catalan regions which were annexed to France in 1659. (p. 1)

As early as the 9<sup>th</sup> century, Catalonia emerged as an independent entity, with self-governing political institutions and laws (Guibernau, 1999).

While a detailed historical overview of Catalonia and the relationship between Spain and Catalonia and their political institutions is well beyond the scope of this paper, it is significant to note that widespread oppression in the name of unity has been well ingrained in Spanish history. As early as the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Castilian hegemonic forces

began to repress communities along what became known as the peripheries of Spain, in which the Castilian language and Spanish nationalism become one in the same.

Throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, Spain used the promotion of a national language as means to link citizens together and to enhance political participation. There were periods of political, cultural, and linguistic resurgence and cultural revival. However, these were typically followed by repressive periods of centralization. This is the case at the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in which Spain, like a pendulum, swung back towards strict, centralized rule.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, an authoritarian political organization was developed, called the Falange, which was linked to the dictatorship led by Primo de Rivera in the 1930s. During the Civil War, the Falange sided with the Nationalists and became a leading force under Franco. During this period, an overwhelming suppressive agenda towards cultural and linguistic minorities was invoked, as Franco's social and political vision underpinned the "fortif[ication of] the 'New Spanish State'" (Hanson, 2000, p. 13). The development of a Francoist state had a profound impact on the Spanish educational system, and recent educational reforms over the past three decades

#### *Construction of the Francoist state*

At the end of the 1930s, with the Civil War victory of Franco and the nationals, backed by the old aristocracy, upper class, and the Catholic Church, the Francoist regime was established. The central values underpinning the Francoist political project included nationalist rhetoric, little political and cultural freedom, the creation of a strong central state concentrated on the political and military power of one man, "*el generalísimo*," the declaration of the state as officially Catholic, with the Catholic Church having a great

deal of cultural and educational control, a lack of political mobility among citizens, and intellectual and cultural poverty as a result of censure and the exile of many intellectuals (Muñoz & Marcos, 2005, p. 151).

The strong Francoist central state did not necessarily extend into the construction of a public education system. Rather, the public education system became marked by the sheer absence of the state. A clear example is the percentage of Gross National Product (GNP) expended on public education, which in 1975 was 1.78%, as compared to 5.1% European average (this included the USSR) and 4% African average in 1975 (Hanson, 1989a, p. 41). During the 40-year Francoist dictatorship, the Spanish education system “was characterized by the Church’s monopoly...a rigid institutional structure, and by an extreme uniformity and centralization” (Esturla, 2000, p. 322). In fact, one of the first actions taken by the Francoist regime was the handing of educational control over to the Catholic Church, in terms of organization, regulation, and funding.

As typical under authoritarian rule, the Francoist regime was preoccupied with stability. This is reflected in the highly centralized Spanish educational system. For the masses, education was seen as a vehicle for promoting nationalist rhetoric and Catholic values, as demonstrated in the public school use of a “cultural transmission model based on ideological control rather than instrumental knowledge” (Bonal, 2000, p. 203). In general, textbooks focused on three main areas: Catholicism, Spanish nationalism, and Franco as *el caudillo* (the maximum leader) (Hanson, 1989a). Franco himself was glorified throughout society and in schools. Historic images and “supreme symbols of national unity” also were invoked to illicit a national sense of *lo español* (that which is Spanish), such as historical references to Catholicism from the Roman period, the

Reconquista, referring to the Christian conquering of the Iberian Peninsula from the Moors and the exile of the Jews, and the Spanish Catholic Monarchs (Muñoz & Marcos, 2005, p. 176; my translation). In addition to textbooks and the promotion of symbolic images, it is reported that over 60,000 teachers between 1936 and 1945 were forcibly reassigned, suspended, or fired, replaced by a member of the Falange (Hanson, 1989b, 2000).

During the years of the Francoist dictatorship, an overwhelming suppressive agenda towards cultural and linguistic minorities was invoked. For Franco and the nationalist movement, expressions of regional nationalism were synonymous with the undermining of the project of Spanish unity and thus, subject to reprimand. Following the Civil War, Franco's position towards Catalonia was one of hostility and resentment. Hughes (1993) wrote that "Barcelona ha[d] been the last bastion of resistance to Franco, and the dictator never forgave the city for it" (p. 8). Franco also resented Barcelona because of its open port, which had potential of giving way to "the influence of foreigners, to strange and nonnative ways...[and] offering an ease of entry and exit that a landlocked capital does not" (Hughes, 1993, p. 8-9). In the post-Civil War developments, the diverse communities of Spain were largely treated as occupied territories after the Civil War.

As a result, the language of Catalonia was silenced and condemned on the street, in print, in schools, in politics, and in communication. Balcells (1996) wrote that the Francoist dictatorship

was confident that by excluding the Catalan language from the radio, the daily press, the cinema, the schools and, later, from television, it would succeed in cutting off the great majority of the population from the difficult rebirth of Catalan national awareness. (p. 144)

Catalan names used on ships and boats had to be translated to Castilian, beginning in 1945, and Catalan names were banned from civil registries. One account described Franco's declaration of Catalan, the language of Catalonia, as nothing more than "la lengua de perros," ("the tongue of dogs"), as Franco encouraged Barcelona police to reprimand the use of Catalan, in which Catalan-speakers were ordered "Habla Cristiano!" "Speak Christian!" invoking once again a Castilian identity synonymous with Christianity (Grant, 1988, p. 157). This suppressive agenda continued even as Spain opened its borders and experienced economic growth in the latter half of the Francoist dictatorship.

#### *Democratization: Pressures and Policy Pursuits*

Spain's transition to a social democratic state after the death of Franco and the democratization of institutions inherited from the Francoist era were widely influenced by Spain's engagement with both European and global pressures. First, Spain's dramatic transformation is largely due to the opening up of the Spanish market in the early 1960s to international competition. While the first half of the Francoist years can be characterized as highly centralized, the latter half is known for the state's massive economic growth due to industrialization and the development of its tourist industry. The opening of the market was also paired with the embracing of "a new political discourse based on 'democracy' and modernization" on the part of Spanish citizens (Bonal, 2000, p. 203). Notwithstanding the shift towards market liberalization and civil society's embrace of democratic values, the Francoist regime continued its executions, with the last assassination taking place just two months before Franco's death in September of 1975.

In light of the political, economic, social, and cultural changes during the second half of the Francoist era, there were shifts towards greater expansion of educational access, out of which a modern mass education system in Spain was born. The first major educational act since 1857 was developed under the Francoist regime in 1970. The Education Reform Act (LGE) of 1970 emphasized equality of educational opportunity and the benefits of a meritocracy (Bonal, 2000). One major mandate of the law was obligatory school attendance for all citizens under the age of 14. This brought about significant increases in educational enrollment patterns in Spain, which the state was not equipped to deal with financially or structurally.

While the transition to democracy was eased given the societal embrace of discourses of democratization, the reform of Spanish public institutions, including education, posed a formidable challenge. As Torres and Piña (2004) pointed out,

in the 1970s, in comparison with other OECD countries, Spain had a small and unbalanced public sector, with important deficiencies in infrastructures and limited activities in the fields of the redistribution of wealth, welfare, health, education, social and cultural services. (p. 447)

Spain's difficulty in reforming the educational sector to meet the demands of increased enrollments and provide equal educational opportunities was similar to the challenges many Western countries encountered given the economic crises of the mid-1970s.

Guillén and Álvarez (2001) argued that the 1970s oil crises halted Spanish economic growth and made implementation of social policies and an overhaul of public institutions inherited from the Francoist era difficult, given the lack of state funding. In the late 1970s, Spain's dependence on oil, which was steadily rising in cost, brought about a number of political and economic challenges. In 1977, the inflation of Spain was 24.5 percent, and unemployment grew from "6 per cent of the active population in 1977 to 17

per cent in 1981” (Heywood, 1995, p. 95). This posed many issues for the reform of the public sector and the consolidation of democracy in Spain.

After winning the 1982 national election, the Spanish Socialist Worker’s Party’s (PSOE) efforts included a program aimed to reinforce administrative efficiency across the state (Heywood, 1995). It also resulted in a shift in policy from “attention to equity in social policy...in favour [*sic*] of a search for efficiency” (Guillén & Álvarez, 2001, p. 115). This shift is in part a consequence of the Spanish state looking to the European Commission (EC) and OECD countries as models for economic growth, social stability, and public policy. During this period of transition, “Becoming Europeans” was an expression used in Spanish political rhetoric as it “implied economic growth, and an improvement of social policy along the lines of the social democratic, Scandinavian systems” (Guillén & Álvarez, 2001, p. 113). Europe was an idealized model of modernization in Spain, which included efforts to align the Spanish education system with European standards of education. Ultimately, Spain’s 1986 accession into the EC allowed for Spain to engage directly in vigorous pursuit of policies aligned with European interests and provided Spain with a strong boost economically in order to reform public policy and build the public infrastructure necessary for a democratized Spain (Gillespie, 2000).

Substituting for the earlier 1980 law, the 1985 Regulatory Organic Law of the Right to Education (*Ley Orgánica del Derecho a la Educación-LODE*) was passed, which decentralized educational responsibility, signifying a different role of the state with respect to educational governance, and brought about important structural developments (Edge, 2000). As the LODE emphasized the importance of decentralization to

democratization, there was recognition of the need for “a system of participation where all sectors of society have the right to decide about issues of organization, pedagogy, and educational finance” (Hanson, 2000, p. 46). It was this legislation (and that of the early 1990s) that established a multilevel system of educational governance “with the creation of school councils in which parents were represented, and trends towards stronger management and steering at school level” (Pereyra, 2002, p. 668). Multiple agencies and councils at various local and regional levels were established to create a decentralized system.

As a result, parents, teachers, unions, students, and local level communities could be represented in the educational system. Edge (2000) discussed the development of the State School Council (*Consejo Escolar del Estado-CEE*), as an 80 member national advisory body representing teachers, parents, unions, administrators, and scholars. The main responsibilities of the State School Council have been to submit proposals for educational change. The Conference of Education Counselors also was established, which brought together the Ministry of Education and Science (MEC), the Chief Education Officers (CEOs) of all CCAA systems, the *Consejos Escolares del Centro* (Education Council), and *Consejos Escolares* (Local School Councils).

Following the 1985 reform were two policy documents: *Proyecto para la Reforma de la Enseñanza* (debated in 1987 and completed in 1988) and *El Libro Blanco para la Reforma del Sistema Educativo* (1989). These two reports detailed the underlying debates of educational reform during this period, indicating particular educational actors, central questions, problems, and necessary changes to make in order to improve the Spanish educational system. These reports formed the backbone of the 1990 Organic Law

on the General Organization of the Educational System (LOGSE). In essence, the main aspects of reform included basic education as compulsory and free, extended to the age of 16, the expansion of vocational education to all students, reduction of educational inequity, and mandated improvements in the quality of teaching (Fierro, 1994).

New mandates also included a focus on excellence in all institutions of education, equality of educational opportunities, and “an explicit objective to not lose ground in the process of European convergence” (Bonaf, 1998, p. 156, my translation). One example is the importance of vocational education, primarily through the pursuit of Leonardo da Vinci grants, which are part of a EU program aimed to aid in the development of lifelong learning through vocational training. The PSOE also enacted the Organic Law on Participation, Assessment and Governance of Institutions of Education (*Ley Orgánica de Participación, Evaluación y Gobierno de los Centros Educativos-LOPEG*). This 1995 law aimed to regulate the evaluation of educational institutions. As part of the move towards excellence and quality assurance, there were also developments in educational investigation, inspection, and evaluation (MEC, 1999).

In the 20 years since the death of Franco, educational enrollments rapidly grew. Hanson (2000) noted that the number of public schools increased from 1,100 in 1975 to approximately 3,000 in 1995, and compared with the 44% of school attendance of 15 year olds in 1975, approximately 100% of 15 year olds were enrolled in 1995. Along with the rising enrollment rates, in the 1990s, efficiency was emphasized, as evident in the implementation of a NPM doctrine, which was rigorously introduced in order to advance the Spanish system of public administration (Torres & Piña, 2004). In 1996, the right-wing Popular Party took on the reformation of the public sector with neoliberal

ideologies of privatization, market liberalization, and an increase in quality and efficiency, leading to a decrease in attention given to equality and social inclusion. After proposing its initial legislation without majority support, the PP was able to enact the Organic Law on Quality in Education (*Ley Orgánica de Calidad de la Educación-LOCE*) (MEC, 2002).

With implementation of the 2002 law just barely off the ground (implementation began in 2003), new leadership of the Socialist Party in Spain in 2004 introduced a series of policy reforms. Under the new direction of José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, President of the Socialist Party, a new educational bill was proposed. The bill was heavily publicized with debates mainly over the teaching of religion. In May 2006, the new educational legislation was passed, entitled the Organic Law of Education (*Ley Orgánica de Educación-LOE*). The Preamble of the LOE states that due to Spain's accession into the EU, and participation in projects and conferences with other nation states organized by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and other intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), Spain must now focus on improving upon the quality and effectiveness of its educational system. López (2006) argued that the LOE establishes these three principles: quality education for all, shared effort, and integration in Europe. The third principle is described in the Preamble as the goal to adequately prepare Spanish students for the demands of the knowledge economy and open its education system up to the world, including a focus on multilingualism, mobility, and cooperation with Europe. This includes a plan for using European benchmarks to determine Spanish educational progress in comparison with other EU member states in

the following areas: the reduction of number of early school exit, the increase in rates of graduation, and improvement of basic skills in reading, mathematical, and scientific literary performance, as measured by Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) data.

In the several decades of dynamic political shifts and rapid policy production, it is noteworthy that processes of democratization in Spain have not been free of conflict. Whereas the Constitution was fashioned as a guiding model for the consolidation of democratic values and the achievement of a decentralized, yet unified nation state system in politics and public policy-making, there have been many uncertainties. As the mass modern educational system has developed in Spain, it has been shaped by the form of decentralization undertaken in Catalonia and Spain. The following section examines the nature of asymmetrical decentralization, utilizing reflections and interpretations of key educational system actors in Barcelona and Madrid.

### Asymmetrical Decentralization

In the transition from the Francoist dictatorship to democracy, decentralization was one strategy that the Spanish state employed to meet the increasing pressures of the historical nations (Catalonia and the Basque Country), and as means to consolidate democratization. The Constitution of 1978 restructured the preexisting 50 provinces into a State of Autonomies, which established the 17 CCAA and two autonomous cities, Melilla and Ceuta. Closa and Heywood (2004) defined the democratic State of Autonomies as

a hybrid that attempts to meet three different (and to some extent contradictory) demands: first, the continued unity of the Spanish nation, inherited from its

history as a strongly centralized state. Second, the recognition of the right to self-government of those regions with a strong sense of national identity....Third, the option for decentralization for other regions which aspired to autonomous self-government. (p. 84)

The division between regions with a strong national identity and regions with aspirations for self-government was defined early in the transition process as a way to guide decentralization. In the process of decentralization, the CCAA were classified as either the

nacionalidades (the Basques, th[e] Catalans and the Galicians), which can claim the status of 'historical nations', and regiones [the regions], which strive for autonomy on the basis of particular historical prerogatives (Navarre), their geography (the Balearics, the Canaries), or for socio-economic reasons (Andalusia, Extremadura, Valencia). (Börzel, 2002, p. 95)

With respect to the transfer of educational competencies to CCAA, it is worth noting that the decentralization process in Spain was not a blanket process, applied at the same time to all 17 of the CCAA.

In the transition period, in the uneven development of decentralization, the establishment of the model of the Spanish state and powers allotted to the CCAA was not a smooth course of action. In fact, this process involved a contentious number of debates. Heywood (1995) argued, "it is...unsurprising that regionalism should have proved the single most contentious political issue during the post-Franco construction of democracy; nearly one-tenth of the lengthy Constitution is devoted to regional matters" (p. 142-143). It was decided that the three historical nations did not have to "make any formal application to the central state," as they were granted privileged status based on their respective Statutes of Autonomy established during the Second Republic (Heywood, 1995, p. 143). The other CCAA were divided into a grade one, the fast track, and grade two, the slow track. Table 1 provides an illustration of the three stages of educational

governance and the legal transfer of educational competencies from the central state to the CCAA.

Table 1

Process of educational decentralization

Stage	Category	CCAA
First (1979-1980)	“Historical nations”	Catalonia and the Basque Country
Second (1981-1992)	Grade One “Fast Track”	Andalusia, Canary Islands, Valencia, Galicia, Navarre
Third (1992-2000)	Grade Two “Slow Track”	Aragón, Asturias, Balearic Islands, Cantabria, Castilla-La Mancha, Castilla y León, Extremadura, La Rioja, Madrid, Murcia

Conflict and debate surrounded the process of decentralization, particularly as special circumstances were allowed for several of the CCAA. In the Spanish Constitution, Article 151 outlined an alternative route, in which any CCAA may “apply to receive the same high level of autonomy as the privileged regions, provided that a stringent series of conditions was first satisfied and the draft autonomy statute was subsequently endorsed in a referendum” (Heywood, 1995, p. 144). As described by Heywood (1995), after Catalonia’s and the Basque Country’s Statutes of Autonomy were approved by the central state in 1979, “there was an outbreak of so-called ‘*fiebre autonómica*’ (autonomy fever) as all the remaining regions sought to establish regional governments,” justified by Article 151 of the Constitution (p. 144; author’s italics). Rather than follow the grade one and two process, Navarre, based on its particular history, was granted a “special route,”

while two CCAA (the Canary Islands, Valencia) were granted a status in between grades one and two (Heywood, 1995, p. 144). Furthermore, in the asymmetrical process of decentralization, all CCAA chose the option of full political autonomy over administrative autonomy, which created both competition and tension among the CCAA.

*Café Para Todos? Coffee For Everyone?*<sup>3</sup>

On the millennium, the final decision-making authorities were transferred to the remaining CCAA, constituting Spain as one of the most politically and educationally decentralized states in Europe (Hanson, 2000). Pereyra (2002) wrote that “in theory, these reorganisations [*sic*] seek to maintain a balance between unity and diversity through coordination, cooperation and collaboration” (p. 668). As such, there were hopes of intergovernmental cooperation between the CCAA. With all CCAA opting for full political autonomy, the state moved to equalize levels of autonomy across all CCAA. This invoked widespread conflicts among the CCAA over claims that particular CCAA were receiving greater privileges through the decentralization process, including taxation privileges. Börzel (2002) argued that the Spanish central state’s attempts to equalize all levels of autonomy across the state

further reduced the privileged status that the three *nacionalidades* had initially enjoyed. The policy of ‘café para todos’ (coffee for everyone) as opposed to ‘champagne for the *nacionalidades*’...profoundly challenged the preferential status and caused substantial conflicts between the *nacionalidades* and the central state. (p. 95)

This also caused both competition and resentment between the CCAA.

Those on the slower track of decentralization resented the privileges seemingly provided to the historical nations (Börzel, 2002). Even among the historical nations, there was a lack of intergovernmental cooperation. Börzel (2002) reported that Catalonia

---

<sup>3</sup> Börzel. T. (2002), p. 95

regularly complained that the “Basques and the Navarese are ‘given brandy with their coffee’” in the form of taxation privileges” (p. 95). These tensions escalated during the decentralization process of Spanish public institutions, as they required fiscal restructuring to support and equalize the transition of authorities to the CCAA.

The financial inequality across the 17 CCAA also became a central issue in the decentralization process. In the new funding system, the CCAA were each allotted grants from the central government to provide funding for public administrative costs of education, health, and transportation. The block grant funding system, along with the Inter-Territorial Compensation Funds (FCI), which sought to decrease the economic inequity between wealthy and more impoverished regions, helped to increase the public expenditure on education to over 5% of Spain’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 1996 (Edge, 2000). This is a dramatic increase from the 2.6% expenditure on education in 1981 (Hanson, 2000; Torres & Piña, 2004). The FCI “was initially distributed according to a formula based upon relative levels of income, migration, and unemployment rates” (Heywood, 1995, p. 152-153). However, issues of migration from other parts of Spain to Catalonia caused a reevaluation of the FCI structure. Wealthier CCAA, such as Catalonia, have also resented the FCI given their higher contributions, and what they have been provided in return.

In attempts to gain greater regional competencies, the CCAA have not been able come together to form a cooperative relationship that would allow them greater collective bargaining power with the central Spanish state. When asked about the level of cooperation that exists between the CCAA, one educational leader in Barcelona responded “Inexistent. Inexistent....The state intervenes a lot because whatever

collaborative agreement made between the CCAA, there has to be approval from the Parliament” (personal communication, May 29, 2006). In order for the CCAA to begin to form more cooperative relationships with one another, they need the support of the central state. In this way, the central state maintains an authoritative position, which limits the intergovernmental cooperation between the CCAA. Consequently, the conflict, competition, and the independent “cada una por su cuenta” (to each their own) policies of the CCAA has limited their mobilization for greater autonomy from the central state (Börzel, 2002, p. 102).

### *Shaping the Decentralization Process*

A political form of decentralization was a central mode of governance advocated in Spain to meet the regional demands of Catalonia and the Basque Country for greater autonomy, decision-making, and the revival of historical rights. Political decentralization also was perceived as a vehicle for greater democratization and local empowerment. At a crucial stage in the shift from a strict authoritarian dictatorship to a democratic organization, a political form of decentralization was deemed necessary for the consolidation of the democratic Spanish state. An educational leader stated, “giving more competencies to the autonomies has been important in order to get the administration closer to the citizenry. The closer to the citizen, the better” (personal communication, June 19, 2006). In this way, a political form of decentralization was assumed to be a core ingredient to the successful continuation of the process of democratization. With the adoption of the Spanish Constitution into law, it was widely considered by politicians, citizens, and scholars to be the backbone of Spain’s efforts of democratization.

The Spanish Constitution outlines the division of competencies between the CCAA and the central state. In the current decentralized Spanish state structure, the division of power between the central government and the CCAA can be divided into three levels, those exclusive the state, those exclusive to the CCAA, and those that are shared between the state and the CCAA. In the drafting of the Spanish Constitution, Articles 148 and 149 illustrate the jurisdiction and the division of competencies between the CCAA and the state. Article 148 states that CCAA may take on responsibility over self-government, territorial planning and housing, environmental protection, and the promotion of economic development within the national economic framework, museums and libraries of interest to the CCAA, monuments, and the promotion of culture, research, and teaching of the regional language. Article 149 section 1 and section 1a state that the state has exclusive jurisdiction over the regulation of basic conditions that guarantee equality of all Spanish citizens to exercise their constitutional rights.

Article 149 sections 2a-3a states that the central state also has exclusive competency over nationality, immigration, international relations, national defense and the Armed Forces, general planning of economic policy, the protection of Spain's cultural and artistic heritage, museums, libraries and archives of the state, regulation of conditions relative to obtaining, issuing and standardization of academic degrees, and statistics for state purposes. The final section of Article 149 states that competencies not expressly attributed to the state by the Constitution will correspond to the CCAA, in line with their respective Statutes of Autonomy. Competencies that are not assumed by the Statutes of Autonomy will correspond to the state.

The most complex issues of governance fall into the area of shared competencies between the state and CCAA. Education is interpreted to lie within this area, in which the Ministry of Education and Science (MEC) shares educational responsibilities with the CCAA. According to the MEC,

the Spanish Constitution of 1978 and the Statutes of Autonomy ensure that the common elements of educational policy and the Spanish educational system will be directed by the MEC, and cooperatively managed by the MEC and the respective Ministries of Education in each of the CCAA that already have had educational competencies transferred to them.  
(<http://www.mec.es/educa/jsp/plantilla.jsp?area=ccaa&id=31>, para. 1; my translation)

Due to the complexity of shared educational competencies, and the ambiguity of the Constitution, there has been an overall challenge of whether Spain “would have one educational system made up of 17 integrated, semi-autonomous parts rather than 17 separate educational systems” (Hanson, 2000, p. 20). In response to this challenge and regional pressures for greater educational autonomy, the MEC established a system, in which educational responsibilities over policy production would be divided across three levels: central state, CCAA, and local administration.

The Spanish state’s structures of administration include the MEC, the Alta Inspección in each CCAA, and the provincial offices in Melilla and Ceuta. The powers allotted to the central administration include the regulation of the entire state system in order to standardize and unify the Spanish education system, international and European cooperation in the area of education, evaluation and inspection through the authority of the Alta Inspección, the regulation of teacher and other professional qualifications, and the establishment of minimum educational requirements for each center of education. The MEC specifically controls basic educational legislation, accreditation of certificates and

degrees, general planning of the education system, and the determination and maintenance of minimum requirements for common curriculum areas, especially those of national concern, such as Spanish history, Spanish national language, mathematics, and science.

The implementation of educational policies dictated by the central state and the remainder of educational responsibilities, such as the design of academic programs to support cultural, linguistic, and economic development of regional communities, is reserved for the CCAA. Additionally, a system of shared curricular control between the central state and CCAA has been established in the post-Franco era. This system of shared control is regulated through a system of “minimum academic requirements” or “minimums.” The system of minimums mandates that 65% of the curriculum of secondary schools (55% in CCAA with another language, such as in Catalonia) must reflect a national (Castilian) focus, and the remaining 35% is left up to the individual CCAA. It is noteworthy that not all of the CCAA have adopted a decentralized educational program. Pereyra (2002) noted, “some autonomous regions have adopted central programmes [*sic*], so that instead of having a single centralist state, there are now several centralist autonomous governments” (p. 668). This provides for extensive complexity in the asymmetrical form of educational decentralization currently undertaken in Spain.

Drawing on the above discussion, the development of the Spanish educational system is characterized by state legislation in the form of a new or reconstituted organic law, which the CCAA are then charged with implementing. In the Constitution, Article 27 section 1 states that “everyone has the right to education,” and Article 27 section 2

states that “the objective of education shall aim at the full development of the human personality in respect for the democratic principles of coexistence and the basic rights and liberties” (<http://www.constitucion.es/constitucion/lenguas/ingles.html#1>, Section 27, para. 1-2). As described by an educational authority in Barcelona, “the Constitution states that the central government guarantees basic, fundamental rights to its citizens through organic laws, which affect the entire state” (personal communication, June 7, 2006).

While the curriculum is divided into a system of minimums, with Catalonia able to utilize 55% of the total curriculum, Catalonia cannot generate its own law of education independent from Spain. In other words, as one educational policy-maker in Barcelona stated, “The organic laws always affect all of Spain. The organic law has to be applied, so when the law is approved, the Autonomous Communities have to apply it” (personal communication). Without actual legislative control to produce policy independent from the central Spanish state, Catalonia’s power stems from essentially how it implements the central law. As one educational expert in Catalonia indicated, “the Autonomous Communities have very little margin to innovate in education” (personal communication). This follows the work of Balcells (1996), who argued that the state

has succeeded...in gradually undermining the jurisdiction of the self-governing communities through the widespread use of the *leyes de bases* whose function is not to establish general guidelines for the self-governing communities, but to define matters reserved to the State on account of their importance, the precise degree of importance being determined by the central government itself. (p. 192)

As the Spanish state has undergone dramatic reterritorialization under strategies of political, administrative, and fiscal decentralization, the state has used strategies to exercise its power and authority.

The other issue with the CCAA's implementation of the organic laws is the rapid changes made in educational legislation with each new political stage of the post-Franco era. With six laws passed in little more than three decades, the CCAA have been consumed by constant educational changes to implement: "what has happened is that ultimately the educational laws change so often that right when we are implementing the organic law, there is already a revision to the law" (personal communication). Even among the rapid changes, participants argued that Catalonia has not gained any additional autonomy legislatively to produce policy.

#### Educational Decentralization in Catalonia

At the level of the CCAA are the Ministries and Departments of Education that represent the CCAA. These government structures are charged with overseeing the portion of the curriculum allocated to the regional level of the CCAA, the creation of centers, and staff administration. In each of the CCAA, there is a local administration that is usually represented by municipal structures, which control aspects of education such as ensuring compliance with obligatory education and the maintenance of infant and primary education. Given that the CCAA interpret and administer policies dictated by the central state, the form of educational decentralization appears to represent a functional model of decentralization. As an educational authority in Catalonia explained during an interview

The Constitutional Tribunal interpreted education as a shared competency, in which the state dictates mandates through the organic law, which includes all of the basic norms, such as the right to education. Then, the CCAA are charged with implementation of these mandates. That is to say that educational policy development functions constitutionally as something shared without actually

being shared, but it is the interpretation that they have given it. (personal communication, June 6, 2006)

In this case, the central state creates national legislation dictated by Article 148, Section 1, and the CCAA are then charged with implementing these norms. Here, the participant is arguing that while the Constitutional Tribunal has interpreted education as shared, legislative control remains under the authority of the central state.

The MEC claims to control only aspects over basic educational legislation in order to guarantee the basic rights to education. However, there are many cases in which regional CCAA policy-makers and system actors have interpreted state educational policy production as an extension of central state control into the terrain of CCAA competencies. For example, a high level authority in Catalonia explained that

It can no longer be claimed that these [central state policies] are just the basic norms because they have completely invaded the terrain of the Autonomous competencies. In other words, if it [the central state] ends up regulating things like the size of letters in textbooks, the number of pages that the textbooks should have...it is clear that they are regulating aspects that are not basic principles, that are not rights, but rather they are regulating aspects of education that are competencies of the CCAA. (personal communication, June 6, 2006)

Even the ways in which policies are implemented in CCAA are regulated by the state. An educational leader in Catalonia concisely stated, “the state does the determining,” (personal communication, July 11, 2006). Furthermore, in the decentralized Spanish state, the CCAA pay capital tax and collect income tax, while the central state exercises authority over educational policy production. As one educational expert in Catalonia explained, “the State legislates, the Autonomous Communities pay” (personal communication, May 29, 2006). Even with increased fiscal responsibilities at CCAA levels, the central Spanish state maintains an important role in policy production, which has particular implications for CCAA decision-making.

In a discussion of fiscal decentralization, one educational leader in Catalonia described the state as yielding particular decision-making powers to Catalonia because of its responsibility financially. The educational leader in Catalonia argued,

Because we have to pay, we need to have something to say. The important things, we cannot decide, and if there are leftovers, we can eat the leftovers. We pay for the cake, and sometimes we get to decide what to do with the leftovers. (personal communication, June 1, 2006)

The CCAA are increasingly responsible for fiscal matters, although they remain steered by the state in matters of policy decision-making and standard-setting.

This appears to be interpreted as the case, even in efforts to increase Catalonia's participation in a number of intergovernmental arenas. The Sectoral Conferences (*Conferencias Sectoriales*) is a mechanism that the state has adopted for encouraging greater participation from Catalonia in policy-making decisions. The Sectoral Conferences emerged out as a way in which officials of the central state could cooperate and coordinate with CCAA leaders "in order to maximize intergovernmental cooperation and to avoid conflicts" (Moreno, 2002, p. 405). One participant argued that during the process of decentralization

one of the problems that [policymakers and government officials] detected in the 1980s was that there were no institutions of dialogue between the CCAA and the central state...the Sectoral Conferences were established to exist as a type of intergovernmental conferences. (personal communication, May 29, 2006)

Each Sectoral Conference consists of the Minister of Education and representatives from each of the 17 CCAA. The Sectoral Conference functions as a way in which to encourage the exchange of information, increase intergovernmental participation, propose educational policies that guarantee the basic equality of citizens, determine collaborative projects, examine performance indicators, and exchange and compile data from each of

the CCAA in order to construct a profile of how the state of Spain is proceeding in meeting EU educational criteria.

While Catalonia is represented in the Sectoral Conferences, one participant argued that the scope and agenda of the Sectoral Conference itself is under authority of the central government. The participant stated, “You must realize that the Sectoral Conferences are controlled by the central government because it is the central government that has the capacity to establish the agenda” (personal communication, May 29, 2006). In the Spanish state’s attempts to establish intergovernmental relationships with the CCAA, it seems to rely primarily on vertical relations, with the power extending down from the central state to the CCAA. These vertical relations have been interpreted by system actors at the level of Catalonia to be unidirectional emanating from the state to the CCAA. An educational expert in Catalonia reflected on this issue,

I think that the CCAA have much less trust for the state than the state does of the CCAA for one basic reason. The state, through legislation, can have much more of an effect on the CCAA....The state has many means to intervene in the CCAA... If they [the state] have everything already done and made, such as the law of education, what are we going to say? You can see the lack of trust much more from the CCAA towards the central government basically for this reason. (personal communication, May 29, 2006)

Given Spain’s history, the relationship between Catalonia and the central state from the perspective of system actors in Catalonia seems to reflect a level of mistrust towards the central state. Extending this discussion is the reconfiguration of regional, nation state and EU governance structures in recent processes of educational policy formation, particularly those concerning decentralization.

## Overlap of National and Regional Politics in the EU

Across the history of the development of the EU, regions have played a key role. As early as the 1957 Treaty of Rome, the Preamble stated that the original six members needed “to strengthen the unity of their economies and to ensure their harmonious development by reducing the differences existing between the various regions and the backwardness of the less favoured [*sic*] regions” (European Commission, 2000, p. 5). In 1975, there were attempts to develop the poorest regions of Europe, which included the establishment of the European Regional Development Fund, which aimed to reallocate the budget contributions of Member State countries.

As the EU continuously developed through the 1990s, regions were provided even more developmental support. With the Maastricht Treaty, cohesion became designated “as one of the main objectives of the Union, alongside economic and monetary union and the single market” (European Commission, 2000, p. 5). Additionally, Jones and Keating (1995) argued that the 1980s enlargement to include southern states that possessed regional diversity, and the reorganization undertaken in a number of Member States resulted in a greater need to take the role of regions into account during the 1990s. Moreover, the authors showed that in the early 1990s “spending by the Community on regional policy had increased to around a quarter of its budget” (p. v). With the Maastricht Treaty, the EU’s policy-making institutions changed, and regions developed particular decision-making capacities. As the EU focused on the economic development of the various regions in Europe, and cohesion became a significant policy objective, literature on the EU began to emphasize analyses of the regions.

In the 1980s, scholarly work on the EU offered little analysis on the role of regions within the EU. However, as multilevel governance became a useful framework for political scientists and scholars in the social sciences in the 1990s, regions were provided increased attention. In this literature, there was a growing focus on the EU as an institution that has given rise to regions within their respective nation states (Closa & Heywood, 2004). Debates over the EU's regional policy have been rooted in diverse contexts, such as Catalonia and the Basque Country in Spain, the German Länder, and the Flemish in Belgium. In each of these diverse contexts, advocates of greater regional representation in the EU have argued that above all, regions in the EU lead to greater citizen participation in EU decision-making and thus, greater democratization. In the EU's development, regional policy has been emphasized as means for greater economic development and cooperation towards particular goals among all EU countries and citizens. In the 2000 European Commission document, *Working for the Regions*, it was stated, "Europe's regional policy is above all a policy of solidarity....Regional policy is also a policy for people" (p. 3). The argument also follows that with an emphasis on the cultural diversity of EU regions, there is greater economic integration in the EU.

It is helpful to distinguish two forms of regionalism, following the work of Keating (1995). Regionalism, Keating (1995) argued, can take many forms, two of which are top-down regionalism and bottom-up regionalism. Keating (1995) explained that top-down regionalism takes "the form of national regional policies," whereas bottom-up regionalism is "in the form of regional political and economic mobilization" (p. 2). The first, Keating (1995) discussed, related to many nation states in Europe and their policies towards regional development. Keating (1995) wrote

Economically, these [regional policies] were justified in terms of the need to tap under-utilized resources in peripheral and declining regions and increase national output. Politically, they served to enhance national solidarity and secure support from peripheral regions for the State regime or the party in power. (p. 2)

Many regions also possess long histories of independent cultural and linguistic traditions.

Keating (1995) discussed that at the same time as nation states in Europe emphasized regional development policies for economic and political purposes, many regions reasserted their “historical claims for regional and national distinctiveness” (p. 3). In the politics of European integration, the EU increasingly has become a forum, in which regions have the potential to gain greater autonomy from the central state. As Wright (2000) stated, “there is evidence that regions have found the umbrella of the EU as encouragement to bid for autonomy” (p. 179). The EU has also had an impact on the reshuffling of relationships and partnerships between regions, nation states, and the EU, in that new political alliances and networks are developing across regions, nations, and supranational levels.

With the 1988 structural funds reform establishing a partnership principle between regions, nation states, and the EU, regions have increasingly gained representation in the context of the central state, as well as the EU. Giordano and Roller (2002) noted, “in recent years, regional entities as well as nationalist political parties have increasingly been able to further their demands within the international arena and to attract support for their causes both at home and abroad” (p. 101). This has raised questions regarding a Europe of the Regions (Applegate, 1999), or as MacLeod (1999) stated, Euro-supranationalism. Moreover, the institutional development of the Committee of the Regions (COR) and the principle of subsidiarity brings about an increase in regional authority and empowerment, which I have discussed elsewhere (Engel, in press).

In the draft of the EU Constitution, regions are mentioned in Title 1, under relations between the EU and Member States. Article I-5.1 stated that the EU respects each of the Member States, “inclusive of regional and local self-government.” The EU also has discussed regions in the Constitution in the context of safeguarding diversity. Article I-3.3 stated that the EU “shall respect rich cultural and linguistic diversity, and shall ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced.” These views have emphasized decentralization as a means of local and regional representation, means for greater EU integration, and the enhancement of economic development. Yet, in order for the European integration project to be successful, the EU actively seeks mechanisms to get as close to the citizen as possible. In this way, the EU draws on regional and local authorities for its own purposes, in much of the same way that regions like Catalonia look towards the EU. Consequently, the relations between regions and nation states have become reconfigured by the EU, and are no longer neatly funneled into center-periphery and nation-EU frameworks. The following discussion looks at the case of Catalonia, Spain, and the EU more specifically.

#### EU and Catalonia: Cooperation, Contestation, and Mediation

The EU has historically existed as a common model of modernization for both the Spanish state and Catalonia. Giordano and Roller (2002) wrote, “Europe provided a unifying objective” (p. 104). This is shown recently in the context of education. For example, as the EU has pressed forward with the Bologna Process, a move to harmonize the higher education systems of EU countries, the reaction from Catalonia and more broadly, from Spain, is in opposition. One participant argued, “Spaniards are opposed to

Bologna, all of the rest of Europe supports it, it is an extraordinary thing. But the Spaniards remain...against Bologna” (personal communication). The EU’s educational programs, such as Bologna have been interpreted in such a way that aligns European integration with a particular neoliberal interpretation of globalization, and what is believed to be a global agenda to privatize education.

### *Cooperation*

When I visited the Autonomous University of Barcelona during the summer of 2005, as typical throughout Spain and Catalonia, there was politically oriented graffiti that covered walls and signs on campus. I visited the campus during several protests held during the process of implementing reforms of the Bologna Treaty. In the middle of the university campus, was a message in Castilian Spanish painted across the concrete steps: “No Bologna, We are not a Market. Universities are not Markets.” One participant described this sentiment among Catalan students and community members: “It is very funny actually because the Catalan nationalists prefer to side with Spaniards that are opposed to Bologna. They talk about privatization” (personal communication). The participant went on to interpret the movement of opposition to the EU’s educational agenda as a unifying issue for all citizens of Spain, so much so that the Catalan movement for greater autonomy and self-government is overshadowed in the process.

The EU also has been a factor of intergovernmental support between the CCAA. In interviews with two policy makers in Barcelona, they described responsibilities of regional offices in Brussels to include the translation of documents and information. The offices then communicate this information to their respective regional government departments in promotion of regional interests. These regions also support the COR and

regularly participate in regional meetings in Brussels. One significant issue that emerged during interviews with regional policy makers involved the change in the intergovernmental relationship between the CCAA in the context of the EU. One participant described the relations between CCAA to be “non-existent” in the context of Spain, but “very cooperative” within Brussels (personal communication). The CCAA often cooperate and communicate about projects and discussions in Brussels that affect regional interests, while in Spain, they often do not or are unable to cooperate.

### *Contestation*

However, the EU has also served as a major point of conflict between the central Spanish state and the CCAA, particularly Catalonia and the Basque Country. The ideal of the EU as a new domain in which historical regional demands can resurface has been promoted in Catalonia, even if this ideal of the EU has remained vague. Keating (1995) argued that in Catalonia, “Europe is evoked more vaguely, as providing an arena in which the regional personality can be projected and as an alternative frame of reference to the State” (p. 8). The role that the EU plays in relations between Spain and Catalonia remains ambiguous. In the post-Franco era, while Catalonia has increased powers of governance and shared responsibilities with the central government, as stated in the previous chapter, the Spanish Constitution remains ambiguous regarding the participation of the CCAA in international or EU affairs (Closa & Heywood, 2004). Drawing on the example of constitutional ambiguity in Spain and the EU, there have been many conflicts over the role of the CCAA in foreign policy. One example involves the establishment of CCAA offices in Brussels.

In 1986, with Spain's accession into the EC, the Basque Country and Catalonia immediately established regional offices in Brussels. The central Spanish state questioned the legality of regional representation in Brussels, and argued that it undermined Spanish national unity in foreign matters (Closa & Heywood, 2004). The case was brought to the Constitutional Tribunal, which ruled in 1995 that CCAA could in fact participate in foreign affairs under the condition that they not act against Spain's foreign policy (Closa & Heywood, 2004). Since 1995, all of the Spanish CCAA have had regional offices in Brussels. Even with the regional offices in the EU, the central state has not allowed Catalonia and the other CCAA to freely participate in international affairs. For example, any visit that the Catalan president makes abroad has to be communicated with the central state (personal communication). Generally, it is considered that foreign policy is the jurisdiction of the Spanish central state. One central government official explained

the [CCAA] can have their own external relations...it's like defense. Defense is the jurisdiction of the central state, but each CCAA can have their own autonomous police, like [Catalonia's] Mosso d'Esquadra, but they have to work in coordination with the state police and security forces. With foreign policy, Catalonia has to work in line with the central state. (personal communication, July 6, 2006)

Foreign policy has been a source of conflict for the central state and Catalonia. A participant reflected: "the central state is not very keen on the international role of the [CCAA] but it has to accept it because the Constitutional Tribunal has accepted [regional] offices in Brussels" (personal communication, July 6, 2006). Still, the central policy maker in Madrid went on to state that any of the CCAA "can open offices around the world, teach their regional languages to whomever all they want, but they can still not bypass the competencies of the state" (personal communication, July 6, 2006). In this

way, the central Spanish state's foreign policy is utilized to exercise a significant amount of authority over Catalonia and the other CCAA.

With these examples, the debate continues over the extent to which regions can even participate in the EU. Roller (2004) wrote that "greater representation and participation in the EU's institutions have become an increasingly salient issue in Catalonia, particularly in light of the Spanish government's more marked refusal to agree to anything other than indirect participation" (p. 82). During an interview with an educational official in Barcelona on May 29, 2006, the participant discussed the debates regarding central Spanish state educational offices in Brussels and whether or not they should be decentralized to Catalonia and the other CCAA. This is a central issue, the participant explained, because some of the educational policies that are being developed at the Catalan level for the interests of Catalonia depend directly on Brussels, and do not depend on the central state. However, while there is a major push to decentralize the control of European offices in Brussels to regional levels of the CCAA, the authority to decentralize still remains in the hands of the central state. This control, one participant stated, "is something that they [the central government] will never give us" (personal communication, June 19, 2006). It was also the general view among participants that until Catalonia has its own foreign policy and can act independently in the context of the EU, it will remain a nation seeking statehood.

### *Mediation*

Additionally, the EU has been looked at as a mediating force to help solve conflicts evoked in a decentralized model of the Spanish state. In the case of the CCAA of Spain, the EU is emphasized as an institution, which can serve to solve conflicts

between CCAA and the central state. Pereyra's (2002) study of decentralization and centralization in Spain looked specifically at two CCAA: Andalusia and the Canary Islands. These two regions have been ranked as two of the poorest CCAA in Spain and least developed regions in the EU. The study examines the tensions that have arisen in the transition of the Spanish state.

Pereyra (2002) reported that all participants viewed the central government as possessing a lack of sufficient knowledge and capacity for the management of the decentralized education system, especially as some of the CCAA, such as Catalonia, continue to pursue policies to gain increased autonomy. With regards to the EU, Pereyra (2002) wrote that participants in the study "make references to alternative power bases beyond the central state—for example the [EU]" (p. 672). The participants also believed that the EU is not advocating strongly enough for "consensus among countries in educational matters" (Pereyra, 2002, p. 672). The reactions from system actors from Andalusia and the Canary Islands suggest that the EU is viewed as a mediating force for internal state affairs, as well as the intergovernmental conflicts arising among the CCAA. In this sense, the EU has been interpreted as an institution above the state that is able to help establish national unity in the face of what is perceived to be fragmentation brought on by a decentralized structure.

### Conclusion

This chapter maps out contemporary processes of educational policy production across Catalonia, Spain, and the EU. Throughout this paper, I have illustrated some of the key educational policy debates in relation to Catalonia's engagement with supranational

and global pressures, as well as pressures emanating from local, subnational, and national imperatives. It is my central argument that these reflections disrupted the traditional view of a singular state structure in global-nation frameworks or center-periphery notions of educational decentralization. Moreover, models such as center-periphery, which is often used in describing state spaces and their governance constructs, tend to ignore the complexity in the overlap of political spheres. At the root of these models is a state-centrism that continues to permeate through the social sciences. However, drawing on the case of multiscalar pressures reshaping one of Spain's historical nations (Catalonia), it is evident that "what is emerging is a complex political order in which European politics is becoming more regionalized; regional politics is increasingly Europeanized; and national politics is both Europeanized and regionalized" (Giordano and Roller, 2002, p. 100). In rejection of the center-periphery and global-nation frameworks, this chapter discusses policy production through the complex overlap of conflicting interests, aims, imperatives, and pressures.

## References

- Applegate, C. (1999). A Europe of Regions: Reflections on the historiography of sub-national places in modern times. *The American Historical Review*, 104(4), 1-32.
- Balcells, A. (1996). *Catalan nationalism: Past and present*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Bonal, X. (1998). La política educativa: Dimensiones de un proceso de transformación (1976-1996). In R. Goma & J. Subirats (Eds.), *Políticas públicas en España: Contenidos, redes de actores y niveles de gobierno*. (pp. 153-175). Editorial Ariel, S.A.
- Bonal, X. (2000). Interest groups and the State in contemporary Spanish education policy. *Journal of Education Policy*, 15(2), 201-216.
- Börzel, T. A. (2002). *States and regions in the European Union: Institutional adaptation in Germany and Spain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brenner, N. (2004). *New state spaces: Urban governance and the rescaling of statehood*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Burbules, N. & Torres, C. (Eds.). (2000). *Globalization and critical perspectives*. London: Routledge.
- Catalan Institute of Statistics (2006). Population. Retrieved January 5, 2007 from, <http://www.idescat.net/en/>
- Closa, C. & Heywood, P. M. (2004). *Spain and the European Union*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Constitución Española (1978) Retrieved March 1, 2007, from <http://www.congreso.es/funciones/constitucion/indice.htm>
- Dale, R. & Robertson, S. (2002). The varying effects of supranational organizations as subjects of globalization on education. *Comparative Education Review*, 46(1). 10-36.
- Edge, K. (2000). *Spain's democratization & decentralization reform*. Report prepared for the Education Reform and Management Group, HDNED, World Bank. Retrieved February 7, 2006 from, <http://www1.worldbank.org/education/globaleducationreform/06.GovernanceReform/06.05.casestudies/spainof.html#CaseStudies>.

- Engel, L.C. (in press). Policy as journey: Tracing the steps of a reinvented Spanish state. In McCarthy, C., Durham, A., Engel, L.C., Filmer, A., Giardina, M.D., Malagrecá, M. (Eds.) *Globalizing cultural studies: Ethnographic interventions in theory, method, and policy*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc.
- Esturla, A. (2000). Spain. In C. Brock & W. Tulasiewicz (Eds.), (2000). *Education in a single Europe* (pp. 321-343). New York: Routledge.
- European Commission (2000). Working for the Regions. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
- European Commission (2004). Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe. *Official Journal of the European Union*. Retrieved March 20, 2007, from <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/JOhtml.do?uri=OJ:C:2004:310:SOM:EN:HTML>
- Fierro, A. (1994). Diseño y desafíos de la reforma educativa española. *Revista de Educación*, 305, 13-36.
- Gillespie, R. (2000). *Spain and the Mediterranean: Developing a European policy towards the south*. London: Macmillan Press LTD.
- Giordano, B. & Roller, E. (2002). Catalonia and the 'Idea of Europe': Competing strategies and discourses within Catalan Party Politics. *European Urban and Supranational Studies*, 9(2), 99-113.
- Grant, N. (1988). The education of minority and peripheral cultures: Introduction. *Comparative Education*, 24(2), 155-166.
- Guibernau, M. (1999). Nations without states: Political communities in a global age. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Guillén, A.M. & Álvarez, S. (2001). Globalization and the southern welfare states. In R. Sykes, B. Palier, & P. M. Prior (Eds.), *Globalization and European welfare states: Challenges and change*. (pp. 103-126). New York: Palgrave.
- Hanson, M. E. (1989a). Decentralisation and regionalisation in educational administration: comparisons of Venezuela, Colombia and Spain. *Comparative Education*, 25(1), 41-55.
- Hanson, M. E. (1989b). Education, administration development and democracy in Spain. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 9(2), 127-138.
- Hanson, M. E. (2000). Democratization and educational decentralization in Spain. *Education Reform and Management Country Study Series*. World Bank: Washington DC

- Heywood, P. (1995). *The government and politics of Spain*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Hughes, R. (1993). *Barcelona*. New York: Vintage, Random House Inc.
- Jones, B. & Keating, M. (Eds.). (1995). *The European Union and the regions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Keating, M. (1995). Europeanism and regionalism. In B. Jones & M. Keating (Eds.), *The European Union and the regions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- MacLeod, G. (1999). Place, politics, and scale dependence: exploring the structuration of Euro-regionalism. *European Urban and Supranational Studies*, 6, 231-253.
- Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia. [www.mec.es](http://www.mec.es)
- Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia. Disposiciones generales: Jefatura del Estado. Ley Organica 8/1985, de 3 de julio, reguladora del Derecho a la Educación
- Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia. Disposiciones generales: Jefatura del Estado. Ley Organica 1/1990, de 3 de octubre, de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo
- Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia. Disposiciones generales: Jefatura del Estado. Ley Organica 9/1995, de 20 de noviembre, de la participación, la evaluación y el gobierno de los centros docentes.
- Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia. Disposiciones generales: Jefatura del Estado. Ley Organica 10/2002, de 23 de diciembre, de Calidad de la Educación
- Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia. Disposiciones generales: Jefatura del Estado. Ley Organica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación
- Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia. (1999, September-December). *Revista de educación* 320: *La Inspección Educativa*. Madrid: INCE.
- Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia. (2002, September-December). *Revista de educación* 329: *La Ley de Calidad*. Madrid: INCE.
- Morrow, R. A. & Torres, C. A. (2003). The state, social movement and educational reform. In R. F. Arnove & C. A. Torres (Eds.), *Comparative education: The dialectic of the global and the local* (pp. 92-114). Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc.
- Muñoz, P. M. & Marcos, M. C. (2005). *España: Ayer y hoy*. New Jersey: Pearson, Prentice Hill.

- Nóvoa, A., & Lawn, M. (2002). *Fabricating Europe: the formation of an education space*. London: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Núñez Seixas, X. M. (2005). From National-Catholic nostalgia to Constitutional patriotism: Conservative Spanish nationalism since the early 1990s. In S. Balfour (Ed.), *The politics of contemporary Spain* (pp. 121-145). New York: Routledge.
- Pereyra, M. (2002). Changing educational governance in Spain: decentralization and control in the autonomous communities. *European Educational Research Journal*, 1(4), 667-675.
- Roller, E. (2004). Conflict and cooperation in EU policy-making: The case of Catalonia. *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, 5(1), 81-102.
- Sassen, S. (2006). *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Telò, M. (2002). Governance and government in the European Union: The open method of coordination. In M. J. Rodriguez (Ed.), *New knowledge economy in Europe* (pp. 242-271). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Torres, L. & Piña, V. (2004). Reshaping public administration: The Spanish experience compared to the UK. *Public Administration*, 82(2), 445-464.
- Wright, S. (2000). *Community and communication: The role of language in nation-state building and European integration*. Cleveland: Multilingual Matters, LTD.