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ETHNOCULTURAL REGIONAL COLLECTIVE IDENTITY OF
SPANISH HISTORICAL NATIONS

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Abstract

This article studies the cultural context of development of the ethnocultural identity in the Spanish regions and creation of the Spanish "state of autonomies". It investigates the process of development of features of the ethnocultural identity in the Spanish regions since the Antiquity to the present. Ethnocultural identity is the result of cultural influences of different ethnic groups who migrated to the Iberian Peninsula. In the era of Antiquity, the following tribes lived on the Iberian Peninsula: Celtiberians, Moors, Romans, Greeks, Germans, Arabs and Jews. In the Middle Ages, the following Spanish kingdoms were created: Castile-la-Mancha, Galicia, Al-Andalus, and Aragon. Despite the creation of a unified Spanish state, the Spanish regional specificity was not leveled. These features were preserved due to the foral system guaranteeing the rights of regional self-governments, which existed until the end of the 19th century. The article analyzes the influence of Catholic Christianity on the process of uniting the Spanish medieval kingdoms into a single Spanish state. The article describes key features of the Spanish cultural policy, focused on the cultural unification, which involves the "castilization" of the Spanish state. The issues of development of the Spanish national civic collective identity, emergence of Spanish regional movements, searches for Spanish national symbols were dealt with by the "Generation 98" participants. Since the second half of the XX century and after the Spanish "transition to democracy" in the regions, ethnocentric sentiments have been manifested, despite the establishment of the Spanish "state of autonomies".

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1. Introduction

The ethno-cultural diversity of the Spanish state is the main prerequisite for the emergence and preservation of specific features of the Spanish regions. Establishment of the modern Spanish "state of autonomies", which is a mosaic of regional collective identities, the Spanish "Nacionalidades", symbolizes the recognition of their regional ethnocultural identity. Before the conquest of the territory of Spain by the Roman troops, the alien Indo-European tribes of the Celts had already lived there, which contributed to their ethnic mixing with the Iberians and emergence of the Celtiberians. After the approval of the power of Rome, Roman immigrants, carriers of Roman culture, directed to the Iberian Peninsula, which contributed to the creation of the ethnonym *Spain*. Citizens of the Spanish provinces enjoyed the same rights as citizens of the rest of the Roman Empire. After the fall of the Western Roman Empire in 476, during the great migration of peoples, the Germanic Visigoth tribes settled and seized power in the former Spanish Roman provinces. In the era of Visigothic Spain, Christianity was established. Until the 19th century, Spanish society was extremely heterogeneous in terms of cultural traditions, there were differences in folk costumes, laws, languages, banknotes, systems of measures and weights, customs, markets. It was necessary to create a single state body from a country of cultural diversity. Nevertheless, the modern Spanish state is one of the most decentralized ones in the EU, a state of "autonomous communities" (Fusi, 1988).

2. Problem Statement

The relevance of the study of ethnocultural collective identity in the Spanish regions is due to the fact that nationalists and a significant number of citizens of the regions which have a status of "historical nationalities" refuse to share the single ethnocultural identity with Spaniards from other regions.

3. Research Questions

The concept of *Identitas* appeared in the 3rd-6th centuries in the works by ecclesiastical Latin authors. The concept became widespread in the 1970s thanks to the theory by E. Erickson. In the late Middle Ages, this concept acquired an ontological character, began to be considered as one of the universals of being within the scholasticism and pantheism of N. Kuzansky, G. Bruno, B. Spinoza. Investigations of the epistemological and axiological aspects of the problem of individual identity and subjectivity of self-knowledge began in the philosophy of romanticism life, as well as in the works by Husserl, Hegel, Descartes, Kant, Marx, and Engels.

The research on collective identity is associated with the spread of "historicist" theories developed by M. Lazarus and G. Steinthal, substantiating the existence of the so-called "People's Spirit" or "General Spirit" developed by Montesquieu. The concepts of People's Spirit and Civic Nationalism have become the basis for substantiating the federalization and regionalization of unitary European states in the 1970s.

The concept of ethnocultural collective identity can be defined as a sociocultural phenomena manifested in the understanding of a historical community by a group of people. There are two main methodological approaches to the study of this phenomenon 1) ontological (primordialist) (L.N. Gumilev,

Yu.V. Bromley, et al.) (Bromley, 1983) 2) constructivist (instrumental) (K. Hubner, E.A. Gellner, E.D. Smith). The regional collective identity is subordinate to the ethnocultural identity. Moreover, the regional identity can develop into the national civic collective identity. It is a complex socio-cultural and economic phenomenon that manifests itself in the awareness of oneself as a part of a regional community. Civic national collective identity is a type of collective identity based on common historical past, language, literature, and shared by an ethnos or a group of ethnic groups that have their own sovereignty and statehood.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this article is to identify the cultural context of development of the ethnocultural regional identity in the Spanish regions, which predetermined the establishment of the modern Spanish state of “autonomous communities.

5. Research Methods

The complex nature of this research issue involves the use of different scientific approaches. To identify the cultural components of Spanish ethnocultural collective identity, the views of representatives of the following scientific schools were analyzed: symbolic interactionism, theory of collective identity, psychoanalysis, constructivism and primordialism; systemic, comparative-historical and biographical methods.

6. Findings

Granting the status of historical nationality the four Spanish regions (Castile-la-Mancha, Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia) is a recognition of their regional ethnocultural specificity by the Spanish government. The Iberian Peninsula has been the scene of ethnic migrations since ancient times. The indigenous population of the Pyrenees is of Iberian origin. Most of the modern inhabitants of Spain are descendants of the Iberians. Since ancient times, Celtic tribes have migrated to the lands of the Iberians. As a result of these migrations, a hybrid Celtic-Iberian culture arose in the central and northern parts of the Iberian Peninsula. The most significant influence of the ancient Celts was exercised on the culture of indigenous Catalans and Galicians. In the II century BC, the Roman armies invaded the lands of the Celtiberians. As a result, elements of the Roman civilization appeared in Spain: the Latin language, which became the basis of the Spanish language and inclusion of inhabitants of the Pyrenees in the family of Roman peoples, construction of cities and roads by the Roman model. After the fall of the Western Roman Empire, the Germanic Visigoth tribes seized power over the former Spanish provinces of Rome. These tribes played an important role in uniting the population of the Spanish regions, establishing Christianity as the state religion of Visigothic Spain with its capital in Toledo. In 711, numerous troops of the Arab Caliphate invaded the lands of German Spain. The rapid seizure of almost the entire territory of Visigothic Spain and spread of Islam in the occupied territories provoked a Spanish response in the form of the Reconquista movement. They wanted to liberate the Iberian Peninsula from the Arab invaders in

order to preserve and protect the Christian faith. The symbol of the "Reconquista" was a legend of the Visigothic king Asturias Pelayo, who ruled in 718–737. According to the legend, under the military leadership of Pelayo, the retreating Visigoths inflicted a major defeat on the troops of the Arab Caliphate (Varela, 1994).

The Caliphate established in medieval Central and Southern Spain for several centuries was of key importance for development of the ethnocultural specificity of Castile-la-Mancha and Andalusia and the neighboring southern Spanish regions. For example, the capital of Castile-la-Mancha, Toledo, was liberated in 1085, and Al-Andalus (Andalusia – in 1492. The historical capital of Castile-la-Mancha, Toledo, was of great economic importance. After the end of the Reconquista, the kingdom of Castile-la-Mancha became a successor to the former Visigothic kingdom, Rex Gotorum. (Morales Moya et al., 2006). The political decisions of the rulers, Isabella I of Castile and Philip II of Aragon, were crucial for the unification of the Spanish medieval kingdoms and creation of the Spanish Empire (Altamira & Crevea, 2003) The Castilian knights became a symbol of liberation of the Spanish Christian lands from the Muslim Arabs. The Arab-Muslim heritage of Castile-la-Mancha and Andalusia is reflected in the emergence of "flamenco" based on gypsy dances, which is seen as the most obvious reflection of Spanish cultural exoticism. (Lipkin et al., 2014). In 1492, the Spanish Empire was created. Castilian Madrid became a capital of the Spanish Empire in 1561 (Kamen, 2007). In Castile-la-Mancha, the industrial development began and a policy aimed at centralizing the Spanish state around this region was adopted. The Castilian language became the state language, which contributed to the cultural dominance of Castile-la-Mancha (Maravall, 1998).

The topic of development of ethnocultural identity in the Spanish regions was studied by Spanish researchers at the turn of the 19th-20th centuries; it was thoroughly investigated by representatives of "Generation 98" which is a creative association of Spanish intellectuals focused on finding spiritual foundations of Spanish culture. As a result, the romantic image of Castilian chivalry of the Reconquista era and the image of Castile-la-Mancha as a homeland of European chivalry, noble defenders of European Christian culture, became widespread. Under the influence of members of the Generation 98 movement, Spanish patriarchal ideals were formed. They are expressed in the image of Don Quixote. The system of economic benefits (Fueros) established in the 16th century ensured the broad economic autonomy and protection of the traditional social order of the Spanish regions. It was maintaining Spanish regional differences until the end of the 19th century. Spanish ethnic diversity contributed to the development of Spanish regional ethnocentric movements (Bizarismo, Catalanidad, Gallisismo, Castellancentrismo) (García de Cortázar, 2010).

The roots of Catalan regional ethnocentrism can be traced back to the establishment of the Spanish state in 1492. The Duchy of Barcelona, which was part of the Kingdom of Aragon, was a wealthy state with the developed trade and navy systems. Thanks to the dynastic union of Isabella I of Castile and Philip II of Aragon, who was king of Aragon, the Spanish medieval kingdoms were united. The border territorial position of Catalonia between France and Spain caused the rivalry between them for power in the region (Kozhanovsky, 1993). The rivalry between Castile-la-Mancha and Catalonia for the economic primacy caused the emergence of a movement for the preservation of traditional Catalan culture "Satalanidad" and one of the origins of Catalan separatism. The significant role of Catalonia in the

Spanish economy of the 18th century was the result of an economic and demographic boom, which was associated with profitable exports of cognac products. By the end of the century, the cotton industry was successfully developing; Catalonia could be called "little England". The Celtic origin of the Catalans served to justify their good-neighborly relations with France. At the end of the XIX century, Catalan nationalists and French archaeologists revealed a similarity of Catalan folklore with the French-Provençal one. In the second half of the 17th century, as a result of the short entry of Catalonia into France, the idea of protecting and spreading the Catalan language arose. The Ode to the Motherland by Carlos Bonaventura published in 1833 is one of the first literary works written in Catalan (Tusell, 1991). Since the 19th century, the "Renaixença" newspaper began to publish articles on the history and current problems of Catalonia.

The emergence of Basque ethnocentrism was associated with the preservation of the foral system in the Basque Country. Basque culture is a preserve of the Iberian patriarchal order. Until the end of the XIX century, most of the Basque people did not speak Castilian. According to the ancient Basque customs, every man in Vizcaya was free and owned his land and home. In each village, men were elected to the General Assembly, which was located in the ancient capital of the Basque Country Guernica. The meetings were held under the symbol of political freedom which was Oak. Later it became a symbol of the traditional patriarchal Basque culture. At the turn of the XIX–XX centuries, against the background of "castilization" of the Spanish state, the traditional Basque closeness was expressed in the concept of ethnic Basque nationalism "Vizkaitarrismo". This teaching was a variant of the conservative-oriented movement for the preservation of Spanish traditionalism and foundations of Catholicism in the social order. An important cultural prerequisite for the Basque ethnocentrism was the medieval Basque myth, according to which the Basque population was the indigenous "pure" population of Iberia which was not mixed with other ethnic groups that migrated to the Iberian Peninsula.

The supporters of the Spanish regional movements were subjected to repressions after the approval of Franco's power (Pozharskaya, 2007). As a result, tens of thousands of people were killed in the Basque Country and Catalonia during the political purges. In response to the Francoist repression in 1962, the terrorist organization ETA was created. The Basque Country has turned into a Spanish imperial semi-colony. An important element of the ETA ideology was "guerrilla", "revolutionary war" against the metropolis (Spain). The purpose was to gain sovereignty of Euskadi (Basque Country). The ETA was disbanded only in 2018 (Khenkin & Samsonkina, 2011).

Against the background of rising unemployment in the southern and central agricultural regions of Spain (Andalusia, Murcia and Castile), the next stage in the development of the industry in Catalonia and the Basque Country provoked a large-scale influx of migrants to Vizcaya, which contributed to the growth of ethnocentrism in the second half of the XX century (Henkin, 2001). For example, in Catalonia the number of population grew from 3 million to 6 million. Two thirds of the new residents came from the South of Spain (Hansen et al., 2013). Internal migration caused a growth of ethnocentrism and popularization of derogatory nicknames separating "vasquistas" (indigenous Basques) from "maketos" (degenerates – the rest of the Spaniards) and Catalans from "charnegos" (newcomer Spaniards).

In Galicia, unlike Catalonia and the Basque Country, the process of spreading the Castilian language and unifying legislation with the rest of the country was peaceful. In general, Galicians are not

distinguished by regional chauvinism, like the Catalans, or ethnocentrism, like the Basques. Like the Catalans, Galicians are of Celtic origin. In Galicia, as well as in other Spanish regions, the regional movement "Galleguismo" aims to study the Galician folk regional culture. During the Second Spanish Republic, along with the "Iberismo" movement, the "Españolismo" movement was created. Supporters of "Galleguismo" aimed to transform Spain into a confederation of four national regions. The key importance of the Second Spanish Republic was development of the Spanish Constitution in 1936, which included the draft regional statutes. It became a prototype of the articles of the Spanish Constitution of 1978 on the autonomy of the Spanish state. According to Galician intellectuals, the main mistake of the Catholic kings (Isabella I of Castile and Philip II of Aragon) was that they tried to create a centralized unitary state, abandoning the federal form of government that was more suitable for Spain. The modern majority of Galician citizens identify themselves as citizens of multilingual Spain and associate the Spanish "state of autonomies" with the "single home" of all Spaniards. As a rule, among Galicians, a dual national identity prevails. They identify themselves as Galician and Spanish (Balfour, 2007).

After the "Spanish transition to democracy" and abandonment of the Francoist national policy, focused on the development of a Spanish mono-national state, Spain was transformed into the "state of autonomous communities". The modern "State of Autonomies" is based on the Spanish Constitution of 1978. Article 2 established the rights of self-government for 17 Spanish "autonomous communities", including 4 historical nations – Catalonia, Galicia, the Basque Country and Castile-la-Mancha (Caminal, 2002).

7. Conclusion

The single Spanish state (the Spanish Empire) was created by unifying the Spanish medieval kingdoms that were formed during the "Reconquista" era.

In the "Reconquista" era, Aragon, Galicia-Leon, Castile, Catalonia, and Navarra (Basque Country) were formed. Castile was of key importance for the unification of the Spanish state. During the Reconquista, the Castilian knights became a symbol of Spanish culture.

Despite the fact that Castile became the center of unification and centralization of the Spanish economy, all the former Spanish medieval kingdoms enjoyed broad rights of legal and economic autonomy, protected by the foral statutes.

Adoption of a cultural policy of "castilization" in the 19th century was considered as a solution to the issue of centralization of the Spanish state and a consequence of the preservation of the foral system and preservation of regional specificity. Regional ethnocentric movements fueled economic imbalances in the regions.

Criticism of the Francoist cultural policy focused on the creation of a mono-national Spanish state became the main prerequisite for the regionalization of Spain and creation of a modern Spanish "state of autonomies".

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