



Universiteit Utrecht

Vox in the Mirror of the Spanish Radical Right

The Consolidation of the Far-Right

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Table of Content

<i>Introduction</i>	6
Academic Debates	8
Theoretical Framework	10
Methodology and Sources	12
Election Data	12
Archival Research	12
<i>The Evolution of the Extreme Right</i>	14
The Spanish Political System: A Small Overview	14
The End of Franco’s Regime	15
The Electoral Failure: Internal and External Reasons.....	16
The Growth of the Extreme Right in 1979.....	18
The Decline of the Extreme Right	19
<i>The Transformation of the Radical Right</i>	22
The Popular Party	22
From <i>Alianza Popular</i> to the Popular Party	22
The Establishment of the Popular Party	24
Antisystem Groups	25
The Radical Right in Western Europe	26
The Radical Right Parties in Spain	27
The Roots of the Radical Right Parties	27
Rise and Fall of the Radical Right Parties	28
The Ideology of the Radical Right Parties	29
<i>The Foundation of Vox</i>	34
The Origins of Vox	35
The 2014 European Election	36
The Consolidation of Vox	37
The Leaders of Vox: Opportunistic and True Believers	39
Santiago Abascal Conde	39
Javier Ortega Smith.....	40
The Ideology of Vox: A Populistic Radical Right Party?	41
Nationalism	41
Nativism	43
Populism.....	44
Authoritarianism	48
Other Features	49
Summary of the Results	51
<i>Conclusion</i>	53
<i>Appendix: Election Data</i>	56
<i>Bibliography</i>	66
Primary Sources	66
Secondary Sources	67

Abstract

Spain had been considered the exception to the rise of the far-right ideology. Despite the Great Recession of 2008, the political mistrust between citizens, and the increase in immigration, there was no significant populist radical right force comparable to the European populist radical right parties. Notwithstanding, after the 2019 Spanish general elections, Vox has become the third political force in the Congress of Deputies. Due to its recent political victory, a topic of debate revolves around Vox's ideology. Through the analysis of Vox's electoral programs, and the study of its linguist and rhetoric, this paper will establish if Vox is the new representative of the populist radical right in Spain.

Although Franco's dictatorship was established over 30 years, neither extreme nor radical right parties have obtained more than one percent of the vote since 1979. What factors have influenced the decline of the far-right? Moreover, how this decline has affected the development of Vox's ideology?

These questions will be answered throughout the thesis, finally linking the overuse of Francoist's dogmas by the extreme right forces, and the lack of modernization by the radical right parties, with the downfall of Spanish far-right. Finally, the thesis will establish how this situation has shaped the development of Vox's identity.

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Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.
George Santayana

I

Introduction

For many years, Spain seemed to be the exception to Europe's new normality: the rise and consolidation of populist radical right parties. Since the end of the Francoist regime in 1975, far-right parties were almost non-existent or irrelevant in the country's political framework.

Despite the Great Recession of 2008, the political mistrust between citizens, and the increase in immigration, academics such as Carmen González-Enríquez and Xavier Casals believed that Spain was an exception to the European rise of populist radical right ideology. Neither extreme nor radical right parties have obtained more than one percent of the vote in national elections since 1979¹. Moreover, there was no significant populist radical right force comparable to the French Rassemblement National, the Italian Lega Nord or the German Alternative für Deutschland².

The bubble exploded when Vox succeeded in the regional election of Andalusia in 2018. In two years, the political party led by Santiago Abascal has become the third largest political force in the country, governs in the southern province of Murcia, and was critical in the formation of Madrid's municipal administration and the Andalusian government.

This research will examine the ideology of Vox and classify the organization according to an ideology. Therefore, I will focus on the analyses of Vox's ideology and political rhetoric between 2013 to 2020. The motivation behind this investigation is based on one reason. There is a riddle in the way that the radical right ideology has evolved in Spain.

On the one hand, the strong rejection of the extremist right ideology led to the marginalization of extreme and radical right parties at the national level for many years, with only a few minor exceptions. On the other hand, Vox shares many features of other

¹ González-Enríquez, Carmen. "The Spanish Exception: Unemployment, Inequality and Immigration, but Not Right-Wing Populist Parties." El Real Instituto Elcano, February 14, 2017. Accessed February 27, 2020. [http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano_es/contenido?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_es/zonas_es/imagen de espana/dt7-2017-gonzalez-enriquez-excepcion-espanola-fracaso-grupos-derecha-populista](http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano_es/contenido?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_es/zonas_es/imagen%20de%20espana/dt7-2017-gonzalez-enriquez-excepcion-espanola-fracaso-grupos-derecha-populista).

² Rubio-Pueyo, Vicente. "Vox: ¿Una Nueva Extrema Derecha En España?" Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, New York Office, June 2019. <http://www.rosalux-nyc.org/vox-a-new-far-right-in-spain/>.

European populist radical right parties, but there is a lack of consensus in the academic field about the nature of the party. In sum, the aim of this research is conveyed in the following research question:

Research question: *Is Vox the new representative of the populist radical right in Spain?*

Hypothesis: Vox is the contemporary representative of the radical right ideology in Spanish politics.

In order to answer the research question, it is necessary to resolve a series of sub-questions, that would be applied in each chapter of this project:

Chapter 2: What were the reasons behind the absence of extreme right parties during Spain's transition to democracy?

Chapter 3: What is the difference between the Spanish extreme right parties and the radical right?

Chapter 4: What is the ideological position of Vox in the Spanish political framework?

Academic relevance

The study of the populist radical right parties has been a real source of fascination for academics. Over the years, experts have focused their attention on the study of those Western European countries where these political parties have been gaining influence. On this subject, Spain has represented an unknown paradigm for international experts, because no populist radical right party has been able to obtain more than one percent of the vote in any national, regional or European election. Therefore, this research project has academic and social relevance. On the one hand, the analysis of Vox's ideology would provide a deeper understanding of the development of the populist radical right ideology in Spain. On the other hand, it would contribute to the study of Vox as a recent political success, and the extent possible, its impact on the political framework.

Academic Debates

When it comes to the study of populism, it may be a cliché to start lamenting the lack of consensus in the academic community³. However, as Paul Taggart explained, populism is one of the “most widely used but poorly understood political concepts of our time”, and its study is “limited in scope and duration, and somewhat episodic”⁴. Therefore, I would summarize the main theoretical contributions regarding the definition of populism, its core features, and the impact of populism in the Western European representative democracies.

The first academic debate concerns the development of populism as a political concept in the 1960s. Ionescu and Gellner established the question of whether populism could be considered an ideology or as an anti-phenomenon⁵. Other significant contributions were made during the conference held at the London School of Economics and Political Science in 1967, where three issues were discussed: populism as a branch of socialism or as a label to cover different kinds of radicalism, whether populism was an ideology or a movement, and the political psychology of populism⁶. In the 1980s, Margaret Canovan came up with a division of populism in *agrarian populism and political populism*⁷. However, common definition of populism was never settled on. As Yves Mény and Yves Surel mentioned, Ionescu and Geller and Canovan concluded that the problem was to create a “definition or an approach capable of subsuming the differences”⁸ of populism.

This ties with the second academic debate developed in the 2000s, where the literature reveals a growing re-interest in populism. Beginning with Mény and Surel that have developed a list of three main characteristics of populism. First, the idea of ‘the people’ is of primary importance for the populist ideology. The populist leader creates a community that would exclude those who are considered different. Second, the

³ Panizza, Francisco. *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy*. Phronesis. London: Verso, 2005. Accessed February 27, 2020. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/a17a/fb69d7d1c39f24d554dceb4b94e95cc8ace2.pdf>

⁴ Taggart, Paul. “Populism and the Pathology of Representative Politics.” In *Democracies and the Populist Challenge*, edited by Yves Mény and Yves Surel, 62–80. Gordonsville: Palgrave Macmillan Limited, 2001. Accessed February 17, 2020. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uunl/detail.action?docID=203944#>

⁵ Deiwiks, Christa. “Populism.” *Living Reviews in Democracy. International Conflict Research*, 2009. Accessed February 14, 2020 https://ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/special-interest/gess/cis/cis_dam/CIS_DAM_2015/WorkingPapers/Living_Reviews_Democracy/Deiwiks.PDF.

⁶ Berlin, Isaiah, Richard Hofstadter, Donald MacRae, Leonard Schapiro, Hugh Seton-Watson, Alain Touraine, F Venturi, Andrzej Walicki, and Peter Worsley. “To Define Populism.” *Government and Opposition* 3, no. 2. 137–79. 1968. Accessed February 14, 2020. www.jstor.org/stable/44481863.

⁷ Deiwiks. “Populism”, 1-9.

⁸ Mény, Yves, and Surel, Yves. “The Constitutive Ambiguity of Populism”. In *Democracies and the Populist Challenge*. Gordonsville: Palgrave Macmillan Limited, 2001. Accessed February 17, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central.

conception of the elites who have betrayed ‘the people’. Third, the restoration of ‘the people’ sovereignty⁹. A similar theme is found in Taggart’s conception of populism. Notwithstanding, he had linked ‘the people’ with the ‘heartland’, which is a “construction of an ideal world”¹⁰.

Herbert Kitschelt considers populism as an expression of dissatisfaction with the political elite and the desire to create a direct democracy between the citizens and the rulers. Moreover, he points out the incorporation of a xenophobic agenda by the populist parties in the 1990s¹¹. Francisco Panizza has indicated that the fundamental feature of populism is the vertical division between ‘the people’ and ‘the other’. He considers that antagonism is central to politics, because it is “through antagonism that political identities are constituted, and radical alternatives to the existing order can be imagined”¹². Cas Mudde has developed a definition of populism as an ideology that considers society to be divided into two homogenous and antagonistic groups: “the pure people” versus the “corrupt elite”, and that the power of sovereignty should rest on the people¹³.

Finally, Christa Deiwiks has established that there is an agreement on at least two core characteristics of populism: strong focus by populist leaders on ‘the people’ and an implicit or explicit antagonism towards ‘the other’¹⁴.

The last academic debate is focused on the study of specific countries where populism has emerged, and its impact on representative democracies. According to Kitschelt, there is the populist radical right (PRR) or the anti-statist; however, the debate about populism in West Europe is focused on the development of PRR parties¹⁵.

The PRR parties have illustrated the core features explained in the second academic debate. Some of the political parties have combined welfare chauvinist or neoliberal economic policies with “socially and politically authoritarian and xenophobic agendas.”¹⁶ Besides, as Taggart pointed out, these parties have been connected with neo-fascism and racism ideologies¹⁷.

⁹ Mény & Surel, “The Constitutive Ambiguity of Populism”. 1-22

¹⁰ Taggart. “Populism and the Pathology of Representative Politics”, 62-80

¹¹ Kitschelt, Herbert. “Popular Dissatisfaction with Democracy: Populism and Party Systems.” In *Popular Dissatisfaction with Democracy: Populism and Party Systems*, edited by Yves Mény, 179–96. Gordonsville: Palgrave Macmillan Limited, 2001. Accessed February 21, 2020.

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uunl/detail.action?docID=203944#>.

¹² Panizza. *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy*. 28-29

¹³ Mudde, Cas. “Constructing a Conceptual Framework.” In *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 11–31. 2007. Accessed February 17, 2020. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511492037.

¹⁴ Deiwiks. “Populism”, 1-9

¹⁵ Mudde, Cas, and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser. *Populismo: Una Breve introducción*. Translated by María Enguix Tercero. Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2019.

¹⁶ Kitschelt, “Popular Dissatisfaction with Democracy: Populism and Party Systems”. 179-196.

¹⁷ Deiwiks. “Populism”. 1-9.

The Western European PRR have presented themselves as spokesmen of the people who have been abandoned by traditional political parties, and as protest parties “against the overrepresentation of minorities” in the government¹⁸.

In this regard, the concept of populism was introduced in Spain by the mass media companies, such as *el País*, who identified the new left-party *Podemos* –later known as *Unidas Podemos*– with this ideology. Notwithstanding, there was not any representative of the PRR in Spain. According to Sonia Alonso and Cristóbal Kaltwasser, some indicators have shown that “in Spain, there is fertile soil for the PRR”¹⁹, but several factors have contributed to the lack of development of this ideology. In 2017, Vox became the first radical right party that gained real political power. Now, the question is: *Is Vox the new representative of the populist radical right in Spain?*

Theoretical Framework

The academics have arrived at some consensus concerning the definition of the radical right. One of these scholars has been Mudde, who came up with four characteristics that appeared in almost all of the definitions: nationalism, xenophobia, populism, and authoritarianism. Notwithstanding, he has developed a new ‘minimum definition’ based on populism, nativism, and authoritarianism as the main pillars of the PRR ideology. Therefore, I am going to be using Mudde’s theory as a theoretical framework in order to classify the political nature of Vox.

Nevertheless, Mudde has defined populism as an ideology that considers society to be divided into two homogenous and antagonistic groups: “the pure people” versus the “corrupt elite”²⁰. I do not agree entirely with Mudde’s definition because he has reduced the concept of populism to the very minimum. Hence, due to the lack of consensus among the academics about the characteristics of populist parties, I will use the theory of Paul Taggart to analyze if Vox has populist features in its electoral programs or rhetoric.

¹⁸ Taggart. “Populism and the Pathology of Representative Politics”. 62-80

¹⁹ Alonso, Sonia, and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser. “Spain: No Country for the Populist Radical Right?” *South European Society and Politics*, 20, no. 1. 21-45. 2014. Accessed April 27, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13608746.2014.985448>.

²⁰Mudde. “Constructing a Conceptual Framework”. 11-31.

According to Taggart, populism has six core themes:

(A) Populism has a hostile attitude towards representative politics. The complexity of the system has created a sensation of frustration among the “ordinary population”²¹, which allows the mobilization of populist parties against it. Furthermore, populists call for a better government, but not a government with more representation.

(B) The populist parties combine the idea of ‘the people’ with the heartland. In other words, these parties have designed an “idealized conception of the community they serve”²², but it is connected with the country’s history, and based on ethnic and cultural homogeneity.

(C) The third theme of populism is its lack of core values, which explain why populism can be associated with different ideological positions²³. For this reason, in Europe, the PRR parties are often tied up with nationalistic views.

(D) Populism “is a reaction to a sense of extreme crisis”²⁴. The people may detect a crisis that traditional political parties cannot deal with.

(E) Populist parties only mobilize when there is a sense of crisis²⁵, which, according to Taggart, explains why it is challenging to maintain populist movements in the long term.

(F) Populism tends to be chameleonic. Taggart argues that the development of populism depends on its context. Understanding the heartland’s political framework is crucial to determine “what moves and mobilizes populism and how the populists frame their language of frustration”²⁶.

²¹ Taggart. “Populism and the Pathology of Representative Politics”, 62-80

²² Ibid. 66-71

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

Methodology and Sources

This paper aims to find the best answer to the research question: *Is Vox the new representative of the populist radical right in Spain?* Various methods have been employed in order to analyze the necessary information. I will be using a quantitative method of analysis, through the investigation of election data, as well as the qualitative method of analyzing archive documents. These methods have enabled me to find the answer to the research question and the sub-questions. The political parties' ideological components will be presented hierarchically; hence, this paper will provide a basis for future research. Moreover, it provides a better understanding of the evolution of the radical right in Spain.

Election Data

Election data has been retrieved from the Spanish Ministry of Home Affairs²⁷, and it has been documented at the end of this research. The polling data has been divided into three categories: the political evolution of the extreme right parties at the national and European level, the Spanish general elections between 1977 to 2019, and the political growth of the PP. These data are the votes, the percent and number of deputies that the political parties have gained over the years. Furthermore, it has been included a compilation of the polling data related to Vox's evolution and its participation in the elections between 2014 to 2019. This data has allowed the tracking of the performance of Vox at all political levels. The comparison of this data with archival research has allowed me to answer the research question and the sub-questions.

Archival Research

The archival research has been focused on the analysis of primary and secondary sources. On the one hand, the primary sources have been Vox's rallies celebrated in Vistalegre Pavillion in Madrid in 2018 and 2020. The study of Vistalegre has allowed understanding the main topics of Vox's ideology and its leaders' rhetoric and linguistics. The analysis

²⁷ See Ministerio del Interior. Consulta de Resultados Electorales. Gobierno de España*. <http://www.infoelectoral.mir.es/infoelectoral/min/areaDescarga.html?method=inicio>

of both meetings made it possible to compare the speeches and see if there is an evolution in the use of language. The research has examined three electoral programs: 100 Measures for the Spain Alive, Founding Manifesto, and the 2019 electoral program. Since this research has also provided an overview of the ideology of three radical right parties – PxC, España200, and DN–, their electoral programs have been added.

The secondary sources are a selection of the most relevant academic literature written by contemporary academics. These articles are related to the study of populism, the theories developed by Cas Mudde and Paul Taggart, and the evolution of the Spanish extreme and radical right formations. It has been included the interview book, *Santiago Abascal. España Vertebrada*, written by Fernando Sánchez Dragó. The addition of this book has been essential to go deeper into Abascal's ideas regarding a series of subjects such as nationalism, immigration, and the PP. It must be pointed out that Vox's recent consolidation has made it challenging to find specific literature about the party. Therefore, some part of the research has been done by analyzing newspapers and specialized magazines.

II

The Evolution of the Extreme Right (1975-1985)

The study of the Spanish extreme right ideology has attracted the attention of many academics during the years. Even though the Falangist dictatorship was established for over 30 years in the country, the far-right parties have not been able to re-establish their power. The public opinion thought that these groups were banished from the political framework. Sebastiaan Faber and Bécquer Seguí argued that the far-right ideology never disappeared in Spain; but it has always been present in society²⁸. According to Xavier Casals, the extreme right-wing ideology was mainly focused on the defends of Francoism legacy and the necessity to re-establish the dictatorship. They found out a society that is barely interested in their message and, instead, were looking for moderate democratic alternatives.

The Spanish Political System: A Small Overview

Before the analysis of the extreme right movement in Spain starts, it is necessary to explain how the political system of the country has changed over the years. Since the democratic transition, Spain was a two party-system, alternating between left and right governments. The system got more complicated due to the influence of new factors, such as the 2008 economic crisis, the apparition of new political parties, and Catalan nationalism.

Jonathan Hopkin considers Spain to be a ‘quasi-federal state’ because the 1978 Constitution allows the transfer of power from the Central Government to autonomous regions²⁹. This decentralization has contributed to the development of powerful regional parties, especially the Catalan and Basques nationalists.

²⁸ Faber, Sebastiaan, and Bécquer Seguí. “Spain’s Radical Right Is Here to Stay—but Did It Ever Leave.” *The Nation*. January 10, 2019. <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/spain-vox-radical-right-populism-catalonia/>.

²⁹ Hopkin, Jonathan. “From Consensus to Competition. The Changing Nature of Democracy in the Spanish Transition.” In *The Politics of Contemporary Spain*, edited by Sebastian Balfour, 6–27. London: Taylor & Francis, 2004. Accessed March 14, 2020. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uunl/detail.action?docID=203944#>.

The Spanish democratic transition was characterized by a high level of consensus, represented by the delicate balance of power between the left and the right parties³⁰. Due to the complexity of the new political system, the political parties constructed a democratic government based on ‘consensus’ policies in the 1970s. However, the approval of the Agreement of Statutes of Autonomy in 1980 gave the impression that the transition was over. Hence, the parties “adopted more opportunistic electoral strategies”³¹ based on their ideologies.

At the executive level, Spain has been governed by a single-party administration controlled by the Spanish Socialist Workers’ Party (PSOE) or the Popular Party (PP). At the legislative level, “the peripheral groups have a strong presence and can place obstacles in the way of the winning party achieving an overall majority”³². Therefore, the Spanish political framework is a democratic competition.

The electoral system disadvantages small national parties³³. The electoral formula used to assign seats at the Parliament, the so-called D’Hondt method, favors big parties at the national level and keeps small national parties out of Parliament. Since the Great Recession of 2008, the situation has changed. The political system has been increasingly polarized and fragmented with the introduction of new political parties at the national level: *Podemos*, *Ciudadanos* (Cs), and, more recently, Vox. Therefore, the country is facing a re-structuring of its political system.

The End of Franco’s Regime

After the death of Francisco Franco in 1975, King Juan Carlos I initiated the path towards the democratic transition of the country. The Francoist Courts approved the 1977 Political Reform Act that allowed the Spanish transition to be carried out within the dictatorial system. The new political situation forced the extreme right to re-organize themselves in political parties. Even though these ultra-right groups spent over a decade warning about the regime’s crisis after the death of Franco, the democratic process seemed to surprise them³⁴.

³⁰ Balfour, Sebastian. “Spain since the Transition to Democracy: an Overview.” In *The Politics of Contemporary Spain*, 1–6. London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2004. Accessed March 3, 2020. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uunl/reader.action?docID=237363&ppg=6>.

³¹ Hopkin. “From Consensus to Competition. The Changing Nature of Democracy in the Spanish Transition”. 6-14
³² Ibid.

³³ Alonso, and Rovira Kaltwasser. “Spain: No Country for the Populist Radical Right?” 21–45.

³⁴ Casals, Xavier. “La Renovación De La Ultraderecha Española: Una Historia Generacional (1966-2008).” *Historia y Política*. 233–58. 2009. Accessed March 16, 2020. <https://recyt.fecyt.es/index.php/Hyp/article/view/44473>.

The only group which had a political structure was *Fuerza Nueva* (FN), founded by the Francoist Blas Piñar. Other groups such as *Falange Española de las JONS* (FEJONS), *Falange Española de las JONS Auténtica* (FJONSA), and *Falange Española Independiente* (FEI), did not have a political organization or a charismatic leader. In the 1977 general election, FN and *Comunión Tradicionalista* decided to form the coalition *Alianza Nacional 18 de Julio*. The electoral result was a complete disaster since neither the coalition, nor the other political parties managed to gather a deputy in the Parliament (Table 1).

Year	Political Parties	Votes	(%)	Deputies
1977	AN18- Alianza Nacional 18 de Julio	67.336	0,37	0
	FJONSA- Falange Española de las JONS Auténtica	46.548	0,25	0
	FJONS- Falange Española de las JONS	25.017	0,14	0
	CJA- Asociación Círculos José Antonio	8,184	0,04	0
	FEI- Falange Española Independiente	855	0	0

Table 1. 1977 Spanish General Election. Source: the author, based on Ministerio del Interior data

The Electoral Failure: Internal and External Reasons

Francoism was dominated by two perspectives: neo-Francoism and neo-Fascism. Both currents looked back to the past. The social and economic changes and the opening of the regime in the 1960s resulted in the extreme-right forces being divided into three major groups: the Francoists who were in favor of doing a partial or complete political reformation. The *Francoists continuista-inmovilistas*, who wanted the continuity of the regime. And the *Francoists-involucionistas*, who were in favor of an authoritarian tightening of the regime³⁵. The last two belonged to the so-called *Francoist bunker*.

During the democratic transition, the defense of National-Catholic identity and Fascism were the two main pillars of the far-right electoral programs. It went hand in hand with an idealized nostalgia for the Spanish Empire, an opposition towards Europe, and a firm rejection of the peripheral nationalism of the Basque Country and Catalonia,

³⁵ Rodríguez Jiménez, José Luis. "Historia De Un Fracaso y ¿De Una Refundación?: De La Vieja a La Nueva Extrema Derecha En España (1975-2012)." *Studia Historica. Historia Contemporánea* 30. 231–68. 2013. Accessed March 22, 2020. <https://revistas.usal.es/index.php/0213-2087/article/view/9907>.

identified as Spain's historical enemies³⁶. However, these groups found a society against these ideals, and identified extreme-right parties as successors of the regime.

Another factor was that the public connected the far-right with the street violence perpetrated by radical groups such as *Defensa Universitaria* or *Guerrilleros de Cristo Rey*. As José Luis Rodríguez Jiménez established, these groups aimed to “blow up the democratic transition by intimidating the left, so they would respond with violence capable of justifying a military response and creating an atmosphere of fear in the citizens, who would desire an authoritarian solution”³⁷.

The 1977 Atocha Massacre changed the situation for the extreme-right. Five labor lawyers linked to the communist syndicate *Comisiones Obreras* (CC.OO), were murdered by an ultra-right commando. This attack had two effects on the far-right parties. First of all, it was expected that the left would seek revenge, but the discipline and containment that socialist and communist demonstrated during the funeral forced the Government to legalize the Spanish Communist Party (PCE). Second, the general public delegitimized the extreme right-wing parties, and the moderate Francoists distanced themselves from those groups.

This ties with the last factor: the majority of the conservative voters gravitated towards center-right parties. Most of them went to President Adolfo Suárez's party, *Unión de Centro Democrático* (UCD), and others to *Alianza Popular* (AP) led by Manuel Fraga. According to Casals, AP looked for supporters of the so-called ‘sociological Francoism’³⁸, which aimed to transform the dictatorship from a political system to a way of life for the Spanish people. However, there was a clear dominance of UCD over AP (Table 2).

³⁶ Núñez Seixas, Xosé-Manoel. “From National-Catholic Nostalgia to Constitutional Patriotism Conservative.” In *The Politics of Contemporary Spain*, edited by Sebastian Balfour, 121–46. Taylor & Francis Group. Accessed March 4, 2020. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uunl/reader.action?docID=237363&ppg=6>.

³⁷ Rodríguez Jiménez. “Historia De Un Fracaso y ¿De Una Refundación?: De La Vieja a La Nueva Extrema Derecha En España (1975-2012).” 231–68.

³⁸ Casals, Xavier. “La Evolución De La Ultraderecha En España: Claves Históricas y Territoriales.” El Real Instituto ElCano. 2017. Accessed March 19, 2020. http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/riecano_es/contenido?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_es/zonas_es/imagen_de_espana/ari59-2017-casals-evolucion-ultraderecha-espana-claves-historicas-territoriales.

Year	Political Parties	Votes	(%)	Deputies
1977	UCD- Unión de Centro Democrático	6.310.391	34,44	165
	PSOE- Partido Socialista Obrero Español	5.371.866	29,32	118
	PCE- Partido Comunista de España	1.709.890	9,33	20
	AP- Federación de Partidos de Alianza Popular	1.504.771	8,21	16

Table 2. 1977 Spanish General Election. Source: the author, based on Ministerio del Interior data

The Growth of the Extreme Right in 1979

Due to the failure of the last election, FN reorganized its supporters through the creation of new centers around the country and the publication of positive articles in newspapers controlled by them. Moreover, AP was under an internal crisis due to the 1977 national election's poor results, and the “rejection of some leaders to various articles of the new 1978 Constitution”³⁹, such as political decentralization.

Acción Democrática Española and *Unión Nacional* (UN), two of AP's organizations led by ex-ministers Silva Muñoz and Fernández de la Mora, abandoned the party and formed a coalition with FN. FEJONS, *Círculos Doctrinales José Antonio*, CT, *Asociación de Jóvenes Tradicionalistas* and *Confederación Nacional de Excombatientes* also joined UN. Therefore, under the leadership of Blas Piñar, UN represented the first image of unity which was crucial for the growth of the extreme-right in Spain.

In the 1979 general election, UN gathered over 300.000 votes, the 2,11 percent, which gave it a seat in Parliament for the first time since the end of the regime. Nevertheless, the ultra-right considered the results to be a second electoral failure and dissolved the coalition.

Year	Political Parties	Votes	(%)	Deputies
1979	UN- Partido Unión Nacional	378.964	2,11	1
	FJONSA- Falange Española de las JONS Auténtica	30.252	0,17	0
	FEA- Falange Española Auténtica	2.736	0,02	0
	UF-FI-AT- Falange Española Independiente-Unidad Falangista	1,188	0,01	0

Table 3. 1979 Spanish General Election. Source: the author, based on Ministerio del Interior data

³⁹ Rodríguez Jiménez. “Historia De Un Fracaso y ¿De Una Refundación?: De La Vieja a La Nueva Extrema Derecha En España (1975-2012)”. 231–68.

The Decline of the Extreme Right

During the decade of 1980, the extreme-right movement ended up relegated to the corners of the Spanish political system due to external and internal factors.

On the one hand, the far-right ideology continued anchored in the Francoist past of the country. The extreme-right parties did not modernize their catholic-nationalistic speeches, which had non-impact in a more secular and anti-racist society. Another critical factor during this period was the absence of a strong and charismatic leader that unified the extreme-right families. Mudde argues that the leader's figure is a crucial element in most political phenomena since he or she is capable of mobilizing the masses and leading the political party⁴⁰.

On the other hand, the Spanish political framework was changing at high speed. First of all, President Suárez presented his resignation after four years of government; so, the country faced its first change of power in the democratic period. Second, the PSOE won the second largest share of the vote, and it was clear that the socialists would win in the 1982 legislative election. Third, the dissolution of UCD in 1983 provoked the migration of the right vote towards AP.

The socialist party was considered one of the most important adversaries of the extreme-right forces. One of the axes of these groups was the legitimization of the Civil War as a crusade between the Catholics versus the Anti-Clerical society⁴¹, led by the socialists and communists. Hence, the extreme-right groups initiated a 'campaign of tension'⁴² using the legacy of the Civil War in order to delegitimize the democratic institutions and justify a coup d'état by the military forces.

The night of February 23, 1981, Leopoldo Calvo-Sotelo (UCD) was going to be elected as the new President of the Government in the Congress of Deputies. However, a group of 200 *Guardia Civil* agents led by Lieutenant-Colonel Antonio Tejero burst into the chambers of the Parliament. The coup d'état failed, and the officers were arrested, but this action left the extreme-right and the Army with a terrible image, which could explain the dissolution of FN and the following political decline of the ultra-right parties.

⁴⁰ Mudde, and Rovira Kaltwasser. *Populismo: Una Breve introducción*.

⁴¹ Casals. "La Evolución De La Ultraderecha En España: Claves Históricas y Territoriales".

⁴² Rodríguez Jiménez. "Historia De Un Fracaso y ¿De Una Refundación?: De La Vieja a La Nueva Extrema Derecha En España (1975-2012)". 231-68.

Year	Political Parties	Votes	(%)	Deputies
1982	FN- Asociación Política Fuerza Nueva	108.746	0,52	0
	MFE- Movimiento Falangista de España	8.976	0,04	0
	FE-JONS- Falange Española de las JONS	2.528	0,01	0
	FEI- Falange Española Independiente	1.862	0,01	0

Table 4. 1982 Spanish General Election. Source: the author, based on Ministerio del Interior data

After the election, FN disappeared officially as a political party, and since then, any extreme or radical right organization has been able to cover the void left by FN at the national level until Vox's victory in 2019. As the following tables demonstrate, the remaining extreme right parties ended up at the corners of the political system.

Year	Political Parties	Votes	(%)	Deputies
1986	FE-JONS- Falange Española de las JONS	43.449	0,22	0

Table 5. 1989 Spanish General Election. Source: the author, based on Ministerio del Interior data

Year	Political Parties	Votes	(%)	Deputies
1989	FE-JONS- Falange Española de las JONS	24.025	0,12	0
	FE- Falange Española Independiente	827	0	0

Table 6. 1989 Spanish General Election. Source: the author, based on Ministerio del Interior data

To summarize, during the first decades of democracy, the extreme right could be considered disconnected from the transition to democracy and anchored in national-catholic speeches of the past. This ideology had non-impact among the Spanish population, which preferred the instauration of democratic parties and rejected the electoral program of Francoist supporters (Illustration 1). The high fragmentation of the extreme-right political parties, each claiming to be the true heirs of the regime, caused a further division of the votes. Meanwhile, the right democratic voters fled towards UCD or AP.

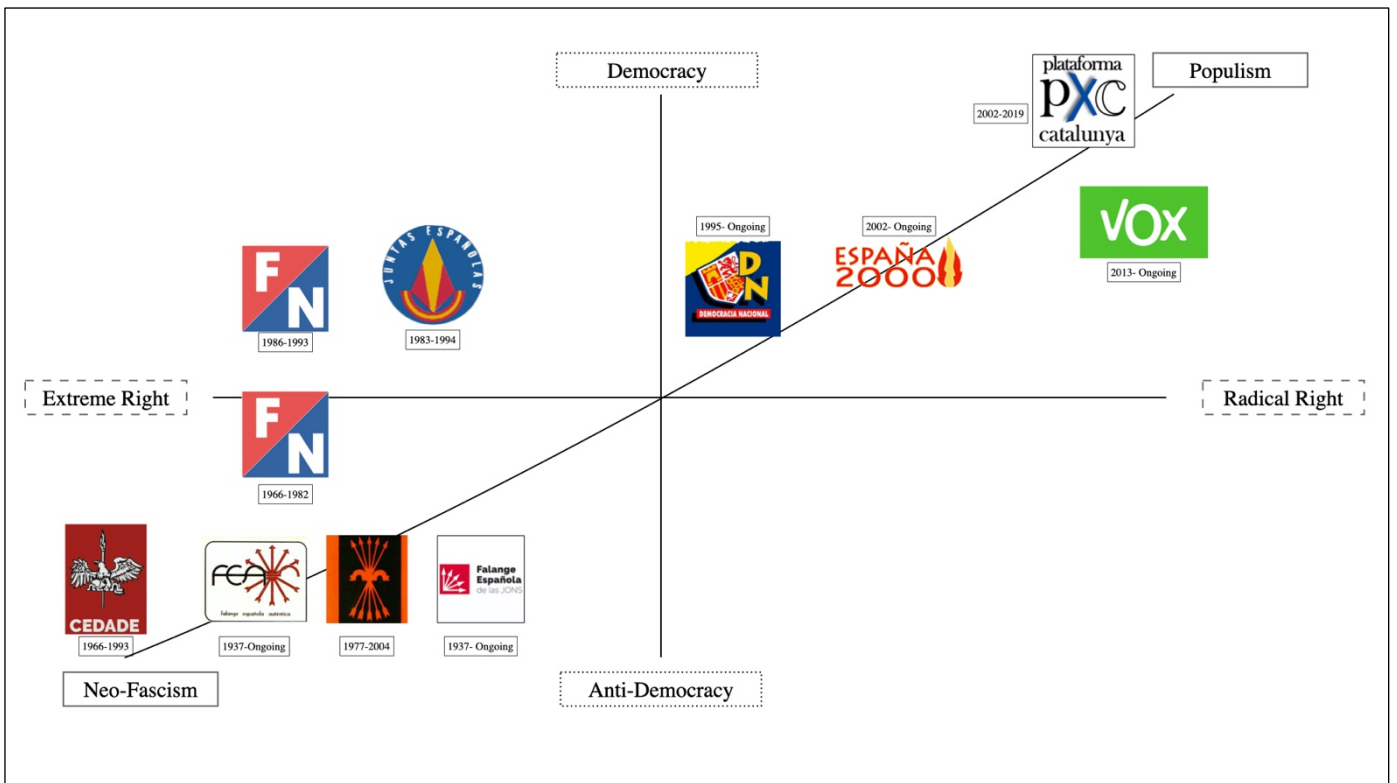


Illustration 1. Evolution of the far-right in Spain between 1975 until 2020. Source: the author

III

The Transformation of the Radical Right (1985-2013)

Between the late 1980s and early 1990s, the extreme right parties abandoned their desire to return to the dictatorial past and started to operate within the democratic system⁴³. Multiple factors influenced in the transition from extreme right parties towards radical right parties. The dominance of the PP over the right forced these groups to accept the democratic transition. Moreover, the appearance of new antisystem groups introduced elements of modernization, and the development of the radical right parties in Western Europe played an essential role in the evolution of the Spanish radical right ideology.

The Popular Party

According to Carmen González-Enríquez, the stronghold of the PP over the right voters is one of the reasons behind the absence of extreme or radical right forces at the national level⁴⁴. Therefore, the study of this party is significant in understanding the transformation of the far-right forces.

From *Alianza Popular* to the Popular Party

In 1989, AP celebrated a congress that approved a fundamental reform of the party's statutes, by "reducing internal democracy and strengthening party hierarchy and cohesion"⁴⁵. The party aimed to integrate the different families of its ranks; therefore, AP was re-defined, under the name of Popular Party (PP), as liberal, conservative, and Christian Democratic party. At the same time, there was a competition among the young leaders for the succession of Manuel Fraga. One of the most ambitious leaders was José

⁴³ Casals. "La Renovación De La Ultraderecha Española: Una Historia Generacional (1966-2008)". 233–58.

⁴⁴ González-Enríquez. "The Spanish Exception: Unemployment, Inequality and Immigration, but Not Right-Wing Populist Parties".

⁴⁵ Balfour. "The Reinvention of Spanish Conservatism". 146–69.

María Aznar, who became president of the party in 1990. By the 1996 general election, the PP had come first place with 38.79 percent of the vote, but it needed the peripheral-nationalist parties in order to form a government (Table 7). For the coming general election in 2000, it gathered over 44 percent of the vote; therefore, it formed a government without smaller national parties (Table 8).

Year	Political Parties	Votes	(%)	Deputies
1996	PP- Partido Popular	9.716.006	38,79	156
	PSOE- Partido Socialista Obrero Español	9.425.678	37,63	141
	IU- Izquierda Unida	2.639.774	10,54	21
	CIU- Convergència i Unió	1.151.633	4,6	16
	EAJ-PNV- Partido Nacionalista Vasco-Euzko Alderdi Jeltzalea-	318.951	1,27	5
	CC- Coalición Canaria	220.418	0,88	4

Table 7. 1996 Spanish General Election. Source: the author, based on Ministerio del Interior data

Sebastian Balfour indicated that during its first period, the PP adopted moderate and pragmatic policies due to its alliance with CIU, EAJ-PNV, and CC. However, in the successive administration (2000-2004), the PP shifted from center-right to right policies, especially concerning economic, education, and healthcare, since it did not need the support of the nationalist parties.

Year	Political Parties	Votes	(%)	Deputies
2000	PP- Partido Popular	10.321.178	44,52	183
	PSOE- Partido Socialista Obrero Español	7.918.752	34,16	125
	IU- Izquierda Unida	1.263.043	5,45	8
	CIU- Convergència i Unió	970.421	4,19	15
	EAJ-PNV- Partido Nacionalista Vasco-Euzko Alderdi Jeltzalea-	353.953	1,53	7
	CC- Coalición Canaria	306.268	1,32	3

Table 8. 2000 Spanish General Election. Source: the author, based on Ministerio del Interior data

The Establishment of the Popular Party

The migration of the voters towards PP

After the dissolution of the center-right UCD in 1983, the conservative voters, radical and moderate, gravitated towards AP since the party led by Fraga was the only group that demonstrated an internal cohesion and had a national representation (Chart 1). The key to their success was “the prolonged occupation of the opposition benched for almost 20 years”⁴⁶. After thirteen years of a Socialist government, during which there were several corruption cases and the GAL⁴⁷ actions, which ended up creating an atmosphere of mistrust among the population towards the PSOE. The center voters gravitated towards the PP in 1996 and 2000 (Chart 1).

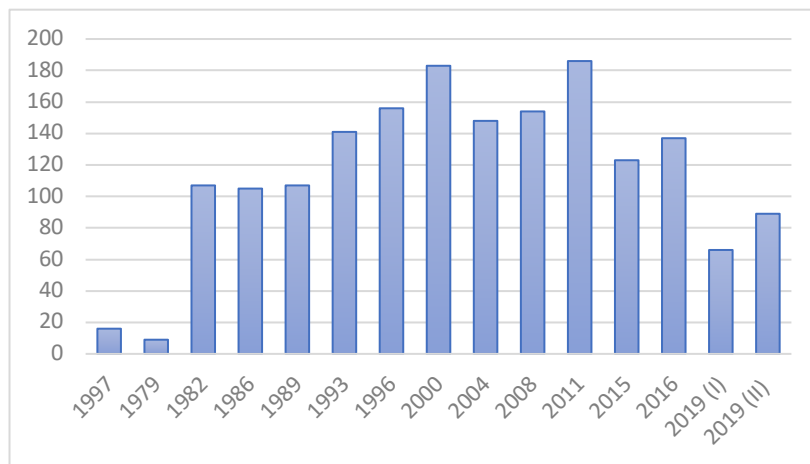


Chart 1. Evolution of the Popular Party (1975-2019). Source: the author, based on Ministerio del Interior data

The Political Positioning of the Popular Party

The PP has maintained a delicate balance between its moderate and traditional voters since its foundation. Francoism is the skeleton that gives form to the PP since most of the leaders are connected to the Francoist political elites or were part of them. However, the party has avoided being connected with the dictatorship’s dogmas in order to maintain its moderate voters. Despite the different families that configure the party (Christian Democrats, neo-liberal, conservative, and radical-right.), and unlike the ultra-right forces, the PP has managed to maintain internal cohesion over the years. As a result, the PP has been the party of choice for the radical/moderate right voters for many years.

⁴⁶ Balfour. “The Reinvention of Spanish Conservatism”. 146–69.

⁴⁷ Illegal Antiterrorist group established to fight ETA between 1983 until 1987. This period is known as the Spanish Dirty War.

The reinvention of Spanish conservatism

The leaders of the PP soon realized that it was necessary to “reinvent the concept of Spanish conservatism. To do so, it needed to disassociate itself, explicitly or implicitly, from Francoism”⁴⁸. Franco’s dictatorship exploited the national feelings of the country and overused the Catholic rhetoric. During the transition, the far-right parties did also use these dogmas as core pillars of their political program. Therefore, it was vital for the PP’s development in the democratic system, disassociate itself from this ideology.

Despite this, any explicit affirmation of nationalism by the right sectors, center or extreme, was immediately connected with the defense of the regime’s old National-Catholic theme. Hence, the PP adapted Habermas’ concept of Constitutional Patriotism. While, the left saw the 1978 Constitution as a starting point for the development of the Spanish democracy; the PP transformed the legislative document in a sacred text, which any alteration represented a challenge to the country, and constructed a new national identity based on the principles of the Constitution.

Antisystem Groups

Sartori introduced the antisystem concept as a group which “has an activity that undermines the legitimacy of the democratic regime, and a belief system that does not share the values of the political order within which it operates”⁴⁹. During these years, new associations started to operate in Spain. One of the most relevant was the skinheads dedicated to the “hunt of the *red people*⁵⁰, homosexuals and immigrants”⁵¹. Using Sartori’s definition as a framework, I am going to consider the skinheads as an antisystem group. These groups stood out by their violent and criminal ‘activism’, but they also demonstrated a lack of organization. The anti-fascism mass media considered them ‘shock forces’ against the democratic system, but the skinhead ideology cannot be categorized as a force in the political system. As Casals has explained, the skinheads represent “youth marginality and free violence”⁵² against the system itself.

⁴⁸ Balfour. “The Reinvention of Spanish Conservatism”.146–69.

⁴⁹ Ignazi, Piero. *The Re-Emergence of the Extreme Right in Europe*. Institut für Höhere Studien. Reihe Politikwissenschaft. 1995. https://www.ihs.ac.at/publications/pol/pw_21.pdf

⁵⁰ Derogatory name used during the Civil War and Franco’s regime to define the republican parties, the left parties, and the parties closest to communism.

⁵¹ Rodríguez Jiménez. “Historia De Un Fracaso y ¿De Una Refundación?: De La Vieja a La Nueva Extrema Derecha En España (1975-2012)”. 231–68.

⁵² Casals. “La Renovación De La Ultraderecha Española: Una Historia Generacional (1966-2008).” 233–58.

However, skinheads are considered a breaking point for the extreme-right movement in Spain since they introduced elements of innovation. An iconography closer to National-Socialism than Francoist aesthetics, and a violent xenophobic agenda⁵³, unusual in the traditional extreme-right circles.

The Radical Right in Western Europe

Piero Ignazi mentioned that in order to be considered an extreme right-wing, a party must “either refer to one of the established right-extremist traditions of thought (fascism, Nazism, *nouvelle droite*) or present an anti-system discourse”⁵⁴.

After World War II, the past’s ideologies had no space in Western Europe's political spectrum. The liberal democracies enjoyed a “remarkable degree of social and political stability”⁵⁵, which undermined the support for extreme ideologies on both the left and the right. However, the mass protests across the continent and the rise of new social movements in the 1980s led to a “profound transformation of West European politics”⁵⁶. Hans-Georg Betz pointed out that the European citizens felt a disenchantment towards the social and political institutions, which led to political fragmentation and weakening electoral alignments⁵⁷. All these changes provoked the appearance of new social actors, which had an ideology marked by a radical-right appeal.

The new parties promoted aggressive speeches against political institutions and traditional parties. However, despite their political authoritarianism, the radical right-wing groups were “(nominally) democratic, even if they opposed some fundamental values of liberal democracy, whereas the extreme right was, in essence, antidemocratic, opposing the fundamental principle of sovereignty of the people”⁵⁸.

⁵³ Viñes, Carles. “De L’Extrema Dreta Al Nacional-Populisme. Una Síntesi Històrica (1931- 2013)” Barcelona: Pompeu Fabra University Press. *Diversia*. 2013. Accessed April 20, 2020.

https://www.upf.edu/diversia/pdf/De_l_extrema_dreta_al_nacional_populisme.pdf

⁵⁴ Betz, Hans-Georg, and Carol Johnson. “Against the Current—Stemming the Tide: the Nostalgic Ideology of the Contemporary Radical Populist Right.” In *The Populist Radical Right: a Reader*. Edited by Cas Mudde, 68–83. London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2016. Accessed April 14, 2020. Doi:

<https://doiorg.proxy.library.uu.nl/10.4324/9781315514574>

⁵⁵ Betz, Hans-Georg. “The New Politics of Resentment: Radical Right in Western Europe.” In *The Populist Radical Right: a Reader*, edited by Cas Mudde, 338–52. London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2016. Accessed April 14, 2020. Doi:

<https://doiorg.proxy.library.uu.nl/10.4324/9781315514574>

⁵⁶ Betz. “The New Politics of Resentment: Radical Right in Western Europe.” 338–52

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Mudde. “Constructing a Conceptual Framework”. 11-31.

Although contemporary European radical-right parties have adopted populism as an essential feature of their ideology, several of contemporary critical parties originated as non-populist radical right parties in the 1970s. Kitschelt considered that the 1970s radical right-wing parties “relied on a neoliberal program of deregulation and public spending cuts”⁵⁹, and had an authoritarian and xenophobic agenda. These parties “promoted themselves as vehicles for the effective expression of popular frustration and forced the political establishment to listen to their demands”⁶⁰. Alonso and Kaltwasser have presented a theory based on the impact of the ‘cleavage structure’ on the electoral fortune of PRR. According to the theory, in order to succeed, these political parties needed to find a niche that was not owned by any of the established parties. Moreover, they had to demonstrate to the public that the left-right political division was “an obsolete distinction and politicize certain issues” that the established parties were not addressing⁶¹. To summarize, these new groups incorporated a moral and political authoritarianism, xenophobia against non-European immigration, and a neoliberal economic agenda in order to occupy the radical right niche.

The Radical Right Parties in Spain

As mentioned above, the dominance of the PP forced the radical right-wing groups to accept and operate within the democratic system. Besides, the development of this political family in Western Europe and the appearance of the antisystem groups, which “occupied the ideological space previously monopolized by the nostalgic far-right”⁶², caused that the extreme-right parties reevaluated their strategy.

The Roots of the Radical Right Parties

Two new parties were founded in the late 1980s. *Frente Nacional* (FN) led by Blas Piñar, and *Juntas Españolas* (JJ.EE). Both organizations tried to reproduce the success of French Front National, but they only introduced a small ideological modernization into their

⁵⁹ Kitschelt, Herbert. “Popular Dissatisfaction with Democracy: Populism and Party Systems.” In *Popular Dissatisfaction with Democracy: Populism and Party Systems*, edited by Yves Mény, 179–96. Gordonsville: Palgrave Macmillan Limited, 2001. Accessed February 21, 2020.

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uunl/detail.action?docID=203944#>.

⁶⁰ Betz, Hans-Georg. “Conditions Favoring the Success and Failure of Radical Right-Wing Populist Parties in Contemporary Democracies.” In *Democracies and the Populist Challenge*, edited by Yves Mény and Yves Surel, 197–212. Gordonsville: Palgrave Macmillan Limited, 2001. Accessed February 24, 2020.

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uunl/detail.action?docID=203944#>.

⁶¹ Alonso, and Rovira Kaltwasser. “Spain: No Country for the Populist Radical Right?”. 21–45.

⁶² Viñes. “De L’Extrema Dreta Al Nacional-Populisme. Una Síntesi Històrica (1931- 2013)”. 42-70.

electoral programs –defense of the 1978 Constitution, and anti-immigration rhetoric–. Despite this, these changes were not enough, and both organizations disappeared in the following years.

The decline of radical right parties continued in the decade of the 1990s. In 1995, it was established the party *Democracia Nacional* (DN), composed by former members of JJ.EE, CEDADE, and Blas Piñar’s FN. Later on, in 2002, Rafael Ripoll created *España2000*, which was also formed by former members of FN and other ultra-right groups. Like other formations, both parties were focused on the defense of the Spanish ‘national identity’ threatened by immigration⁶³ and tried to become the leading representative of the far-right in Spain.

The formations did not gather any significant political success due to the fragmentation of radical right voters. However, both parties did introduce a change in their political strategy. Instead of running in the general elections, they focused on the local and regional elections. These parties aimed to ensure their position at the local administrations, as Le Pen did in Marseille, and from there, they would “spread their message, reach the control on the Autonomies and make the last jump into the Congress of the Deputies”⁶⁴.

Rise and Fall of the Radical Right Parties

Against all expectations, the decline of the radical right parties stopped after the 2003 Catalonia local election. The new populist radical right party, *Plataforma per Catalunya* (PxC), managed to secure an alderman in four city halls. PxC was founded by a former member of FN, Josep Anglada. According to Casals, the political party presented itself as an “independent Catalan party”⁶⁵, against the establishment. Its key features were the use of direct-neighborhood policy and strong opposition towards immigration, mainly Islamic. They considered that immigration was responsible for unemployment, the rise of criminality, and the erosion of Catalan identity. The political party grew strong in Catalan neighborhoods with high levels of immigration and unemployment⁶⁶.

⁶³ Rodríguez Jiménez. “Historia De Un Fracaso y ¿De Una Refundación?: De La Vieja a La Nueva Extrema Derecha En España (1975-2012)”. 231–68.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Casals. “La Renovación De La Ultraderecha Española: Una Historia Generacional (1966-2008)”. 233–58.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

In the subsequent 2007 local election, the party gathered 12,4 percent of the votes, and by the 2010 regional election, it stayed at the Catalan Parliament doors with 75.124 votes (Table 9).

Year	Elections	Votes	%	Representative
2003	Local	3.309	0,4	4
2003	Regional	4.892	0,1	-
2007	Local	12.447	0,4	17
2010	Regional	75.134	2,4	-
2011	Local	65.905	2,3	67
2011	General	59.297	1,7	-
2012	Regional	60.142	1,6	-
2015	Local	27.348	0,8	8

Table 9. Evolution of the PxC between 2003-2015. Source: the author, based on the Ministerio del Interior data.

The Ideology of the Radical Right Parties

As mentioned before, after the second world war, the European democracies faced a period of stability, accompanied by economic growth and the expansion of the welfare state. The situation changed with the “resurgence of ideological and political turbulence in the late 1960s, the rising social conflicts in the early 1970s and the spread of mass protest by the new social movements in the 1980s”⁶⁷. All these resulted in the rise of the European radical right parties. Meanwhile, the Spanish case was the opposite.

Multiple factors have marked the fall of the radical right-wing since the end of the dictatorship in 1975. One of the reasons has been the ideology of these groups. The Spanish radical right parties realized that they needed to modernize their ideology in order to attract new voters. Hence, three essential topics had to be changed: Francoist glorification, National-Catholicism, and antidemocratic speeches. Mudde argued that radical right parties share two characteristics that separate them from conventional conservatism: nativism and authoritarianism. Populism is also a key feature of contemporary radical right parties; nevertheless, this chapter will focus on the two core features of radical right formations and other present characteristics.

⁶⁷ Betz. “The New Politics of Resentment: Radical Right in Western Europe.” 338–52.

Nativism

Radical right parties aim to build a monocultural and nation-state. In Mudde's words, the idea is to establish a series of policies that ensure that states are "inhabited exclusively by members of the nativist group ("the nation"), since nonnative elements (persons and ideas) are fundamentally threatening to the homogenous nation-state"⁶⁸. Until the decade of 1980, xenophobia was not a core feature in the agenda of the Spanish radical right parties, but the success of the Le Pen's Front National and the appearance of the antisystem groups incorporated nativism into the dogma.

The nativist nature of DN, *España2000*, and PxC is evident in the measures against non-EU immigration. PxC and DN classify massive immigration as an 'invasion' of the Spanish territory, which threatens "modifying the national identity"⁶⁹. *España2000* also points out how immigration would lead to an "authentic demography replacement of the Spanish population"⁷⁰. This rejection is especially focused on Islam. For example, PxC has based almost its entire electoral programs on anti-Islamic measures⁷¹, and other political parties such as DN consider that "the Islamization of Spain and Europe, via immigration and birth, must be avoided"⁷².

During the first decade of 2000, xenophobic speeches had non-impact in the Spanish population. As Carmen González-Enríquez noted, "the refusal to accept immigrants can only be argued based on their "otherness" regarding a shared national identity and interest"⁷³, but Spain had a weak national identity. Notwithstanding, the lack of rejection did not mean that Spaniards were not xenophobic. Spain has been one of the least xenophobic states compared with other European countries (Table 10), but there are several reasons behind it.

According to Elcano Royal Institute, immigrants tend to live in specific geographic areas within Spain; hence, it has created the appearance that the country does not have immigrants. Moreover, most of the migration influx came from Latin American countries, speaking Spanish, and sharing Catholicism. Therefore, it was easier for the Spaniards to accept them⁷⁴. Nevertheless, the rise of migration has provoked a shift in

⁶⁸ Mudde. "Constructing a Conceptual Framework", 11-31.

⁶⁹ Democracia Nacional. *Documentos Ideológicos y Programáticos de Democracia Nacional*. (n.d.). http://democracianacional.org/dn/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/programa_dn.pdf

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Plataforma per Catalunya. *Elecciones al Parlament de Catalunya 2010*. 2010. <https://www.plataforma.cat/es/paginas/programas-electorales.html>

⁷² Democracia Nacional. *Documentos Ideológicos y Programáticos de Democracia Nacional*.

⁷³ González-Enríquez. "The Spanish Exception: Unemployment, Inequality and Immigration, but Not Right-Wing Populist Parties".

⁷⁴ Ibid.

public opinion regarding this issue, and the percent has moved closer to the European average in the last years.

	Italy (%)	France (%)	Spain (%)	UK (%)	Germany (%)	Mean (%)
Immigration is a threat to our culture and our identity	23.7	25.6	10.6	31.0	25.1	25.0
Immigrants are a threat to employment	32.2	28.3	18.7	-	28.8	
Immigrants are a threat to public order and security	46.1	29.4	13.7	26.2	22.5	28.4

Table 10. Source: Diamanti (2000)

However, nativism does not reject only persons but also foreign ideas. Spanish radical right ideology presents a firm rejection of Anglo-Saxon concepts and has an anti-globalization character. Both DN and *España 2000* have rejected the “transfer of sovereignty to supranational political and economic institutions, the idea of globalization, and it believes that the only true alternative for real democracy is nationalism”⁷⁵.

Authoritarianism

Even though authoritarianism can be defined in different ways, in this research, it is defined as “the belief in a strictly ordered society, in which infringements of authority are to be punished severely”⁷⁶. This attitude may echo Francoist antidemocratic speeches. Hence, to avoid this connection, the radical right parties have established a set of internal and external enemies that represent a threat to Spain: separatism –Catalan and Basque–, organized crime, terrorism, and illegal immigration, that justify a political tightening.

This conception ties up also with their nativist nature. In other words, the radical right parties consider migration to be the main reason for the rise of criminality. For example, PxC has declared that “there is a direct relationship between this sudden increase in crime and the latest avalanched of illegal and hungry immigrants who, in finding no job, are doomed to crime”⁷⁷.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Mudde. “Constructing a Conceptual Framework”, 11-31.

⁷⁷ Plataforma per Catalaunya. *Elecciones Municipales 2003*. 2003. <https://www.plataforma.cat/download/municipales2003.pdf>

Nationalism

DN and *España2000* have a marked nationalism based on the development of a homogenous national identity. Notwithstanding, Spain has a weak national identity due to the overused of nationalist rhetoric during the dictatorship⁷⁸ and the expansion of a powerful regional nationalism. Both factors have transformed Spain into a multiethnic country. Therefore, DN and *España2000* have used nationalism in order to recover a unique national identity. However, strong regional nationalism formed in different regions of the country have placed obstacles in the way of the national radical right parties. On the other hand, this peripheral nationalism may also explain the success of PxC in Catalonia. The Catalan radical right party has used the Catalan identity to justify its measures against immigration.

Religion

Unlike Western European radical right-wing, Spanish radical right parties consider Catholic dogmas as the base of Spain's national identity. This entanglement has its roots in the National-Catholic character developed during Francoist dictatorship, and later was, defended by extreme right parties. Nowadays, *España2000* seems to be the only political party with an explicitly Christian message. For instance, "Christianity is a cultural and ideological pillar that has formed our identity"⁷⁹ or "we should defend our Christian origin"⁸⁰ from external threats. The other radical right formations have implicitly defended this idea.

However, Spanish society has been increasingly secular and has rejected a political involvement between the Roman Catholic Church and the conservative parties. Furthermore, the radical right parties have used Spain's heritage as a Catholic country to justify the exclusion of other groups, such as immigrants from the Middle East, since their arrival could jeopardize Spanish national identity.

⁷⁸ See Chapter II: The Evolution of the Extreme Right.

⁷⁹ *España 2000. Programa político.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

To summarize, the Spanish radical right has evolved from being an extreme right-wing focused on the defends of National-Catholic identity and the glorification of Fascism, to become a radical right-wing comparable to the European radical-right (Table 11). Notwithstanding, these political parties cannot be considered a new phenomenon in Spain since the majority of their members are connected to former members of the extreme right associations. Moreover, despite the attempt to modernize their ideology, the fragmentation and constant rivalry among these groups, and the absence of charismatic leadership that unify the different families, had provoked the marginalization of radical right-wing. The only exception was PxC, who was capable of combining the strong Catalan identity with nativist measures.

Ideological features per party (C = Core; P= present, not core; I = indication, not explicit).

Feature	FJONS	CEDADE	FEA	FEI	FN	JJ.EE	DN	ESP 2000	PxC
Authoritarianism						P	P	P	
Nationalism	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
Nativism		P			P	P	C	C	C
Religion	C	C	C	C	C	P	I	P	I
Fascism Nazism	C	C	C	C	C	P			

Table 11. Source: author, based on a table created by Cas Mudde⁸¹.

⁸¹ Mudde. "Constructing a Conceptual Framework", 11-31.

IV

The Foundation of Vox (2013 – 2020)

While in Western Europe, the populist radical right parties have become a significant political force. Spain continued to be an exception: no radical right parties have had representatives elected at the national level since 1979. The high degree of fragmentation within the radical right parties, the stronghold of the PP over the right, and the political system contributed to the decline of the radical right. Moreover, Alonso and Kaltwasser have argued that the Great Recession of 2008, the population's mistrust over the political system, and the rise of non-EU immigration did not "improve the electoral odds of the PRR, but rather it facilitated the emergence of leftist populist forces"⁸² such as *Podemos*.

However, the situation changed when Vox entered in the regional parliament of Andalusia in 2018, and its support allowed the formation of a right government lead by the PP and C's. It was the first time that a radical right party managed to step in a regional parliament since 1979, and it was a warning sign for the PP, whose influence over the right has started to decline since the rise of C's in 2015, and later on Vox (Chart 1).

Vox maintained a poor political performance since its foundation in 2013; nevertheless, the electoral results in both 2019 general elections –April 2019 and November 2019– has allowed the radical right formation to become the third political force of the country. In sum, "Vox has achieved a political success since it has achieved five percent of the vote in three consecutive elections"⁸³.

The following chapter aims to study Vox recent successes in order to find the answer to the research question: *Is Vox the new representative of the populist radical right in Spain?*

⁸² Alonso, and Rovira Kaltwasser. "Spain: No Country for the Populist Radical Right?" 21–45.

⁸³ Ortiz Barquero, Pablo. "The Electoral Breakthrough of the Radical Right in Spain: Correlates of Electoral Support for VOX in Andalusia (2018)." *Genealogy* 3, no. 4. 2019. Accessed April 28, 2020. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3390/genealogy3040072>.

The Origins of Vox

The main difference between Vox and its European counterparts is that Vox's political origins date back to the PP. The political party was a division of the conservative party since the majority of its leaders were politically active in the PP or were connected to it.

The founders of Vox addressed a letter to the ex-Leader of the PP, Mariano Rajoy⁸⁴, where they explained their 'profound disappointment' towards Mr. Rajoy, and the actions of his government regarding the Catalan separatist's problem, and the political measures adopted towards the terrorist organization, *Euskadi Ta Askatasuna* (ETA)⁸⁵. Moreover, they considered that under the leadership of Rajoy, the PP was too "moderate on issues such as the traditional values, national unity, or economic freedom"⁸⁶, which were critical features for the radical right voters.

Both José María Aznar Administrations (1996-2004) applied strong neoconservative policies by privatizing public sectors, the internationalization of public banks and companies, and Spain's involvement in the Iraq war. At the ideological level, Aznar made constant references to the concept of Constitutional Patriotism⁸⁷ in order to defend the unity of the country and its traditional values. In sum, nationalism and nativism were strong points in his conservative electoral program. This hegemony allowed the party to maintain control over right-wing voters.

The PP came back to power after four years of socialist Government, which were marked by the first years of the economic crisis of 2008 (Table12). Rajoy's Government (2011-2018) mainly focused on the Great Recession's adverse effects: high peaks of unemployment, austerity measures, and eviction rates.

Nevertheless, Rajoy adopted a moderate attitude in social and cultural aspects, in comparison with Aznar. According to Abascal, Rajoy did a belligerent opposition towards Zapatero, but after 2011 he changed the principles that the PP had always defended⁸⁸.

⁸⁴ Spanish President from 2011 to 2018.

⁸⁵ Abascal, Santiago. "Carta a Mariano Rajoy." *Carta a Mariano Rajoy*. Álava, 2013. <https://www.santiagoabascal.es/>.

⁸⁶ Ferreira, Carles. "Vox as Representative of the Radical Right in Spain: A Study of Its Ideology." *Revista Española de Ciencia Política*, 51. 73–98. 2019. Accessed April 23, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13608746.2014.985448>.

⁸⁷ See Chapter III. The Popular Party.

⁸⁸ Dragó Sánchez, Fernando. *Santiago Abascal, España Vertebrada*. Barcelona, Spain: Grupo Planeta. 2019.

Year	Political Parties	Votes	(%)	Deputies
2011	PP- Partido Popular	10.866.566	44,63	186
	PSOE- Partido Socialista Obrero Español	7.003.511	28,76	110
	IU-LV- Izquierda Unida- Los Verdes: La Izquierda Plural	1.686.040	6,92	11
	UPyD- Unión Progreso y Democracia	1.143.225	4,7	5
	CIU- Convergència i Unió	1.015.691	4,17	16

Table 12. 2011 Spanish General Election. Source: the author, based on Ministerio del Interior data

The 2014 European Election

After Vox foundation, the party centered its attention in the 2014 European election. As mentioned before, radical right parties have adopted the strategy to participate in local, regional, or European elections to avoid the D'Hondt formula⁸⁹ and win supporters.

The former vice-president of the European Parliament, Alexis Vidal-Quadras, was elected head of the party and as Vox's representative in the 2014 European election. However, the party failed to enter the European chamber by 2.000 votes (Table 13). Subsequently, Vidal-Quadras abandoned the party, alleging that he did not want to contribute to the further division of the right vote due to the emerging "extremism of the left"⁹⁰, predicting the rise of *Podemos* and, later on, the liberal C's. Vidal-Quadra's departure marked a crucial change in the ideology of the party.

Under Santiago Abascal's leadership, Vox assumed the same features as the other radical right organizations⁹¹. In addition to its active defense of ETA's victims and its authoritarian fight against Catalan/Basque nationalism, Vox added the xenophobic speeches against immigration and preservation of traditional Spanish values. Since its foundation, Vox has participated in all the electoral contest, but it maintained a low political profile (Table 13). Same as the other Spanish radical right organizations, Vox was unable to politicize new points of debate, such as the rise of immigration. Moreover, the foundation of *Podemos* and C's was also significant for Vox's lack of development.

⁸⁹ See Chapter II. The Spanish Political System: A Small Overview.

⁹⁰ Ferreira. "Vox as Representative of the Radical Right in Spain: A Study of Its Ideology". 21–45.

⁹¹ Sangiao, Sergio. "Los Orígenes De Vox: El Aznarato y La Lucha Contra ETA." *CTXT: Contexto y Acción*. Público, November 28, 2018. <https://ctxt.es/es/20181129/Politica/23127/vox-aznar-eta-esperanza-aguirre-sergio-sangiao.htm>.

Year	Elections	Votes	(%)	Deputies
2014	European	244,929	1,57	0
2015	General	58.114	0,23	0
2015	Regional (11 Autonomous Communities)	97.648	0,1	0
2016	General	47.182	0,2	0

Table 13. Vox's evolution between 2013 and 2016. Source: the author, based on Ministerio del Interior data

The Consolidation of Vox

The 2018 regional election in the Andalusia community signaled the end of the Spanish exception and the starting point for Vox's political consolidation. Vox gathered eleven percent of the votes, which was translated as gaining twelve seats in the regional parliament. The growth of Vox continued in the following 2019 general elections. In the first election, celebrated in April, the radical right formation achieved 10 percent of the vote, which allowed its entrance into the legislative chamber. Notwithstanding, Vox's major success was in the second general election hosted in November⁹², gaining 15 percent of the votes, which meant that Vox became the third political force in the Congress of Deputies with 52 deputies (Chart 2).

Vox's political victory had significant repercussions in the political framework of the country. First of all, it demonstrated the radical right ideology's growth among the population, which could also be translated as a loss of confidence in the four-party system. Second, the growing influence of Vox forced the new president of the PP, Pablo Casado, to adopt practically "the same rhetoric and programs as Vox"⁹³ in order to stop the 'desertion' of its more conservative voters, which had been essential for PP political leadership over the right.

⁹² The Socialist Pedro Sánchez was incapable of creating a government and convoked a second election.

⁹³ Rubio-Pueyo. "Vox: ¿Una Nueva Extrema Derecha En España?". 1-26.

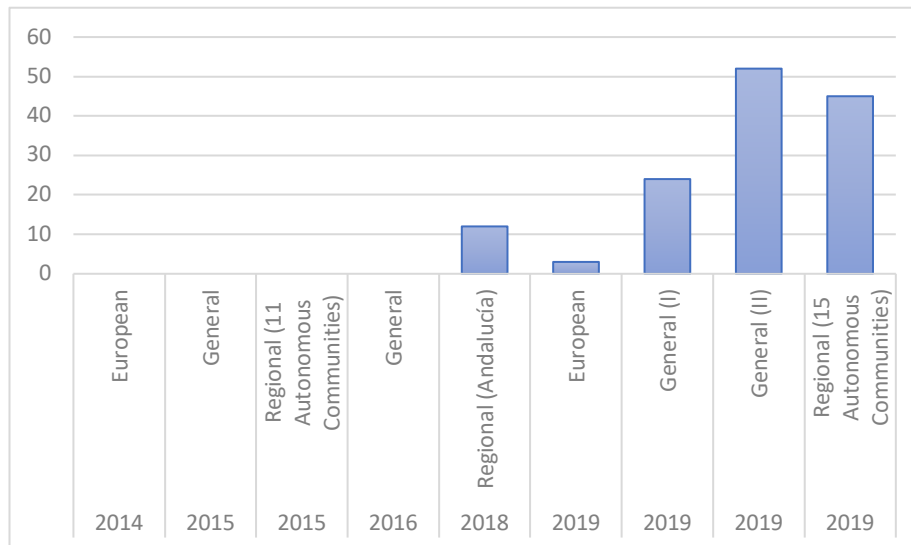


Chart 2. The evolution of Vox from 2013 to 2019. Source: the author, based on Ministerio del Interior data.

At the European level, Vox has maintained an ambivalent attitude regarding the European PRR organizations⁹⁴. Abascal has been recognized by the European radical right leaders, such as Marine Le Pen (FN), Frauke Petry (AfD), and Geert Wilders (PVV). At the same time, Vox’s president has expressed its admiration and support to the Hungarian president, Viktor Orbán⁹⁵. However, after the 2019 European election, where Abascal’s formation managed to secure three MEP, Vox decided to sit on the bench of the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) instead of the formation led by Le Pen and Salvini, Identity and Democracy (ID).

As Carles Ferreira pointed out, the political implication behind this action demonstrated the importance of understanding the ideological core of Vox. The reason is that while ID is a clear representative of the PRR in Europe, ECR “is also located at the right-wing of the European Popular Party and their anti-federalist attitude unites the formations, but not all the political parties can be categorized as populist radical right”⁹⁶.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Abascal, Santiago. “Discurso de Santiago Abascal en Vistalegre. España Viva”. [October 7, 2018]. Youtube Video. 28:04. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t_CfZ5amIE&t=1105s

⁹⁶ Ferreira. “Vox as Representative of the Radical Right in Spain: A Study of Its Ideology”. 21–45.

The Leaders of Vox: Opportunistic and True Believers

Mudde states that the success of a political party depends on “the ability of its leader to mobilize the masses and/or lead its party to apply radical reforms”⁹⁷. The mobilization of the masses is not easy since it is necessary to appropriate political issues in order to influence public opinion⁹⁸. Hence, the populist leaders tend to present themselves as the authentic voice of ‘the people’ against the corrupt elite.

However, in reality, the majority of the populist leaders are connected to the political establishment. “Some of them may have held political positions within the system or participate in politics due to family connections”⁹⁹. The leaders of Vox have demonstrated some of these features. Vox’s high-ranking officials were politically active in the PP or were connected to it. Nevertheless, even though they do not hide their political background, they promote themselves as “the only true alternative against the enemies of Spain”¹⁰⁰ and how they have been capable of starting a debate about all the “forbidden issues”¹⁰¹.

Santiago Abascal Conde

Santiago Abascal grew up in the town of Amurrio, in the Basque Country. Due to his family connection with the PP, they were threatened by ETA. Despite this, this experience inspired Abascal to join the PP. Inside the conservative party, he had a close relationship with Esperanza Aguirre¹⁰², a vital representative of the party’s neoconservative wing, which allowed Abascal access to different positions in the party.

Abascal was a deputy in the Basque Parliament (2005-2009), but because of the political differences with high-ranking offices, he moved to Madrid. Aguirre selected him as the new director of the Data Protection Agency of the Community of Madrid, and later on as Director of the Foundation for Patronage and Social Sponsorship. In 2012, he abandoned “the PP to avoid become corrupted”¹⁰³.

⁹⁷ Mudde, and Rovira Kaltwasser. *Populismo: Una Breve introducción*.

⁹⁸ Kaltwasser Rovira, Cristóbal, Paul A. Taggart, Paulina Ochoa Espejo, and Pierre Ostiguy. “Populism in Western Europe”. In *The Oxford Handbook of Populism*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2017. Accessed March 6, 2020. Doi: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198803560.013.12

⁹⁹ Mudde, and Rovira Kaltwasser. *Populismo: Una Breve introducción*.

¹⁰⁰ Vox. “Directo. Vistalegre III – La Alternativa”. [March, 2020]. Youtube Video. 1:59. [March, 2020] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jKQ7vtfETO&t=6123s>

¹⁰¹ Abascal, Santiago. “Discurso de Santiago Abascal. Elecciones 10N”. [November, 2019]. Youtube Video, 11:59. [November, 2019]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zAYEBkn3Gz4>

¹⁰² Aznar’s Minister of Education (1996-1999), and later on the President of the Community of Madrid (2003-2012).

¹⁰³ Dragó Sánchez. *Santiago Abascal, España Vertebrada*.

This decision has allowed Abascal to become the best-known face of the radical right. His ability to politicize issues and the creation of a reliable radical right program, has allowed Abascal to represent himself as a strong and charismatic leader who is able to unify the radical right. His ideology is based on three core features, also present in Vox's doctrine: right to life, freedom, and the unity of Spain. Fernando Sánchez Dragó indicated that Catholicism is also a structuring element, but, even though Abascal considers Vox as a not a religious party, he agrees that Catholicism is the "foundation stone of Spain's identity"¹⁰⁴. Furthermore, Abascal has taken an aggressive tone towards the traditional parties, especially those on the left, which he has identified as part of the *Dictadura Progre*¹⁰⁵. This attitude also connects with an old idea of the extreme right: Spain is in danger. Abascal uses this aggressive tone to state as fact that Spain is under attack and needs to be saved in the same way that the military did in 1936.

Javier Ortega Smith

Javier Ortega Smith is the Secretary-General of the party, and he has been one of the decisive figures of Vox's success in the last years. Ex-military and lawyer, Ortega Smith has represented Vox in the majority of the legal procedures against high-ranking Spanish politicians, such as the trial against the Catalan separatists¹⁰⁶ at the Constitutional Tribunal, or the political complaints against President Pedro Sánchez. Notwithstanding, the Catalan nationalists' prosecution has been crucial for Vox in order to position themselves as the only "true alternative against the ones who want to break Spain"¹⁰⁷.

The Secretary-General represents the extreme ideology inside the party, which is especially visible through his connections with some far-right media or his family ties to Franco Foundation. In his public apparitions, Ortega Smith copies the same aggressive tone as Abascal to defend the unity of Spain, which is threatened by internal and exterior enemies. Moreover, Ortega Smith has compared Vox's political trajectory with the period of *La Reconquista*¹⁰⁸ and makes constant evocations of the catechism and the imperial

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 60-61.

¹⁰⁵ Progressive Dictatorship.

¹⁰⁶ Judicial process against Catalan nationalist leaders due to the illegal referendum held in Catalonia on October 1, 2017.

¹⁰⁷ Llanera, Kiko. "Por qué voto a Vox. Documental de el País". Youtube Video, 21.05. February 16, 2020.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcHT9mxBQxQ>

¹⁰⁸ Historical period between 711 to 1492 when the Christian Kingdoms defeated the Muslim Caliphate in the Iberic Peninsula.

ages. His strong beliefs had led him to participate in so-called ‘great patriotic feats’¹⁰⁹ such as swimming across the Strait of Gibraltar to raise the Spanish flag in United Kingdom territory. To sum up, as Dragó described, Javier Ortega Smith is Vox’s gladiator.

Both politicians represent the two faces of Vox: the opportunists and the true believers. The creation of Vox opened the door for the political growth of radical right politicians, that has always been present in the PP but contained by the right moderates. Therefore, Vox has become the perfect platform to grow professionally; at the same time, it publicly represents the radical right ideology. In the words of Santiago Abascal, Vox “represents the Spaniards who have not been represented in the last forty years,” which is also an unequivocal critic to the democratic transition and the PSOE and PP governments¹¹⁰.

The Ideology of Vox: A Populistic Radical Right Party?

The consolidation of Vox in the Congress of Deputies seems to indicate that the party has become the leading representative of the radical right ideology in Spain. Notwithstanding, due to its recent consolidation, academics continue debating about the ideology of the political party.

Nationalism

Like PxC, *España2000*, and DN, the concept of nationalism is the central pillar of Vox’s ideology, and it is present in its electoral programs, speeches, and public appearances (Table 11). Vox’s nationalism is divided into two branches: the unity of the country and the defense of a specific national identity.

On the one hand, the political party aims to build a central state by suppressing the system of regional autonomy, since Vox believes that it jeopardizes the territorial unity of Spain¹¹¹. However, it is important to notice that Vox is focused more on Catalonia’s autonomic system than the Basque Country. For instance, the first measure of the 2019 program is the suppression of the Catalan Autonomy until the total defeat of

¹⁰⁹ Amón, Rubén. “Javier Ortega Smith, el alma castrense de Vox”. *El País*. 2019. https://elpais.com/politica/2019/01/14/actualidad/1547465654_876450.html.

¹¹⁰ Abascal, Santiago. “Discurso de Santiago Abascal. Elecciones 10N”. November, 2019.

¹¹¹ Vox. *100 Medidas Urgentes de Vox para la España Viva*. PDF. 2018. <https://www.voxespana.es/noticias/100-medidas-urgentes-de-vox-para-espana-20181006>.

the coup and the purging of civil and criminal responsibilities¹¹². Followed by the second measure: the suppression of the political parties, associations, and NGOs that pursue the destruction of the territorial unit of the Nation and its sovereignty¹¹³. Other actions have targeted the country's economic decentralization, such as the abolishment of the Basque and Navarra economic agreements¹¹⁴. This lack of focus may be related to the rise of Catalan separatism, which has coincided with the disarmament of ETA.

On the other hand, national identity is deeply connected with the historical past of the country. This is the first connection of Vox ideology with populist features. According to Taggart, “populists tend to identify themselves with the heartland that represents an idealized conception of the community they serve”¹¹⁵. In this regard, Vox has developed an idealized world based on what it means to be Spaniard.

This idealization of the heartland, which Vox has defined as patriotism, is present in the political party’s electoral program and linguistics. The organization has stated that there are two Spain: The so-called ‘Spain Alive’, and the ‘Dead Spain’. Vicente Pueyo-Rubio has delved into this idea and argued that this division is especially evident in education and cultural policies. For instance, Vox has proposed that Spanish becomes the official language, both educational and administrative level¹¹⁶, which would reduce the learning of the co-official languages (Euskera, Catalan, and Gallego) as optative tongues¹¹⁷. Furthermore, to win the rural vote, the party has vindicated “bullfighting and hunting as unquestionable signs of Spanish identity”¹¹⁸.

In summary, Vox promotes the creation of a monocultural and unitary state. Notwithstanding, nationalism is not a unique feature of the radical right parties, since it is a common component of right-wing ideology. Hence, it must be combined with other significant characteristics of the radical right parties: nativism.

¹¹² Ibid, 1.

¹¹³ Ibid, 2.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 10.

¹¹⁵ Taggart. “Populism and the Pathology of Representative Politics”, 62-80.

¹¹⁶ Vox. *100 Medidas Urgentes de Vox para la España Viva*. 2018.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, 62.

¹¹⁸ Rubio-Pueyo. “Vox: ¿Una Nueva Extrema Derecha En España?”. 1-26.

Nativism

The nativist nature of Vox is evident in its xenophobic statements against migrants. However, it is crucial to indicate that this attitude is mainly focused on a specific type of immigration. Remembering Mudde's nativist definition, "states should be inhabited exclusively by members of the nativist group (the nation), and that nonnative elements (persons and ideas) are fundamentally threatening to the homogenous nation-state"¹¹⁹.

Vox considers that the cultural, moral, and religious homogeneity will benefit the social cohesion of Spain. The religious, historical, and linguistic ties between Spain and the Latin American states favor the social integration –and acceptance– of migrants from those countries¹²⁰. Hence, the migrants who do not share these features are identified as a threat to the identity of Spain. Vox's anti-immigration ideas are directed towards migrants that come from Africa and the Middle East. For instance, some of Vox's actions are the rise of Spain frontiers to stop the wave of immigration¹²¹, and the immediate deportation of illegal immigrants and those who have valid permits but had broken the law¹²². In summary, Vox categorizes the arrival of migrants as an "invasion"¹²³.

Like other radical right parties, Vox has connected the waves of immigration with two other critical factors: criminality and economy. In Abascal's own words, "Vox wants to fight against the immigration that fills our streets with criminals"¹²⁴. On the other hand, it defends the idea that immigrants are an economic burden for the country, and that social and economic aid should go first to the Spaniards.

This type of attitude also ties with Vox's strong anti-Islamic sentiment. In its electoral program, the political party categorizes the measures against Islam under the tags of defense, security, and frontiers. Fundamentalist mosques, the expulsion of fundamentalist imams, the absolute collaboration of the Islamic representatives to detect radicalism, and the suppression of the study of Islam in public schools¹²⁵ are some of Vox's measures against Muslims.

As Mudde pointed out, nativism does not only focus on people but also ideas. Mainly, it is reflected in Vox's anti-globalization attitude. According to Abascal, Spain

¹¹⁹ Mudde. "Constructing a Conceptual Framework", 11-31.

¹²⁰ Dragó Sánchez. *Santiago Abascal, España Vertebrada*.

¹²¹ Vox. *100 Medidas Urgentes de Vox para la España Viva*. 2018.

¹²² Ibid, 15.

¹²³ Ferreira. "Vox as Representative of the Radical Right in Spain: A Study of Its Ideology". 21-45.

¹²⁴ RTVE. "El minuto de oro de Santiago Abascal. Debate a cinco en RTVE". Youtube video. 0:58. November, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NHtCw7A8OUE>

¹²⁵ Vox. *100 Medidas Urgentes de Vox para la España Viva*. 2018.

and Europe are “facing a situation of cultural Marxism that seeks to erase national sovereignties and individual identities with the result of the imposition of globalism by the members of the *progre dictatorship*, the international elites, and globalist lobbies”¹²⁶. Rocío Monasterio added that Vox says, “no to global governance that wants to end the sovereignty of nations”¹²⁷. However, unlike other European radical right parties such as the French FN, Vox has not suggested that Spain abandons the European Union (EU) or the Eurozone. Its measures are mainly focused on the defends of Spain’s national sovereignty over supranational institutions.

Populism

As Taggart explained, the concept of populism is perhaps the “most widely used but poorly understood political concept of our time”¹²⁸. The academic community has been incapable of arriving at a consensus about its definition. Notwithstanding, remembering Deiwiks’ words, there is an agreement on at least two core characteristics of populism: populist leaders’ strong focus on ‘the people’ and an implicit or explicit antagonism towards “the other”¹²⁹. Taggart has maintained that populism, as an ideal type, has six principal themes¹³⁰.

In 2019, Ferreira argued that populism is an implicit feature of Vox’s political program. The phrase ‘the people’ is never mentioned, in comparison, with constant mentions of Spain or the Spaniards. Other typical populist concepts such as ‘the elite’ or corruption are barely mentioned in the electoral programs of 2019 or the Vistalegre meetings of 2018 and 2019. To sum up, Ferreira considered that Vox’s rhetoric is more nationalist than populist¹³¹.

However, this research proposes that populism is more explicit than it may appear. It is crucial to remark that this feature appears in the speeches of Santiago Abascal, and other leaders of Vox, in Vistalegre 2019 and 2020, and it is not present in the electoral programs analyzed in the study. Another important distinction is that Vox is not a new party, but due to its recent political success, the political party has adopted an inclusive attitude towards “all the Spaniards”¹³².

¹²⁶ Dragó Sánchez. *Santiago Abascal, España Vertebrada*.

¹²⁷ Vox. “Directo. Vistalegre III – La Alternativa”. March, 2020.

¹²⁸ Taggart. “Populism and the Pathology of Representative Politics”, 62-80.

¹²⁹ Deiwiks. “Populism”, 1-9.

¹³⁰ See Theoretical Framework.

¹³¹ Ferreira. “Vox as Representative of the Radical Right in Spain: A Study of Its Ideology”. 21-45.

¹³² Vox. “Directo. Vistalegre III – La Alternativa”. March 8, 2020.

The people and the elites

The most important question to ask in this section is who the people are for Vox? As Ferreira said, Vox does not mention the word of the people in his speeches. Still, the party has created a clear ideology based on the distinction of two separate groups: the community, identified as the true Spaniards, and the others, who belong to the *progre dictatorship*. As Taggart explains, populist leaders tend to extract the community ideals from their conception of the heartland. Vox's understanding of what it means being Spaniard is strongly connected with the historical heritage of the country –La Reconquista and the Empire–, and its traditional values; hence, its definition of the people is wrapped on a nationalistic perspective. Nevertheless, Vox makes it clear that there are two separate groups in Spain. For instance, Abascal indicated that the left is using mass media to “condemn the innocent, the patriot, the farmer, the dissident of the *progre dictatorship*, in order to protect the criminals, the guilty, the coup, and the globalist”¹³³.

This distinction is not new in the Spanish political framework. Going back to chapter II of this research, one of Franco's legacies was the conception of the Civil War as the only way to save Spain from its enemies –the socialists and communists–. This idea of the ‘saviors of the country’ fighting the enemies was present in the ideology of the extreme right associations during the democratic transition, in the radical right groups during the democratic regime, and now in Vox's rhetoric.

In this regard, Vox is the political representative of the larger group, the true Spaniards, which ties with its nativist nature. It is essential to remember that Vox aims to establish a state “inhabited exclusively by members of the nativist group and that nonnative elements (persons and ideas) are fundamentally threatening to the homogenous nation-state”¹³⁴.

Spain is a multiethnic country due to the historical stronghold of regional identities such as Catalan, Basque, Castilian, or Andalusian. These national groups are represented as the power of the Autonomous regions in the legislative decision-making process of the country. Despite this, Vox identifies the autonomous communities as “the enemies of Spain since they have created 17 centralized autonomies and reject that Spain

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Mudde. “Constructing a Conceptual Framework”, 11-31.

is the only thing that unites the Spaniards”¹³⁵. This ideology connects with Taggart’s first populist theme: populism has a hostile attitude towards representative politics¹³⁶.

Against the representative politics

Taggart defines representative politics as a political system built around the ‘vertical axis’ between the people and the political elite. The political elite, which is formed by political parties, interest groups, and social movements, is the one who drives the country and decides which issues to put into the issue agenda. The population does not decide which ideas or projects could be included in the public agenda. Unless the elite puts an idea on the agenda, it is not otherwise available for the citizens. This is the problem that populists have with representative politics.

Following this definition, Taggart argues that populist parties are ‘protest parties’ against this type of system. Nowadays, most populist parties are focused on the over-representation of minorities in the political framework. The central belief is that the state is allied with either organized interests or the liberal elite represented by these minorities¹³⁷.

In this regard, Vox falls into the category of a ‘protest party’ due to its hostile attitude towards the Spanish political system and the influence of the ‘globalist elite’ on it. As Rocío Monasterio said, Vox is the only organization that “defends Spain against the multicultural societies that globalist elites –with the aid of the left parties– try to impose on us”¹³⁸, and if the government does not protect the Spaniards, “it better goes away and makes way for a better government”¹³⁹. Furthermore, Vox proposes the suppression of the autonomic system since they are controlled by groups that want to break with Spain.

Vox’s ideology is an acknowledged contradiction. On the one hand, Vox defines itself as the political party of the true Spaniards versus the multicultural minorities and the globalist elites¹⁴⁰. It also proposes the suppression of the autonomic system in order to establish a “Unitary State of Law that returns powers to the central government and limits the autonomous legislative capacity”¹⁴¹. On the other hand, Vox is against the

¹³⁵ Dragó Sánchez. *Santiago Abascal, España Vertebrada*.

¹³⁶ Taggart. “Populism and the Pathology of Representative Politics”, 62-80.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Vox. “Directo. Vistalegre III – La Alternativa”. March 8, 2020.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Vox. *100 Medidas Urgentes de Vox para la España Viva*. 2018.

people who are subverting the established political system, especially the regional groups of Catalonia and Basque Country. However, this paradox fits with Taggart's populist theme: populism is a reaction to a sense of extreme crisis¹⁴².

Sense of crisis

It is not strange that Vox has grown in power in the last two years. As Taggart explained, populism emerges when the citizens have the conception that the traditional parties cannot deal with a crisis¹⁴³. Betz noted that, in some cases, what triggers popular resentment is a simple event that serves as a focal point for expressions of anger, or, in other cases, a prolonged exposure to a negative experience¹⁴⁴. In Spain, it was a combination of both. The extended effects of the economic crisis, which has left the country with high rates of unemployment and austerity, combined now with the Catalan separatist challenge, triggered the resentment on the population regardless of their political ideology.

On October 1, 2017, the Catalan Government, led by a coalition of separatist parties, held an illegal referendum and, later on, declared the unilateral independence of Catalonia (DUI). The DUI provoked a series of actions that led to the Catalan Government's suspension and the celebration of a new election. However, the separatist coalition remains in power, while "the political conflict has expanded beyond the confines of the region's electorate into the national arena"¹⁴⁵. According to Kiko Llanera, the Catalan conflict is a recurrent topic in the responses to the question: "*why do I vote for Vox?*" The voters have the sensation that the traditional parties do not know how to handle the situation¹⁴⁶.

Remembering Alonso and Kaltwasser's theory, populist radical right parties need to find a niche and politicize specific issues that are not being addressed by the mainstream political forces¹⁴⁷ in order to succeed. In this regard, Vox ideology does not differ from the other Spanish radical right parties' ideologies. Vox focuses on similar issues such as the political decentralization represented by the territorial organization, the

¹⁴² Taggart. "Populism and the Pathology of Representative Politics", 62-80.

¹⁴³ Ibid, 62-80.

¹⁴⁴ Betz. "Conditions Favoring the Success and Failure of Radical Right-Wing Populist Parties in Contemporary Democracies". 197-212.

¹⁴⁵ Turnbull-Dugarte, Stuart J. "Explaining the End of Spanish Exceptionalism and Electoral Support for Vox." *Research & Politics* 6, no. 2. 2019. Accessed April 27, 2020. <https://doi-org.proxy.library.uu.nl/10.1177/2053168019851680>.

¹⁴⁶ Llanera. "Por qué voto a Vox. Documental de el País". February 16, 2020.

¹⁴⁷ Alonso, and Rovira Kaltwasser. "Spain: No Country for the Populist Radical Right?". 21-45.

defends of the traditional values and the rise of immigration¹⁴⁸. Hence, Vox has occupied the same niche than the other radical right groups and was equally incapable of triggering popular resentments.

However, Vox found out in the Catalan crisis the perfect path to canalize its ideology. The separatist challenge has represented the conception that the government has made too many concessions to the Catalan and Basque. Vox has presented itself as the ‘only reliable alternative’ to the other parties, with clear and authoritarian solutions to the Catalan nationalism. Hence, the political group has won not only the votes of the radical right population but also those who do not want Catalonia's independence.

Notwithstanding, Andrés Rodríguez-Pose has explained that Vox “offered simple solutions to very complex problems, which require a high level of coordination.”¹⁴⁹ In other words, Vox has used what Taggart denominates as ‘politics of simplicity’, which embodies the idea of straightforward policies for complex situations.

In sum, Vox used the idea of the government being too open to dialogue with the separatist groups, which grew more influential in their regions due to the representative system; hence, it led to a national crisis, and now the only way to solve it is by applying an authoritarian solution.

Authoritarianism

The majority of the Spanish right political parties, extreme, radicals, and moderate, have their roots in the Francoism regime. Currently, only one extreme right party, FE-JONS, continues defending the re-establishment of the dictatorship. The other organizations have found refuge in more or less authoritarian attitudes.

Mudde defines authoritarianism as “the belief in a strictly ordered society, in which infringements of authority are to be punished severely”¹⁵⁰. Hence, authoritarian parties are unwilling to deal with changes or criticism that other groups may argue against specific issues.

Vox, as a division of the PP, shares the same historical background, but the party has defended the development of a more politically and morally authoritarian society than the PP. This authoritarian attitude is especially evident in Vox’s measure regarding the territorial administration, secessionism, immigration, and traditional values.

¹⁴⁸ Vox. *Manifiesto Fundacional*. PDF. 2013. <https://www.voxespana.es/espana/manifiesto-fundacional-vox>

¹⁴⁹ Llanera. “Por qué voto a Vox”. Documental de el País.

¹⁵⁰ Mudde. “Constructing a Conceptual Framework”, 11-31.

For instance, Vox proposes the suspension of almost all three levels of the national organization in order to create a centralized government. The political party also wants to provide the maximum legal protection to the nation's symbols, especially the Flag, the Hymn, and the Crown¹⁵¹. In Abascal's own words, "all those who betray the national sovereignty and the Constitution will end up in prison"¹⁵².

From a Spanish perspective, this attitude recalls the anti-democratic speeches of the extreme right forces during the democratic transition¹⁵³. However, the party has never demonstrated any implicit or explicit evidence that it wants to re-establish the Francoist dictatorship or an anti-democratic regime.

Vox is unwilling to accept the fundamental nature of pluralistic politics, which accepts different opinions and does not deny them the right to argue against the established system. The Spanish transition was built upon the legitimization of Spain's regional identities. However, authoritarian parties do not accept this legitimacy and the arguments that challenge their own. In this regard, Vox refuses to accept the arguments of the Catalan separatist as legitimate.

Moreover, Vox adopts an authoritarian behavior regarding the morale of society, especially on aspects related to same-sex marriage and families, or abortion¹⁵⁴. Vox also has demonstrated a negative attitude regarding the cultural minorities of the country and the feminist movement. Notwithstanding, the radical right party does not propose violent actions, like the antisystem associations or the extreme right parties, to establish its beliefs. Hence, Vox is a democratic political party with an authoritarian perspective.

Other Features

Traditional values

Radical right parties tend to protect the traditional values of the country. Like the Polish Law and Justice (PiS), Vox's electoral programs have indicated the importance of maintaining traditional values such as protection of the 'the natural family', and anti-abortion and anti-feminist attitudes. For instance, in the Education and Culture section,

¹⁵¹ Vox. *Programa electoral de Vox para las elecciones generales 2019*. PDF. 2019. https://github.com/open-manifesto-project/Open-Manifesto/blob/master/Manifiestos/ManifiestosOMv1.0/VOX_GENERALES_ESPA%C3%91A_28-04-2019_OMv1.0.json

¹⁵² Vox. "Directo. Vistalegre III – La Alternativa". March 8, 2020.

¹⁵³ See Chapter II. The Ideology of the Extreme Right-Wing.

¹⁵⁴ Vox. *100 Medidas Urgentes de Vox para la España Viva*.

Vox proposes the suppression of the Gender Violence law, since its only objective is ‘the criminalization of men’, the creation of a Family Ministry, and the development of an anti-abortion law. Furthermore, Vox has also established a ‘crusade’ against the “LGTBQ+ lobby”¹⁵⁵ since it undermines the institution of marriage and the ‘natural families’. Vox has used these ideas to negotiate its support in the formation of the Andalusia autonomic government and Madrid's municipal administration.

Vox’s traditional values are also connected with the Catholic heritage of Spain, and the necessity to defend it. As Ignacio Garriga argued, “Christianity is the main pillar of our society”¹⁵⁶. Moreover, using Orbán as an example, Vox has included in its program the creation of an Agency to help threatened Christian minorities¹⁵⁷. Finally, the party proposes the establishment of a law to protect bullfighting as part of Spain’s cultural patrimony and hunting as a necessary and traditional activity in the rural world¹⁵⁸.

Neoliberalism

Vox has a neoliberal perspective in its economic plan. According to Guillermo Fernández Vázquez, the political party considers that States are elements of disruption in the market: therefore, the best economic policy is to avoid government interference.¹⁵⁹ On the other hand, the party has proposed reducing political spending and a drastic tax reduction. This is a breaking point between Vox and some of its European analogs. Kitschelt, in collaboration with Anthony McGann, noted that radical right parties developed a winning formula based on the combination of economic pro-market policies with xenophobic and authoritarian messages in the 1980s¹⁶⁰. At the beginning of the century, parties like the French FN adopted a welfare chauvinist nature in order to appeal to the working class¹⁶¹ and abandoned the first winning formula. Vox’s economic program adapts to the first formula proposed by Kitschelt and McGann.

¹⁵⁵ Vox. “Directo. Vistalegre III – La Alternativa”. March 8, 2020.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Vox. *100 Medidas Urgentes de Vox para la España Viva*. 2018.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid, 16-17.

¹⁵⁹ Fernández Vázquez, Guillermo. *Vox, la extrema derecha de siempre. CTXT: Contexto y Acción*. Público. April 24, 2019. <https://ctxt.es/es/20190424/Politica/25776/Guillermo-Fernandez-Vazquez-Vox-programa-electoral-Abascal-neoliberalismo.htm>

¹⁶⁰ Kitschelt, Herbert, and Anthony McGann. “The Contemporary Radical Right. An Interpretative and Explanatory Framework.” In *The Populist Radical Right: a Reader*, edited by Cas Mudde, 352–85. London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2016. Accessed April 30, 2020.

¹⁶¹ Kitschelt, and McGann. “The Contemporary Radical Right. An Interpretative and Explanatory Framework.”, 383-385

Summary of the Results

The application of the theoretical framework has highlighted the main features of Vox's ideology. These features have been divided into two categories: core and present. The first group represented the nuclear ideas of Vox, which have served as the skeleton to shape the political party. The other ones are the characteristics that are not crucial to classify the political party, but they have provided a deep understanding of its political nature. As table 14 shows, Vox's core features are nationalism, nativism, authoritarianism, and the defense of the traditional Spanish values. Moreover, as it was mentioned above, populism is present in the rhetoric of the party. It cannot be classified as a core feature since the concept does not frame the ideology of Vox, but it is subordinated to the nationalist/nativist ideology. Besides, the party has defended a neoliberal economic plan over the years, but it is not decisive to understand its political nature.

<i>Feature</i>	<i>Ideological Position</i>
<i>Nationalism</i>	Core
<i>Nativism</i>	Core
<i>Populism</i>	Present
<i>Authoritarianism</i>	Core
<i>Traditional values</i>	Core
<i>Neoliberalism</i>	Present

Table 14. Summary of the ideological nature of Vox. Source: the author.

The study of these six features has been useful not only to answer the research question but also to locate Vox's ideological position in the Spanish radical right framework. Vox shares the same nationalist ideology as PxC, DN, and *España2000* based on a strong defense of the national identity and government centralization. This conception was also a key feature for the extreme right organizations. Notwithstanding, Vox authoritarian perspective does not imply the imposition of these ideas using violent methods or by reestablishing the dictatorship. Therefore, the party operates within the democratic system (Illustration 1). The study of nationalism is not enough to understand the political nature of Vox: hence, it is necessary to pay attention to another of its features: nativism. The combination of its nationalist rhetoric with a clear xenophobic message has

demonstrated that Vox is a radical right party that wants to transform Spain into a monocultural and unitary state.

However, the research question aims to demonstrate if Vox has become the new representative of the populist radical right in Spain. Therefore, the analysis of the concept of populism was crucial in order to answer the question. As it was mentioned above, Vox has some of the populist features described by Taggart. Nevertheless, most of the time, they are subordinated to the nationalistic rhetoric. Some authors had assumed that Vox is not a PRR equivalent to the European ones. This research has concluded that Vox fulfills the majority of Taggart's populist features. Vox's rhetoric has created a clear distinction between the faithful community, represented by the true Spaniards, and the other group, defined by high-ranking offices, regional political parties and organizations, and the globalist elites. Vox's populism is strongly framed in a nationalist perspective, and it was not until recently that Vox started to make this vertical distinction between the people and the other, which is crucial for the development of the populist features. Therefore, it is essential to highlight that this new dimension continues to be subordinated to the nationalistic rhetoric. Nevertheless, there are discrepancies among Vox's leaders in the application of certain concepts, such as who are the corrupt elites.

This development reminds of the transformation of some European radical right parties in the late 1970s. For instance, the French FN led by Jean-Marie Le Pen started defending similar principals as Vox. However, FN realized the necessity to modernize its ideology in order to attract a broad electoral spectrum. Hence, under the leadership of Marine Le Pen, the party adopted a populist speech combined with the defends of welfare chauvinism.

To summarize, the investigation has concluded that Vox is a radical right party but not a PRR. On the one hand, Vox shares the same nativist and national characteristic as the European PRR being crucial the "attack of foreigners, the vilification of feminist and environmental movement, and the stress on national symbols and historical reminiscences"¹⁶². However, the populist feature continues being subordinated to the nationalist/nativist ideology. On the other hand, many signs have indicated that there is ground for Vox's ideology to develop a more explicit populist ideology in the following years: therefore, the party could become a populist radical right party.

¹⁶² Kitschelt, and McGann . "The Contemporary Radical Right. An Interpretative and Explanatory Framework.", 368-69.

V

Conclusion

In 2017, Carmen González-Enríquez expressed her surprise that despite the negative impact of the economic crisis, the high unemployment and eviction rates, and the rise of immigration in Spain, there was not a successful PRR party. Hence, she and other academics stated that there was no room for the PRR movement in Spain. Nevertheless, in the following year, Vox became the first radical right party to enter the Autonomous Community's regional parliament since 1979.

In comparison with other European countries, which have been dealing with PRR parties for many years, Vox's successes took by surprise to the scholars, the traditional parties, and the general public by surprise. Hence, the abrupt consolidation of Vox made it crucial to understand the core features behind its ideology. Some academics believed that Vox was a more conservative party than the PP, and other classified the political party into the extreme right-wing. For these reasons, this research project aims to explain this riddle by studying Vox's ideology and see if the political party has become the new representative of the PRR in Spain. In addition, this paper also wants to study the growth of Vox from the perspective of the past or, in other words, how the development of the Spanish far-right has influenced Vox.

During the democratic transition, the extreme right parties adhered to the regime's dogmas and refused to adapt to the country's new democratic reality. This decision created a fragile balance between the left and the right, who feared the mobilization of the army against the transition. Nevertheless, the cultural change had paved the way for the political reform, and the extreme right was marginalized at the corners of the legislative framework. The transformation of the extreme right parties into the radical right organizations between the late 1980s and 1990s had the same result. The organizations introduced minor changes such as the defense of the 1978 Constitution and xenophobic messages. It would not be until the foundation of PxC that a radical right party presented a modern message and abandoned Francoism's dogmas.

In sum, over 40 years, with minor exceptions, the far-right organizations were incapable of building a united movement that could attract a minority of the electorate but enough to create a niche in the political framework and force other parties to negotiate with the conservative right.

The analysis of the far-right movement has demonstrated that Vox is not a new political phenomenon in Spain. The comparison of the electoral programs and rhetoric has shown that Vox shares the same features as the other radical right parties: nationalism, nativism, authoritarianism, and traditional values. Vox's measures against non-EU immigration and the desire to establish a cultural homogeneity have highlighted its nationalist/nativist nature. Furthermore, Vox shares the same authoritarian point of view, like DN and *España2000*. In other words, the radical right party promotes the establishment of a strict moral and political society.

The comparison of the extreme right parties and the radical right parties revealed that Vox has an authoritarian perspective, but it is not anti-democratic. The Spanish extreme right organizations have defended the establishment of a Fascist dictatorship. Nevertheless, Vox has never demonstrated any implicit or explicit evidence of this intention. Vox has a clear nativist and authoritarian nature, present in both programs and public apparitions. Therefore, this paper has concluded that Vox is, without any doubt, a radical right party.

However, the central puzzle of this research has been whether Vox can be categorized in the subfamily of the European PRR. This paper has concluded that Vox is not a PRR, because although its populist features are present, they are subordinate to its nationalist nature. Nevertheless, recent speeches have demonstrated that Vox is starting to create a vertical distinction between true Spaniards, as representative of 'the people', and the others.

The slow transition of the Spanish extreme right parties into the radical right parties seems to indicate that Spain has always been behind Europe in the development of the far-right field. When the European radical right parties consolidated their power in their countries, Spain had only two small radical right representative –JJ.EE. And FN– with an ideology closer to the ideologies of the past.

It is impossible to predict what would happen in the future; however, the development of Vox is quite similar to other European radical right parties that started defending similar positions as Vox but have become PRR parties. In this stage, a new line of investigation could be whether Vox remains a non-populist radical right party or

whether the party may experience a similar political development as its European counterparts and become a populist radical right party in the near future. Vox's admiration towards the Hungarian president, Viktor Orbán, expressed numerous times in the programs and speeches, may be an indicator of Vox's future plans. Vox may distance itself from the PRR parties represented by Salvini and Le Pen and follow the same steps as the Hungarian representative. Therefore, this research project could be used as a base for future comparative studies that plan to analyze the relationship between Fidezs-Hungarian Civic Alliance, and Vox.

Appendix: Election Data

The Electoral Evolution of the Far-Right Parties between 1977 to 2019

Year	Political Parties	Votes	(%)	Deputies
1977	AN18- Alianza Nacional 18 de Julio	67.336	0,37	0
	FJONSA- Falange Española de las JONS Auténtica	46.548	0,25	0
	FJONS- Falange Española de las JONS	25.017	0,14	0
	CJA- Asociación Círculos José Antonio	8,184	0,04	0
	FEI- Falange Española Independiente	855	0	0
1979	UN- Partido Unión Nacional	378.964	2,11	1
	FJONSA- Falange Española de las JONS Auténtica	30.252	0,17	0
	FEA- Falange Española Auténtica	2.736	0,02	0
	UF-FI-AT- Falange Española Independiente-Unidad Falangista	1,188	0,01	0
	FE-UF- Falange Española-Unidad Falangista	876	0	0
1982	FN- Asociación Política Fuerza Nueva	108.746	0,52	0
	MFE- Movimiento Falangista de España	8.976	0,04	0
	FE-JONS- Falange Española de las JONS	2.528	0,01	0
	FE-I- Falange Española Independiente	1.862	0,01	0
1986	FE-JONS- Falange Española de las JONS	43.449	0,22	0
1989	FE-JONS- Falange Española de las JONS	24.025	0,12	0
	FE- Falange Española Independiente	827	0	0
1993	FE-JONS- Falange Española de las JONS	8.000	0,03	0
	FE- Falange Española Independiente	1.415	0,01	0
	FEA- Falange Española Auténtica	747	0	0
1996	FEA- Falange Española Auténtica	12.114	0,05	0
	FE- Falange Española Independiente	1.550	0,01	0
2000	FE- La Falange	14.431	0,06	0
	ES2000- España 2000	9.562	0,04	0
	FEI-FE 2000- Falange Española Independiente-Falange 2000	6.621	0,03	0
2004	FE-JONS- Falange Española de las JONS	12.266	0,05	0
	FA- Falange Auténtica	4.589	0,02	0
	ES2000- España 2000	4.231	0,02	0
2008	FE-JONS- Falange Española de las JONS	14.023	0,05	0
	D.N- Democracia Nacional	12.836	0,05	0
	AES- Alternativa Española	7.300	0,03	0

	ES2000- España 2000	6.906	0,03	0
	FA- Falange Auténtica	4.607	0,01	0
	M.F.E- Movimiento Falangista de España	68	0	0
	PxC- Plataforma per Catalunya	59.949	0,25	0
2011	ES2000- España 2000	9.266	0,04	0
	FE-JONS- Falange Española de las JONS	2.898	0,01	0
	D.N- Democracia Nacional	1.867	0,01	0
	VOX-VOX	58.114	0,23	0
2015	FE-JONS- Falange Española de las JONS	7.495	0,03	0
	D.N- Democracia Nacional	1.704	0	0
	VOX-VOX	47.182	0,2	0
2016	FE-JONS- Falange Española de las JONS	9.909	0,04	0
	PxC- Plataforma per Catalunya	724	0	0
	FE- La Falange	254	0	0
	VOX-VOX	2.688.092	10,26	24
2019 April	FE-JONS- Falange Española de las JONS	646	0	0
	VOX-VOX	3.656.979	15,08	52
2019 November	FE-JONS- Falange Española de las JONS	616	0	0

The Evolution of the Far-Right in the European Elections between 1987 to 2019

Year	Political Parties	Votes	(%)	Deputies
1987	FN- Frente Nacional	122.799	0,43	0
	FE-JONS- Falange Española de las JONS	23.407	0,08	0
1989	FN- Frente Nacional	60.672	0,21	0
	FE-JONS- Falange Española de las JONS	24.340	0,08	0
1994	FE-JONS- Falange Española de las JONS	11.733	0,04	0
	FEI- Falange Española Independiente	5.602	0,02	0
	ADN- Alternativa Democrática Nacional	4.489	0,01	0
1999	FEI- Falange Española Independiente	13.940	0,04	0
	FE- La Falange	10.792	0,03	0
	DN- Democracia Nacional	8.053	0,02	0
2004	DN- Democracia Nacional	6.314	0,02	0
	FE- La Falange	5.935	0,02	0
	FE-JONS- Falange Española de las JONS	4.484	0,01	0
	FA- Falange Auténtica	2.008	0,01	0
	AES- Alternativa Española	19.583	0,06	0
2009	FE-JONS- Falange Española de las JONS	10.031	0,03	0
	DN- Democracia Nacional	9.950	0,03	0
	FN- Frente Nacional	7.970	0,02	0
	VOX-VOX	246.833	0,68	0
2014	FE-JONS- Falange Española de las JONS	21.687	0,06	0
	DN- Democracia Nacional	13.079	0,04	0
	VOX-VOX	1.393.684	6,21	3
2019	ADÑ- FE de las JONS, Alternativa Española, La Falange, Democracia Nacional	11.699	0,03	0

Spanish General Elections between 1977 to 2019

Year	Political Parties	Votes	(%)	Deputies
1977	UCD- Unión de Centro Democrático	6.310.391	34,44	165
	PSOE- Partido Socialista Obrero Español	5.371.866	29,32	118
	PCE- Partido Comunista de España	1.709.890	9,33	20
	AP- Federación de Partidos de Alianza Popular	1.504.771	8,21	16
1979	UCD- Unión de Centro Democrático	6.268.593	34,84	168
	PSOE- Partido Socialista Obrero Español	5.469.813	30,4	121
	PCE- Partido Comunista de España	1.938.487	10,77	23
	CD- Coalición Democrática	1.060.330	5,8	9
1982	PSOE- Partido Socialista Obrero Español	10.127.392	48,11	202
	AP-PDP- Alianza Popular-Partido Demócrata Popular	5.548.107	26,36	107
	UCD- Unión de Centro Democrático	1.425.093	6,77	11
	PCE- Partido Comunista de España	846.515	4,02	4
	CIU- Convergència i Unió	772.726	3,67	12
1986	PSOE- Partido Socialista Obrero Español	8.901.718	36,6	184
	AP-PDP-PL- Coalición Popular	5.247.677	25,79	105
	CDS- Centro Democrático y Social	1.861.912	9,07	19
	CIU- Convergència i Unió	1.014.258	7,89	18
	IU- Coalición Izquierda Unida	935.504	5,04	7
	EAJ-PNV- Partido Nacionalista Vasco	309.610	1,24	6
	HB- Herri Batasuna	231.722	1,07	5
1989	PSOE- Partido Socialista Obrero Español	8.115.568	39,6	175
	PP- Partido Popular	5.285.972	25,79	107
	IU- Izquierda Unida	1.858.588	9,07	17
	CDS- Centro Democrático y Social	1.617.716	7,89	14
	CIU- Convergència i Unió	1.032.243	5,04	18
1993	PSOE- Partido Socialista Obrero Español	9.150.083	38,78	159
	PP- Partido Popular	8.201.463	34,76	141
	IU- Izquierda Unida	2.253.722	9,55	18
	CIU- Convergència i Unió	1.165.783	4,94	17
	EAJ-PNV- Partido Nacionalista Vasco- Euzko Alderdi Jeltzalea-	291.448	1,24	5

1996	PP- Partido Popular	9.716.006	38,79	156
	PSOE- Partido Socialista Obrero Español	9.425.678	37,63	141
	IU- Izquierda Unida	2.639.774	10,54	21
	CIU- Convergència i Unió	1.151.633	4,6	16
	EAJ-PNV- Partido Nacionalista Vasco- Euzko Alderdi Jeltzalea-	318.951	1,27	5
	CC-Coalición Canaria	220.418	0,88	4
2000	PP- Partido Popular	10.321.178	44,52	183
	PSOE- Partido Socialista Obrero Español	7.918.752	34,16	125
	IU- Izquierda Unida	1.263.043	5,45	8
	CIU- Convergència i Unió	970.421	4,19	15
	EAJ-PNV- Partido Nacionalista Vasco- Euzko Alderdi Jeltzalea-	353.953	1,53	7
	CC-Coalición Canaria	306.268	1,32	3
2004	PSOE- Partido Socialista Obrero Español	11.026.163	42,59	164
	PP- Partido Popular	9.763.144	37,71	148
	IU- Izquierda Unida	1.284.081	4,96	5
	CIU- Convergència i Unió	835.471	3,23	10
	ERC- Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya	652.196	2,52	8
	EAJ-PNV- Partido Nacionalista Vasco- Euzko Alderdi Jeltzalea-	420.980	1,63	7
	CC-Coalición Canaria	235.221	0,91	3
2008	PSOE- Partido Socialista Obrero Español	11.289.335	43,87	169
	PP- Partido Popular	10.278.010	39,94	154
	IU- Izquierda Unida	969.946	3,77	2
	CIU- Convergència i Unió	779.425	3,03	10
	EAJ-PNV- Partido Nacionalista Vasco- Euzko Alderdi Jeltzalea-	306.128	1,19	6
	UPyD- Unión Progreso y Democracia	306.079	1,19	1
	ERC- Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya	298.139	1,16	3
2011	PP- Partido Popular	10.866.566	44,63	186
	PSOE- Partido Socialista Obrero Español	7.003.511	28,76	110
	IU-LV- Izquierda Unida- Los Verdes: La Izquierda Plural	1.686.040	6,92	11
	UPyD- Unión Progreso y Democracia	1.143.225	4,7	5
	CIU- Convergència i Unió	1.015.691	4,17	16

	Amaiur- Amaiur	334.498	1,37	7
	EAJ-PNV- Partido Nacionalista Vasco- Euzko Alderdi Jeltzalea-	324.498	1,37	5
	ERC- Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya	256.985	1,06	3
2015	PP- Partido Popular	7.236.965	28,71	123
	PSOE- Partido Socialista Obrero Español	5.545.315	22	90
	C's- Ciudadanos	3.514.528	13,94	40
	Podemos- Podemos	3.198.584	12,69	42
	En Comú- En Comú Podem	929.880	3,69	12
	IU-UPeC- Unidad Popular: Izquierda Unida, Unidad Popular En	926.783	3,68	2
	Podemos-Com- Compromís-Podemos-És El Moment	673.549	2,67	9
	ERC-CATSI- Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya-Catalunya Sí	601.782	2,39	9
2016	PP- Partido Popular	7.941.236	33,01	137
	PSOE- Partido Socialista Obrero Español	5.443.846	22,63	85
	Podemos-IU-EQUO- Unidos Podemos	3.227.123	13,42	45
	C's- Ciudadanos	3.141.570	13,06	32
	ECP- En Comú Podem-Guanyem el Canvi	853.102	3,55	12
	Podemos-Com- Compromís-Podemos- EUPV-A la Valenciana	659.771	2,74	9
	ERC-CATSI- Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya-Catalunya Sí	632.234	2,63	9
2019 (I)	PSOE- Partido Socialista Obrero Español	7.513.142	28,67	123
	PP- Partido Popular	4.373.653	16,69	66
	C's- Ciudadanos	4.155.665	15,86	57
	Podemos-IU-EQUO- Unidas Podemos	2.897.419	11,06	33
	Vox- Vox	2.688.092	10,26	24
	ERC-Sobiranes- Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya-Sobiranes	1.020.392	3,89	24
	ECP-GUANYEM- En Comú Podem- Guanyem el Canvi	615.665	3,89	15
	JxCat-Junts- Junts per Catalunya-Junts	500.787	2,35	7
	PSOE- Partido Socialista Obrero Español	6.792.199	28	120
	PP- Partido Popular	5.047.040	20,81	89

2019 (II)	Vox-Vox	3.656.979	15,08	52
	Podemos-IU-EQUO- Unidas Podemos	2.381.960	9,82	26
	C's- Ciudadanos	1.650.318	6,8	26
	ERC-Sobiranistes- Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya-Sobiranistes	874.859	3,61	13
	ECP-GUANYEM- En Comú Podem- Guanyem el Canvi	549.173	2,26	7
	JxCat-Junts- Junts per Catalunya-Junts	530.225	2,19	8

The Evolution of the Popular Party between 1977 to 2019

Year	Election	Popular Party (& Coalitions)	Votes	%	Deputies
1997	General	AP- Federación de Partidos de Alianza Popular	1.504.771	8,21	16
1979	General	CD- Coalición Democrática	1.060.330	5,8	9
1982	General	AP-PDP- Alianza Popular-Partido Demócrata Popular	5.548.107	26,36	107
1986	General	AP-PDP-PL- Coalición Popular	5.247.677	25,79	105
1989	General	PP- Partido Popular	5.285.972	25,79	107
1993	General	PP- Partido Popular	8.201.463	34,76	141
1996	General	PP- Partido Popular	9.716.006	38,79	156
2000	General	PP- Partido Popular	10.321.178	44,52	183
2004	General	PP- Partido Popular	9.763.144	37,71	148
2008	General	PP- Partido Popular	10.278.010	39,94	154
2011	General	PP- Partido Popular	10.866.566	44,63	186
2015	General	PP- Partido Popular	7.236.965	28,71	123
2016	General	PP- Partido Popular	7.941.236	33,01	137
2019 (I)	General	PP- Partido Popular	4.373.653	16,69	66
2019 (II)	General	PP- Partido Popular	5.047.040	20,81	89

The Evolution of Vox between 2014 to 2019

Year	Elections	Votes	(%)	Deputies
2014	European	244,929	1,57	0
2015	General	58.114	0,23	0
2015	Regional* (11 Autonomous Communities)	97.648	0,1	0
2016	General	47.182	0,2	0
2018	Regional (Andalucía)	395.978	x	12
2019	European	1.393.684	6,21	3
2019	General (I)	2.688.092	10,26	24
2019	General (II)	3.656.979	15,08	52
2019	Regional** (15 Autonomous Communities)	973.480	x	45

***Vox's Electoral Results in the 2015 Spanish Regional Elections**

Regional Election 2015	Votes	%	Deputies
Junta General del Principado de Asturias	3.176	0,59	0
Parlamento de Canarias	1.853	0,2	0
Parlamento de Cantabria	5.277	0,34	0
Cortes de Castilla-La Mancha	5.277	0,48	0
Cortes de Castilla y León	9.219	0,68	0
Asamblea de Ceuta	356	1,22	0
Asamblea de Extremadura	1.733	0,28	0
Asamblea de Madrid	37.043	1,17	0
Asamblea Regional de Murcia	5.513	0,87	0
Cortes Valencianas	10.184	0,41	0
Parlamento de Andalucía	18.017	0,45	0
Total	97.648		

****Vox's Electoral Results in the 2019 Spanish Regional Elections**

Regional Election 2019	Votes	%	Deputies
Cortes de Aragón	40.263	6,08	3
Junta General del Principado de Asturias	33.784	6,42	2
Parlamento de las Islas Baleares	34.668	8,12	3
Parlamento de Canarias	22.021	2,47	0
Parlamento de Cantabria	16.392	5,05	2
Cortes de Castilla-La Mancha	75.636	7,02	0
Cortes de Castilla y León	75.331	5,49	1
Asamblea de Ceuta	7.566	22,37	6
Asamblea de Extremadura	28.849	4,7	0
Parlamento de la Rioja	6.277	3,86	0
Asamblea de Madrid	285.099	8,86	12
Asamblea de Melilla	2.655	7,76	2
Asamblea Regional de Murcia	61.591	9,46	4
Parlamento de Navarra	4.401	1,29	0
Cortes Valencianas	278.947	10,44	10
Total	973.480		45

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