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Football and National  
Identities in Spain

Alejandro Quiroga

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The Strange Death of Don Quixote



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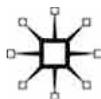
*Global Culture and Sport Series*

# Football and National Identities in Spain

**The Strange Death of Don Quixote**

Alejandro Quiroga  
*University of Newcastle, UK*

palgrave  
macmillan



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*'We left a dictatorship to enter a shopping mall'*

*(Chocadelia Internacional)*

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# Introduction

When I first began to toy with the idea of writing this book in the spring of 2008, the Spanish national football team, the *selección española*, was internationally known for one thing: underachievement. Unlike Spanish clubs, distinguished by their international success, the *selección* showed fighting spirit but ultimately performed below expectations. Spain was the incarnation of a delusional Don Quixote tilting at windmills, uncompromising but hopeless and condemned to fail. By the time I finished the book, almost five years later, Spain were considered to be one of the best teams of all time. They had won Euro 2008, the 2010 World Cup and Euro 2012, playing modern, stylish and highly sophisticated football. No other national team had attained three major tournaments in a row in the history of the game and few squads had reached the quality and artistry of the Spaniards. Don Quixote had died. Spaniards were now the personification of modernity, flair, teamwork and panache. Crucially, these descriptions of the Spanish national team were not just mere depictions of footballers but the portrayal of national characteristics allegedly embodied by the *selección española*. Through football commentary, the media re-elaborated the narrative about Spanish national identity. By associating a number of national features, myths and stereotypes with the *selección española* and correlating playing styles to the psychological and cultural characteristics of the nation, football reporting played a key role in the discursive construction of Spain.

The victorious run of the *selección española* not only replaced the old discourse of national failure for a new narrative of success in the media, but it also brought millions of Spaniards to the streets in commemoration. The European titles and the World Cup led to massive popular celebrations with huge displays of Spanish national symbols and patriotic

chants all over the country. While nothing truly exceptional in some European countries in a post-Cold War era that had witnessed the re-emergence of nationalist manifestations, these public exhibitions of patriotism were unprecedented in Spain. The reasons were twofold. Firstly, the legacy of the Franco dictatorship deeply eroded the legitimacy of Spanish nationalism ever since the establishment of the new democracy in the late 1970s. For decades, Spanish national identities went through a crisis of legitimation which meant that any public exhibition of Spanish patriotism was immediately associated with the extreme right. Secondly and intrinsically related to the first point, the lack of legitimation of the Spanish nation was especially conspicuous in Catalonia and the Basque Country. These territories have their own nationalist movements, which have promoted alternative national identities to the Spanish ones. Relevantly, Catalan and Basque nationalists have controlled their respective regional governments for most of the last three decades. In this context, the celebration of Spain's victories in Catalonia and the Basque Country is testimony to the power of football to stir national passions and mobilise the population.

This book seeks to investigate the use of football to create, shape and reinforce national identities in Spain since democracy was restored in 1977. The focus is on the construction, propagation and contestation of national narratives in the sports media, and more precisely, on the manner in which football reporting is utilised to foster Spanish, Catalan and Basque national myths, clichés and stereotypes in different historical circumstances. The sport is widely recognised for its role in facilitating collective identification, and has been mobilised to reproduce and contest dominant narratives of national identity. The book also analyses the use that central and regional governments have made of football teams, as a means to generate patriotic narratives, and explores the counter-hegemonic discourses that have challenged the dominant ones at different moments of recent Spanish history.

Three main ideas run through the entire book. Firstly, the appreciation that national narratives are determined by the historical context in which they are reproduced. Of particular importance here are the interrelations between political factors, social transformations and changes in the mass media. Secondly, the notion that the narratives associated with Spanish football were created and transformed throughout the decades via a continuous 'dialogue' between the Spanish and the foreign media. For this reason, the monograph explores not only the views of the Spanish media but also the representations of Spain by the national 'others'. Specifically, I focus on how the English, French,

German and Italian media have used football reporting to construct a number of narratives on Spain and on themselves. Thirdly, the construction of national narratives via football and the conflicting identities within Spain have parallels in many other parts of the world. They are symptoms of much wider processes of globalisation. I explore how these processes of globalisation have influenced the way in which national identities are produced, propagated and assimilated in the so-called post-modern era of football.

The book combines a chronological and a thematic framework. Chronologically, the study covers the period from the birth of the Spanish national team in 1920 to the *selección's* triumph in Euro 2012. The bulk of the investigation, however, concentrates on the period 1975–2012. This chronological approach allows the examination of national narratives in different socio-political eras of Spanish history, such as the end of the Franco regime, the transition to democracy, the socialist governments of Felipe González, José María Aznar's conservative rule, the 2004–2011 José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero premiership and the return of the right to power with Mariano Rajoy in late 2011. Thematically, most chapters concentrate on the construction of discourses on Spain. Yet the final two chapters are devoted to the discourses developed in Catalonia and the Basque Country from the death of General Franco in 1975 to 2012. This thematic approach highlights the particular situation of these territories, where a number of national narratives have been competing for hegemony for decades.

The first chapter has an introductory nature. It presents the 'fury and failure narrative', the central discourse about football and national identities in Spain. The narrative combined positive features about Spanish courage with appeals to misfortune and national psychological shortcomings to justify failure. It was created at the beginning of the twentieth century and lasted well into the twenty-first. In addition, Chapter 1 deals with the historiography of Spanish football and identities and explains the methodology followed throughout the book. The chapter also engages with the current academic debates on globalisation, national identities and football. In addition, I introduce in this section one of the core concepts of the book: the 'cumulative media effect'. This refers to the increasing impact that national football narratives have on citizens, as a result of the development of the mass media and the subsequent growing exposure to sports information by the public.

Chapter 2 is an interpretative essay structured chronologically. It deals with the Spanish nationalist messages created and transmitted by different political regimes and the counter-hegemonic Basque and

Catalan nationalist discourses in the years 1920–1975. The chapter focuses on the different national stereotypes and myths associated with the Spanish national team. More specifically, the myth of the *furia española* (Spanish fury) and the stereotype of underachievement and failure associated with the *selección* are at the centre of our analysis. The chapter shows how the use of the Spanish fury and failure stereotypes to describe the ‘typical’ Spanish national character changed its meaning according to diverse political and social circumstances. Particular attention is paid here to the ways in which Francoism consciously intensified the identification between Spanish teams and the dictatorship, seeking to capitalise on Spanish victories.

The convulsive period between the death of the dictator in 1975 and the election of the first socialist government in 1982 is analysed in Chapter 3. It focuses on the creation of alternative discourses of Spanish national identity, the representation of the country in the midst of a political transition in the international press and the celebration of the 1982 World Cup in Spain. The chapter also deals with the growth of Catalan and Basque nationalisms associated with FC Barcelona and Athletic de Bilbao respectively. I link here the rapid political changes of the era to the radical social mobilisation in Spanish football. The section establishes a connection between the process of political devolution, which included the formation of a semi-federal state, and the rise in the manifestations of regional and alternative national identities in football stadiums and the sports media.

Chapter 4 explores Spanish national identities in the 1980s and 1990s. It relates discourses on Spanish identities to the socio-political transformations during the Felipe González and José María Aznar governments. I stress the socialists’ problem of identifying a common discourse about the past and shared symbols of identity across Spain, which was reflected in the strengthening of regional and local identities in Spanish football. And yet, the socialist modernisation of the country, which was helped by Spain’s entry into the European Economic Community, still had an impact on the way Spanish football was portrayed in the media. The stereotype of the *furia española* was gradually dropped and the quixotic attitudes attributed to Spanish players progressively disappeared. However, the sense of failure and underachievement remained associated with the *selección*. This perception of underperformance was shared by both the international and the Spanish media, whose narratives somehow linked Spain to its former backwardness through sporting failure. Nevertheless, Chapter 4 challenges the idea that the association of the national team with underachievement meant

popular detachment from the *selección*. In an ever more televised social milieu, the failure narrative led Spaniards to develop a strong emotional link with the squad, as TV ratings and media coverage demonstrated.

The narrative of failure slowly began to lose its hegemonic position in the media at the turn of the twentieth-first century. Chapter 5 analyses the strengthening of Spanish national identity in relation to football. As the first decade of the new century progressed, Spain gained a new international image as a modern and successful nation owing to the high profile of Spanish sportsmen. At home, Spanish football clubs and the national team were described as stylish, artistic and sophisticated. These were manifestations of a new Spanish cultural nationalism that debunked old stereotypes about underdevelopment and backwardness and presented Spain as a modern, advanced European nation in a globalised world. The *selección's* victory in Euro 2008 resulted in a sort of 'patriotic explosion' which included the reclamation of Spanish symbols, the consolidation of a narrative of success and public displays of national pride to unprecedented levels. The ensuing triumphs at the 2010 World Cup and Euro 2012 perpetuated the narrative of success and the nationalist displays all over the country. Interestingly, these reaffirmations of collective popular pride occurred as the world economic crisis had an increasingly destructive effect on Spain.

Chapter 6 explores the transformations of national identities in Catalonia from the transition to democracy to the popular celebrations of Spain's Euro 2012 victory on the streets of Barcelona. It analyses the role of FC Barcelona as the alternative national team of Catalonia, the creation of Catalan national teams, the dialectic between Catalan and Spanish narratives and the question of dual identities (Catalan and Spanish) in the Principality. Lastly, Chapter 7 provides an analysis of the transformation of national narratives through football commentary in the Basque Country from 1975 to 2012. The chapter explores the role of Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad as sources of collective identification, the creation of Euskadi national teams, the impact of Basque nationalism on football, the dialectical relationship between Spanish and Basque identities and the development of dual identities in a society that has been traumatised by political violence for decades.

When I began to work on this book in 2008 the world economic crisis had just begun and few could guess at its severity or duration. Five years later, the crisis and the ensuing austerity policies have had a devastating effect on Spain. In early 2013, the country has 26 per cent of the population unemployed, over a million Spaniards use soup kitchens on a regular basis, more than 400,000 families have been evicted from

their homes because they cannot pay their mortgages, salaries have plummeted and the banking system has been bailed out with public money. The cuts imposed on the welfare state and the privatisation of public services are having an impact well beyond economics. They are ripping out the social fabric of a country, increasingly poor and riddled with corruption scandals involving the royal family, the main political parties and well-known entrepreneurs. In many respects, Spain is a different country to the one it was in 2008. This transformation has affected national narratives on Spain, the way Spaniards see themselves and the way they are perceived abroad. The crisis has also accelerated the conflict of identities in Spain and the centrifugal demands for independence in Catalonia and the Basque Country. I am fully aware of the fact that the topic of this book is highly controversial, a political minefield and an extremely sensitive subject, for national narratives are embedded in personal identities and worldviews. And it is precisely the construction, promotion and assimilation of national identities that this book aims to unravel. Ultimately, I have tried to reflect on national mythmaking, on patriotic narratives and stereotypes that are passed off as natural and eternal truths to justify certain social and political orders. The following pages not only highlight the artificial and changing nature of national myths but also underline the vested interests behind the creation and promotion of these patriotic narratives.

# 1

## Football, National Narratives and the Cumulative Media Effect

‘The imagined community of millions seems more real as a team of eleven named people’

(Eric Hobsbawm)<sup>1</sup>

On 21 June 2000, the Spanish national team played one of the most memorable games in the history of the European football championships. Needing a win to qualify for the quarter-finals, Spain faced Yugoslavia in the last match of the group stage of Euro 2000. Two minutes into injury time, however, the Spaniards were 2–3 down and their situation seemed hopeless. What followed was a remarkable feat of survival. In the 93rd minute, the referee awarded Spain a penalty and Gaizka Mendieta calmly scored from the spot. Two minutes later, Pep Guardiola’s long cross found Ismael Urzaiz, whose header was agonisingly half-volleyed by Alfonso Pérez to give Spain the match and a place in the quarter-finals. The Spanish press presented the comeback as the product of a unique national ‘courage’, a particular ‘fury’ which gave Spaniards the will to fight when everything seemed to be lost.<sup>2</sup> What could not be achieved through playing good football and creating chances, the sports correspondent of the daily *ABC* explained, had been accomplished through ‘heroism, bravery and self-esteem’.<sup>3</sup>

Four days later, the Spanish national team played France for a place in the semi-finals. The French reached the closing moments of the game 2–1 up, but in the very last minute the Italian referee Pierluigi Collina awarded Spain a penalty. The striker Raúl González took the responsibility, placed the ball on the penalty spot, kicked it violently with his left foot and sent it over the bar to the delight of the Gallic keeper Fabien Barthez. Two minutes later the match was over. Not for the first time, Spain were out at the quarter-final stages of an

international football tournament. On this occasion, there was no mention of courage or bravery in the press. The result was presented as a 'sad and painful' defeat, due to 'unfortunate circumstances' and 'bad luck'.<sup>4</sup> The defeat was the consequence of a mysterious historic 'curse' on the *selección* and therefore inevitable.<sup>5</sup> There was 'no point in fighting against destiny'.<sup>6</sup> In a somewhat poetic manner, Enrique Ortega wrote in *ABC*: 'The present and the past are written with the same ink and the future always ends at the same place. Spain go home at the quarter-final stages yet again. The semi-finals are their particular Everest'.<sup>7</sup>

In the space of four days, the national team had gone from being portrayed as the embodiment of courage and bravery to being the sad victims of a historical curse that precluded Spaniards from entering Europe's footballing elite. It is obvious that history does not play football, let alone miss penalties. However, these two opposing representations of the national team perfectly illustrate the main components of a master narrative on Spaniards' national characteristics that has prevailed in the last century. This narrative is based on two core sets of ideas. In the first place, Spanish footballers, and by extension all Spaniards, are characterised by their *furia*, a term that translates as fury or rage, but also, above all, has connotations of passion, bravery and courage. In most cases, the term *furia* has positive overtones and denotes the alleged daring, fighting spirit of Spaniards. Secondly, and with no apparent contradiction, Spaniards are often described as underachievers, psychologically weak, backward creatures and the victims of out-of-control, obscure historical forces. This is the dark side of passion and bravery. This is courage and valour turned into irrational and savage behaviour that prevents Spaniards from winning. The combination of these sets of positive and negative ideas make up what may be named the 'fury and failure narrative', a story that links Spanish success to extraordinary courage and defeat to national psychological impediments and/or historical misfortunes. This 'fury and failure narrative' emerged at the start of the twentieth century and has endured, in various shapes and forms, well into the twenty-first. This discourse aims at explaining not only sporting victories and defeats but also the very nature of Spanish national identities.

The understanding of nations as constructed narratives has become highly influential among scholars over recent years. This approach to the study of national identities considers nations as a group of metaphors, myths, stereotypes and images produced and reproduced at discursive level.<sup>8</sup> From the end of the eighteenth century, different collections of metaphors and images began to create a number of master narratives that elaborated a national past for communities and

territories all over the world.<sup>9</sup> In Europe, historians of the Enlightenment were pioneers in creating modern national narratives that were later re-elaborated and propagated by teachers, journalists and politicians throughout the nineteenth century. These national master narratives were disseminated via textbooks, press and literature and found their natural *milieu* for propagation in schools, clubs, bars and homes. As the twentieth century progressed, other media and genres became important in the shaping of national discourses. Film, architecture, painting, fine arts and music, to name a few examples, contributed profusely to the transmission of the myths and metaphors that constituted the national master narratives.<sup>10</sup> Popular historiography, the non-academic representation of history in written, visual and artefactual forms to non-expert audiences via novels, radio and television, became the most significant means to communicate information about the past in the twentieth century. These popular representations of history frequently favoured crude, one-dimensional interpretations of the past, simplifying national narratives and thus making them more effective in shaping identity.<sup>11</sup>

Sport also played a key role in the formation of national discourses. Urban economic growth, developments in metropolitan consumption and the commercialisation of leisure brought an unprecedented popularisation of sport in the first decades of the twentieth century.<sup>12</sup> These changes paved the way for the emergence of a specialised press and an increased coverage of sport in mass newspapers. Sports reporting became an additional way to narrate the nation, a supplement to the accounts of historians, writers, musicians and artists. Similar to the cases of literature, music and film, sports writing acquired a national character by ascribing national features to athletes and teams and developing a national narrative. The creation of international competitions, including the modern Olympic Games, led to the belief that athletes and teams had national styles that, somehow, reflected the national identity of the country they represented. Gradually, the bond between the features of national athletes and teams, on the one hand, and national identities, on the other, strengthened, for the media espoused a narrative that emphasised 'stereotypical national styles'. According to this narrative, and rather absurdly, sportsmen and women had to remain true to their national styles if they were to succeed. Failure was explained in terms of deviation from the genuine national style. Additionally, sports journalists constructed heroic tales of epic performances that, as in other genres, had the ability to turn athletes into national idols.<sup>13</sup> As with national figures of the fatherland's history and literature, athletes were compared to the idols of the past, thus drawing a timeline connecting former and contemporary heroes.

No other sport has contributed to the affirmation of national identities and the propagation of national narratives as much as football. Firstly, football appears to capture Benedict Anderson's notion of an 'imagined community' completely, for it is relatively easy to imagine the nation and bolster its identity when the fatherland is represented by eleven players in a game against another nation.<sup>14</sup> In the words of Eric Hobsbawm, the 'imagined community of millions seems more real as a team of eleven named people'.<sup>15</sup> The abstract concept of the national community becomes more tangible when 'visualised' via a uniformed team. Secondly, football was read as a manifestation of the societies in which it operated. National teams were seen as repositories of national identities in their style of play. The public identified with and took pride in a particular style as opposed to other national styles. This affinity for a specific style showed a national self-awareness and an affirmation of a particular national identity. It also meant that the universal practice of the sport was 'indigenised', as certain playing styles were perceived as distinctive to the nation concerned.<sup>16</sup>

Certainly, football has also been able to create and reproduce identities at local, provincial and regional levels. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, football teams have become a source of collective identification and an expression of local communities. Provincial and regional rivalries also developed among teams of neighbouring towns all over Europe.<sup>17</sup> On most occasions, however, the creation or strengthening of provincial and regional sport-based identities has proved no obstruction to the fostering of national feelings. On the contrary, the construction of local, provincial and regional identities through the medium of football has reinforced national ones. In this sense football has been no different from other channels of mass nationalisation. For most people the abstract idea of the nation has 'materialised' via local institutions such as the school, the town hall, the post office or the church.<sup>18</sup> In the case of football, local teams play in provincial and regional leagues that, in turn, are part of national competitions organised by the national football association. This system is able to encompass a wide cross-section of the public, while still keeping the nation as the ultimate arbiter of local football.

## **Historiography and methodology**

Notwithstanding the long-lasting importance of both football and nationalisms in the Iberian Peninsula, academic scholarship on sport and identities in Spain has only recently flourished.<sup>19</sup> The pioneering

works of Duncan Shaw on football and Francoism and Vic Duke and Liz Crolley on Spanish football nations in the twentieth century took a political history approach to explain the links between the sport and national identifications.<sup>20</sup> The emphasis here was on the role of the Spanish state as the maker of national identities through football, although counter-hegemonic Catalan and Basque identities were also thrown into the equation. The investigations of John Walton, Francisco Caspistegui, Jorge Uría and Xavier Pujadas have analysed the issue from a social history perspective.<sup>21</sup> Urban transformations, social modernisation and the commercialisation of leisure are at the centre of these analyses, which tend to deal with the first decades of the twentieth century. Along similar lines, Andrew MacFarland has tried to bridge cultural and social history by focusing on the impact of consumerism on identity. His works have emphasised the role of urban consumption and nationalist agendas when it comes to explaining the rapid growth of football, and its class-based implications, in early twentieth-century Spain.<sup>22</sup> Additionally, some other disciplines have contributed to our understanding of sport and identities in Spain. Jeremy MacClancy's research on the (re)invention of Basque sports and Salvador Duch's analysis of the Real Madrid–FC Barcelona rivalry have shown that anthropology can substantially further our knowledge of identity creation and transformation processes.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, the sociological works of Ramón Llopis on sports and collective identification and Hunter Shobe's investigations making explicit the connections between football, identity and geographical notions of place have demonstrated that there is a plurality of valid approaches in academic studies on football and identities in Spain.

Of particular relevance to my investigation are the works of Jesús Castañón Rodríguez. Castañón was a pioneer in the study of the Spanish media's discourses on football. His 1993 book *El lenguaje periodístico del fútbol* took a socio-linguistic approach to analyse the historical changes of the narratives produced in the Spanish press from the 1920s until the late 1980s.<sup>24</sup> The result was a ground-breaking piece of research that competently interwove transformations and continuities in the political, media and discursive arenas. In a similar vein, Liz Crolley and David Hand have used discourse analysis to explore the representation of identities in the print media of a number of European countries, such as Spain, Italy, France, Germany and the United Kingdom. These two linguists have focused on newspapers' discourse as a way to create and reproduce identities on a daily basis. By analysing football reporting in a transnationally comparative manner, they have explored the

mechanisms at work in the reflection of major issues of regional and national identities.<sup>25</sup> Following the post-structuralist school of discourse analysis, Crolley and Hand suggest that the media are not merely passive reproducers of existing social attitudes but are also creators of national and regional identities.<sup>26</sup> These constructions and reproductions of identities are dynamic processes that require a certain dialogue between self-representation (how nations perceive themselves) and hetero-representation (how nations are perceived by others). Thus when analysing the Spanish case in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Crolley and Hand identify the main elements of the construction and reproduction of identities both 'in terms of autotypification (Spain portrayed by Spaniards) and heterotypification (Spain as perceived by others)'.<sup>27</sup>

The linguistic analysis of Hand and Crolley runs parallel to the critical investigation of national stereotypes in literature and cultural studies known as *imagology*. This research focuses on the production of mental images of the 'other' and of the 'self'. Imagologists concentrate on the relationship 'between those images that characterize the Other (*hetero-images*) and those which characterize one's own domestic identity (*self-images* or *auto-images*)'.<sup>28</sup> In this respect, nations are imagined discourses, as the stereotypical characterisation of nations and regions take place at a rhetorical level, regardless of their veracity and 'outside the area of testable reports or statements of facts'.<sup>29</sup> This is not to say that the social and political circumstances in which national stereotypes are produced are not relevant. They are indeed. But clichés can be highly detached from reality and still be universally shared in different historical environments.

The methodology of this book involves the analysis of the structure and underlying meaning of media texts, together with the historical analysis of the social circumstances in which texts are produced. I focus on the dynamics between the discourses of self-representation and the discourses of hetero-representations, that is, the relationship between the ways in which Spaniards represented themselves and the manners in which foreigners portrayed Spain. More specifically, the book concentrates on how the Spanish and the international media have used football writing and radio and TV commentary to construct a number of discourses on Spanish national identities since 1975. In terms of the international media, I explore newspapers, radio programmes and television broadcasts from the UK, France, Italy and Germany. These countries have acted in different shapes and forms as the 'other' for Spanish national identities and much of the latter are built on the stereotypical characterisation of France, Britain, Italy and Germany. Spain, on the

other hand, has also acted to a greater or lesser extent as the national 'other' for France, the UK, Germany and Italy.<sup>30</sup> In the case of Catalonia and the Basque Country the situation is highly fragmented, as different and alternative national identities struggle to become hegemonic. For Basque and Catalan nationalists the most important other is Spain. Hence my methodology involves the analysis of the self-representations of Catalonia and the Basque Country, the portrayal of Spain in both regions and how their identities are described in Spain.

The detailed analysis of the historical context in which national narratives are created and recreated is also key to this book's approach. My research links socio-political transformations to changes and continuities in national discourses. As noted above, national identities do not exist in isolation. They are rooted within dominant social structures which tend to reproduce hegemonic relations of inequality.<sup>31</sup> One of the goals of this volume is to explain the changing nature of national identities in relation to the social and political transformations of Spain, from the transition to democracy in the second half of the 1970s to the present. In light of this aim, Antonio Gramsci's concepts of hegemony and counter-hegemony are important here. The idea that the ruling classes obtain the consent of the people not merely by force but also by cultural means places the cultural construction of identities at the centre of the struggle for power.<sup>32</sup> For Gramsci, hegemonic cultural practices and discourses are not simply imposed from above but emerge out of a process of negotiation between those elites controlling the mass media and a complex network of heterogeneous groups known as 'the public'. In turn, sections of the public resort to counter-hegemonic cultural tactics, including negation, contestation and resignification of the hegemonic narratives.<sup>33</sup> This understanding of hegemony and counter-hegemony implies the idea of conflict management and facilitates the analysis of ideology and identities in fields of popular culture such as sport.<sup>34</sup> In my case studies, the narratives of national identity created and propagated by the mass media are varied and dynamic. Some national narratives became hegemonic for a period of time and later acted as counter-hegemonic discourses in a different political era. For instance, Spanish authoritarian nationalism was the hegemonic discourse in Catalonia during the Franco dictatorship, although its primacy was originally gained by force. By contrast, Catalan nationalism was counter-hegemonic, but it used FC Barcelona to promote Catalanist narratives and became increasingly popular under Franco. With the return of democracy to Spain in the second half of the 1970s, Catalanism became hegemonic, as Spanish authoritarian

nationalism turned into a counter-hegemonic minority discourse in Catalonia. Changes in both the country's political structure and the social configuration of the public to whom national discourses are addressed are vital to understanding which narrative is hegemonic and why. Historical contextualisation allows us to comprehend the hegemony-counter-hegemony relationship at any given conjuncture.

The constant renegotiation of hegemonic and counter-hegemonic discourses reinforces the dynamic nature of national narratives. The period 1975–2012 witnessed the emergence of a number of narratives associated with football in the Spanish media. Francoist ideas of Spain shared media space with democratic visions of the country, conservative discourses opposed progressive views and modern and traditional values were combined in different doses depending on the political leanings of the narratives. Furthermore, Catalan and Basque nationalists espoused patriotic football narratives seeking to gain cultural hegemony in their territories, and local regionalists all over Spain have used sport to promote their own identities. As a result, Spain's identity map of the period under scrutiny appears highly fragmented. This book analyses this variety of narratives and the interactions among nation-building football discourses. These interactions are understood here as manifestations of power struggles to gain hegemony within particular territories, be they Spain, Catalonia or the Basque Country.

I take a flexible approach to hegemony which emphasises human agency and considers counter-hegemonic resistance as an exercise of power itself.<sup>35</sup> This is not to say, however, that all discourses compete for hegemony under similar conditions. As a creator of national identities, football narratives are usually pretty close to state-promoted narratives. Football narratives are produced by mostly privately owned mass media, yet the press usually accede to a hegemony mainly built by the state apparatus.<sup>36</sup> The discursive disparity between privately owned media and the state historically varies according to the nature of political regimes. In dictatorial regimes, the gap between the media discourse and the state narratives tends to disappear. Alternative national narratives to the official discourse are banned, persecuted, forced underground or represented in unconventional channels. The very nature of the political regime determines an unfair and unbalanced dialectic. In democratic regimes, the interaction of national narratives takes place in a 'market of identities' shaped by political and economic forces and run by the mass media.<sup>37</sup> The propagation of public identities and the struggle for hegemony in this market is determined by the unequal distribution of material and symbolic resources in mass media. Thus this

market of identities, with its hegemonic and minority discourses, reproduces the structural inequalities of society.

### **The cumulative media effect and globalisation**

Of particular interest to this present study is the role of the mass media as producers of identities. The media directly transmit national narratives to individuals, who 'experience' the nation in the shape of images, sounds and textual representations. The manner in which individuals internalise national identities, the way in which they feel that they belong to the national group, greatly depends on the sort of narrative reproduced, the media and the level of message reiteration. In the case of football narratives, the function of the media has changed considerably over time. National football discourses of the first decades of the twentieth century had significantly lesser relevance in terms of fostering identities than early twenty-first-century narratives. In fact, football has had an ever-growing impact as a creator of national identities in Spain in the last 100 years. The reasons for this tendency partly lie in the role played by the media in the way football narratives are experienced by the public, that is, in the manner individuals 'imagine' that eleven men in shorts are the Spanish nation.

The historical sequence shows that the media has had a cumulative effect on transmitting football narratives and, therefore, on creating national identities. In the 1920s, football narratives were experienced by the Spanish public exclusively via newspapers and magazines. Information relating to a particular match would come only via the printed press, at a time when sports sections in newspapers were small. Thus newspapers would write about important matches occasionally on the day before the game, often on the very same day of the fixture and almost certainly on the day after the event. In this manner, the individual could relate to, and hence 'experience', a collective identity associated with a particular team two or three times per match. Furthermore, international matches were scarce in the early days of European football. Local, provincial and regional competitions dominated the football scene and the sports sections of newspapers and magazines. As a result, the narrative of the Spanish national team and the patriotic characteristics associated with it had a moderate impact in the 1920s – notwithstanding the rise in football's popularity throughout the decade.

From the late 1920s onwards, matches began to be broadcast on the radio. This gave the public the possibility of reading about a match on

the eve and the day of the game, then listening to that particular game on the radio and reading the report about the event the following day. The same game was commented upon beforehand in newspapers, then narrated on the radio and finally recounted in the printed press. This sequence had a cumulative effect on the transmission of the nationalist message, because national stereotypes, patriotic clichés and jingoist discourses were repeated in two different media and matches were 'experienced' by individuals three or four times. From the 1940s, the *Noticiarios y Documentales* (NO-DO), the Francoist newsreels compulsorily shown in all cinemas, often included football highlights.<sup>38</sup> NO-DO gave a new dimension to the experience of the national narratives, as it facilitated the visualisation of Spanish teams all over the country and expanded the experience of the nation by keeping football matches in the public's mind for months after the event had taken place. The influence of football matches in identity creation was prolonged and contributed to the accumulation of Francoist national narratives in the public's minds.

The appearance of television in late-1950s Spain fostered the cumulative media effect even further. Live TV coverage provided a new way to promote national narratives. Football highlights allowed the retelling of a particular match in living rooms and bars all over the country. The expansion of TV facilitated different sequences by which a football match could be read about, watched live and then read about again the following day. Alternatively, an individual could read about the competition in the pre-match report, then listen to the event on the radio, later watch the game's highlights on television, read about it again in the next morning's newspaper and, lastly, see footage of the fixture on NO-DO three months down the line. The combinations of media sequences were multiple but in all cases televised football meant patriotic myths and national stereotypes were replicated in a much more effective manner. Additionally, in 1972, *Televisión Española* (TVE, the Spanish state broadcast corporation) launched *Estudio Estadio*, a programme similar to *Match of the Day* in the UK that summarised the weekend's most important league matches, while highlights of the games began to feature in TV news sports sections on a regular basis. The proliferation of football on the small screen still further expanded the public's experiences of the game and their concomitant reproduction of national stereotypes. Moreover, televised football soon had a knock-on effect. In the 1960s and 1970s, Spanish newspapers increased the number of pages devoted to the sport, as they realised more football meant more sales.<sup>39</sup>

In the 1980s and 1990s the expansion of private channels and the emergence of satellite and cable television multiplied the presence of football on the small screen. Again, this led to an upturn in football reports in newspapers.<sup>40</sup> This cumulative media effect has to be understood against the backdrop of a changing Spanish society where sport in general, and football in particular, became a weekly practice for millions of national subjects following the transition to democracy.<sup>41</sup> The active practice of the sport facilitated the impact of the media narratives on football and, thus, the grounding of national identities. In the last decade, the expansion of football on television and the internet has boosted remarkably the cumulative media effect. Sport broadcasts have mushroomed on Spanish TV channels and football matches repeatedly top the table of most-viewed programmes. The presence of sport is so overwhelming that some scholars have described the process as the 'sportisation' of the media (*deportización de los medios*).<sup>42</sup> This process has gone well beyond television and has affected newspapers, radio broadcasts and the internet. Nowadays, the web allows individuals to access multiple newspapers, radios, blogs and 2.0 social networks, so they can read, listen and see footage about a particular match from innumerable sources with no time restriction.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, the internet provides access to live football, highlights and videos of old matches, which perpetuate the visual presence of the game in the new media and enable a 24/7 access to the national experience via football.

The gradual transformation of the role of mass media over the last century is a welcome reminder of the relevance of historical approaches when analysing the transmission of national identities. Likewise, the contradictory impact of globalisation on the transmission of national identities is an issue that needs to be considered here. In recent years, an important academic debate has emerged on how globalisation affects nation-states and national identities. Some scholars have argued that the more the globalisation processes develop the more nation-states decline. Social, economic and political transformations in the last decades of the twentieth century are presented as the reasons for a split between the nation-state and the national community. As a result of these global transformations, football teams would lose their national characteristics, to the point that nowadays one could not talk about clear, well-defined national styles of playing.<sup>44</sup> A different body of opinion denies a direct correlation between globalisation and the deterioration of national identities and nation-states.<sup>45</sup> According to this line of interpretation, nationhood is still reproduced on a daily basis in the media, classrooms, public spaces and, surely, sports venues.<sup>46</sup>

Globalising forces are not necessarily eroding national, regional and local identities. The ever-increasing growth of sports in the media (and the concomitant promotion of diverse national, regional and local identities) is proof of the limits of globalisation's undermining of national identities.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, some authors acknowledge a certain erosion of the political and economic power of nation-states, but still argue that nationalism, as an ideological and cultural force, is on the rise. Nation-states might be losing some political and economic abilities, but this very loss would push their political and media elites to focus on building an even more robust cultural nation to reinforce their legitimacy. As usual in these situations, the sports media would act as the best device to strengthen national unity in cultural terms.<sup>48</sup>

Following Roland Robertson and Richard Giulianotti, I understand globalisation 'as a long-term, complex, and multi-phased historical process, underpinned by subtle and shifting interdependencies between the local and the global, or the universal and the particular'.<sup>49</sup> The emphasis is here on the interplay between the local and the global, resulting in unique outcomes in different geographic areas. This process is known as 'glocalisation' and implies that the dichotomies between the universal and the particular, between commonality and differentiation, are not necessarily mutually exclusive but rather interconnected when it comes to identity formation via sport. The process of glocalisation, nonetheless, takes place in an interpenetrative relationship with the phenomenon of 'grobalisation'. The 'grobal' refers to 'the imperialistic ambitions of nations, corporations, organizations, and the like and their desire, indeed need, to impose themselves on various geographic areas'.<sup>50</sup> The process of grobalisation 'highlights the fact that there are global processes that overwhelm the local rather than neatly integrating the two'.<sup>51</sup> In this book's case studies, the emphasis is on the attempts of Spanish national governments and the Catalan and Basque regional governments to impose themselves in their territories. These processes of grobalisation also imply the promotion of cultural identities that incorporate local, provincial and regional elements into the national discourses. In the last analysis, the promotion of these national identities seeks to legitimise the existence of the Spanish, Catalan and Basque nations and, hence, the continuation of the very governments that foster cultural nationalism via football.

## 2

# Invention and Propagation of the Fury and Failure Narrative (1920–1975)

‘Catalans, Basques and Galicians deserve eternal gratitude  
from all Spaniards who love football’<sup>1</sup>

On 10 July 1975, the Francoist minister José Solís gave a notorious speech at the Spanish Football Federation. A chubby, smiley man, Solís defended an increase in the number of hours devoted to sports in the Spanish education system, even if this meant ‘teaching less Latin’ at school.<sup>2</sup> According to the minister, Spain had to popularise grass-roots football, build playing fields all over the country and encourage youngsters to practise sports, because these were also patriotic ways ‘to fly the flag’.<sup>3</sup> The day after Solís’s speech, the film *Furia española* premiered after months of controversy. In a ‘tradition of very bitter, acerbic, Spanish humour’, the movie told the story of an Andalusian immigrant in Catalonia with a passion for FC Barcelona and prostitutes.<sup>4</sup> In the words of Francesc Betriu, the film’s director, the plot was ‘typical of here’, for it narrated the life of immigrants and ‘the role of Barça as the highest exponent of integration in Catalonia’.<sup>5</sup> The Franco dictatorship could not see the funny side of *Furia española* and the movie was banned and confiscated. When the Cannes Film Festival asked for the film to be shown at the French cinematic event, the situation reached Kafkaesque heights. Trying to conceal the fact that *Furia española* had been physically seized by the dictatorship, the Francoist Ministry of Information and Tourism denied the very existence of the movie. More than thirty film critics then signed a petition demanding the release of the film. A year later, the Francoist government finally allowed the projection of a mutilated version of *Furia española*,

maimed by the censors with more than twenty cuts. Still, some found the film offensive before watching it. At the premiere at the Olympia in Valencia, the cinema had to be evacuated due to a bomb alert from an extreme-right group.<sup>6</sup>

Minister Solís's speech and the controversy surrounding *Furia española* in the months before the death of General Franco were highly telling of a dictatorship fully aware of the significance of football to nationalising the masses and the dangers of satire undermining official messages. After all, the minister advocated the use of football to promote national identity, while the film used parody to portray a Spanish society in which football was used as a device to sublimate sexual frustrations and a tool to alienate the masses. *Furia española*, additionally, tackled the issue of FC Barcelona as an established vehicle of immigrants' social integration into Catalan society. The title of the movie was highly symbolic too and showed that the myth of the Spanish fury had become commonplace in the country's imagery by 1975.

In fact, by the time Franco died in November 1975, the myth of the Spanish fury had been associated with the national football team for over half a century. This chapter focuses on the creation and historical development of this myth and the complementary myth of Spaniards as perennial underachievers in the period 1920–1975. Both myths were at the centre of a dialogue of stereotypes that formed the overarching 'fury and failure narrative'. The narrative dominated the twentieth century, but it also evolved according to the different historical socio-political situations of Spain. Thus, when analysing the fury and failure narrative in the period 1920–1975, it is possible to differentiate three eras. The 1920–1939 era witnessed the creation and consolidation of the myths of the Spanish fury and failure associated with the national football team. These were years of an increasing politicisation of football and a growing confrontation between Spanish, Catalan and Basque national narratives in the sporting arenas. The Franco dictatorship transformed the fury and failure narrative in an attempt to impose a fascist idea of Spain in the first two decades of the dictatorship (1939–1959). The military regime used football as a tool of mass indoctrination and allowed no room to express alternative national identities to the official one in the media. The socio-economic transformations during late Francoism (1960–1975) led to a further alteration of the fury and failure narrative. The regime utilised all possible means to associate Spanish victories with the dictatorship and yet Athletic de Bilbao and FC Barcelona regained in this period their role as promoters of Basque and Catalan nationalism respectively. Nonetheless, Athletic de Bilbao

and FC Barcelona also performed a role of social integrators of immigrants in the Basque Country and Catalonia who were not necessarily related to regional nationalisms – as epitomised by the main character in the film *Furia española*.

### **Creation and consolidation of the fury and failure narrative (1920–1939)**

The myth of the *furia española* was created at the same time as the Spanish national team. In 1920 the Spanish Football Federation formed the first *selección nacional* to compete at the Antwerp Olympics. The team ended up winning the silver medal and a good deal of international recognition. It was the French newspaper *L'Auto* that first used the term *furia* to refer to the Spanish national team. 'Denmark beaten by the Spanish fury' was the headline following the Iberians' first game at the Olympics.<sup>7</sup> The term soon caught Dutch sport correspondents' imagination and H. Hollander, the editor of *De Telegraaf*, began to use 'fury' to describe the Spaniards' playing style.<sup>8</sup> After all, the 'Spanish fury' was commonplace in Dutch nationalist imagery. In the case of football reporting, Spanish fury indicated the brutality and unsophistication of the Spaniards' style, unflattering qualities that the Dutch press traced back to the sacking of Antwerp in 1576, an event that had been incorporated into the Dutch and Belgian national narratives and which showed Spaniards as inhuman, violent and vicious. Following the idea that national football teams' styles reflected the national identities of the countries represented, the Dutch press easily linked the fierceness of the *selección* to the wars of the late sixteenth century in the Low Countries – military conflicts which would eventually lead to the independence of the Dutch Republic from the Spanish crown. According to this modern adaptation of the Black Legend, Spaniards were, and had always been, brutes, so they naturally played unrefined football.

This representation of Spaniards as brutish creatures was far from being exclusive to the Dutch. The image of Spain as a violent country fitted fairly well into the British, French, German and Italian narratives of the national 'other' in the first decades of the twentieth century. These discourses tended to portray Spaniards as passionate, irrational and impulsive people, following the Romantic stereotypes created at the beginning of the nineteenth century. However, racial theories in vogue in the early twentieth century added biological determinism to the discourses on Spaniards, who were generally seen as decadent and mentally feeble.<sup>9</sup> The Spanish Civil War, in its turn, echoed old

stereotypes of popular international imagination according to ideological affiliation: a heroic people fighting reaction and obscurantism associated with the Black Legend on the one hand, or a necessary struggle to bring order to an anarchical country on the other.<sup>10</sup> In all cases, this link between Spain and decadence, so recurrent in European discourses, would eventually facilitate the adoption of a 'narrative of failure' regarding Spanish football.

The myth of the fury associated with football was first introduced in Spain by Manolo de Castro, aka Handicap.<sup>11</sup> De Castro was a sports journalist who covered the Antwerp Olympics for the weekly *Madrid-Sport*, while acting as one of the three managers of the Spanish football team. In his reports, and later in his book *Las gestas españolas en el football Olímpico de Amberes*, Handicap wrote that Belgian newspapers considered that the *furía* set Spain apart from the rest of the teams.<sup>12</sup> De Castro himself used the term fury to describe the Spanish playing style as 'tough and ardent'. This style of 'enthusiasm and courage', together with the players' 'great love for their fatherland' and their 'speedy and scientific' implementation of the game, supposedly gave Spaniards some advantages.<sup>13</sup> For instance, superiority over Holland was explained on the basis that the Dutch lacked the energy of Spain's 'classic fury'. In the game against Sweden, which was considered one of the most violent football events ever, the Scandinavians went for a physical match, but bore the brunt of the confrontation and were sent home by a 'Spain of macho players'.<sup>14</sup> In presenting the fury as virile, energetic and ardent, Manolo de Castro was divesting the original Spanish fury of its negative connotations of brutality, unsophistication and backwardness and thus making it acceptable for the Spanish public.

The myth of the Spanish fury was consolidated in 1924, following the publication of Juan Deportista's book *La furia española*.<sup>15</sup> Aided by a carefully orchestrated advertising campaign, the book soon became a best-seller and the 'Spanish fury' commonplace in the press.<sup>16</sup> Deportista's work was the first attempt to theorise Spain's football fury. The book argued that the *furía* was the patriotic manifestation of Spanish individualism. This peculiar patriotism was revealed in a fiercely courageous fighting spirit that led Spain to triumph against all odds.<sup>17</sup> By 1929, the term had become so popular that a weekly sports magazine called *Furia Española* was launched in Barcelona.<sup>18</sup> Following de Castro, the Spanish fury's original derogatory connotations were turned upside down. Unlike in the Netherlands, *furía española* did not mean violence and brutality but bravery, courage and an intense will to win.<sup>19</sup> The Iberian media kept the expression but transformed its negative undertones into

positive national traits, such as fighting spirit and heroic attitudes. Thus the silver medal at the Antwerp Olympiad was turned into a legendary achievement, the foundational myth of the *selección* and the yardstick by which Spaniards' character would be measured in the future.

This is not to say that the myth of the Spanish fury was without its domestic critics. Some journalists thought that the *furia* implied passion and impulsiveness, qualities useful for winning 'jumping contests', but not necessarily football matches.<sup>20</sup> Others wrote that the Spanish fury translated into mere force on the pitch, a useless power by itself. Skill and intelligence, argued *Blanco y Negro*, should prevail over force on the Spanish team.<sup>21</sup> Despite the questioning of its usefulness, the idea that the Spanish fury was a feature of the national team was firmly consolidated by the late 1920s. Following the victory of Spain over England in a friendly in April 1929, *El Mundo Deportivo* explained that the key reason for the triumph was that Spaniards' 'hearts had been more influential than their heads' during the match, while *La Nación* considered the success was 'the definitive consecration of Spanish football many years on from the Antwerp epic'.<sup>22</sup> The cliché of the fury was used to justify defeat too. If Spaniards deviated from the defining national characteristic, then victory was almost impossible. The Spanish press, for instance, pointed to a lack of fury to rationalise France's victory over Spain in 1933. Sergio Valdés wrote in the pages of *Nuevo Mundo* that the Spanish national team had been unable to play its furious football, because the old generation was dying out. The new players might eventually make good use of a polished technique, but they would 'never reach that sublime vigour' of the old guard.<sup>23</sup> The *selección* was nothing less than a representation of Spaniards as a people, a 'wrecked amalgamation. Neither fury nor science'.<sup>24</sup>

Together with the Spanish fury, fatalism featured prominently in the narrative around the national team. This fatalism was based on a sense that a combination of bad luck and biased refereeing acted against Spain and precluded the *selección* from fulfilling its potential. The birth of this doom narrative can also be traced back to the 1920 Antwerp Olympiad. Spain won all her matches in the football tournament except the one against the hosts and eventual champions, Belgium. Manolo de Castro's explanation of the 3–1 Spanish defeat was twofold. First, 'misfortune showed Spain no mercy that fateful afternoon' and luck sided with the Belgians.<sup>25</sup> Secondly, the referee was 'negligent or biased', as he gave a goal to the home team scored in a 'scandalous offside position'.<sup>26</sup> Along similar lines, Luis Argüello, the Treasurer of the Real Federación Española de Fútbol, explained that Spain lost to Belgium

'because *they had to lose*' and accused the referee of being a 'tourist' who had disallowed two perfectly legal goals to the Spaniards.<sup>27</sup> 'If misfortune had shown some pity, we are sure we would have won the tournament', summarised *Madrid-Sport*, reflecting a feeling of injustice among Spanish journalists.<sup>28</sup>

Fatalism, misfortune and injustice grew more central to the narrative of Spanish football during the 1924 Paris Olympics. Following the successful performance at Antwerp, Spain had reached the French capital as one of the favourites. However, they were knocked out by Italy in the very first game of the competition. The Italian victory came from an own goal scored by Pedro Vallana in the 84th minute. *La Vanguardia* emphasised misfortune as the main factor for defeat. The Spanish own goal was a fatal accident and Italy's victory was sheer 'chance'.<sup>29</sup> Interestingly, the Barcelona daily highlighted the unanimous response of the French press and reviewed reports from *L'Auto*, *Echo des Sports*, *Le Matin*, *Figaro*, *L'Ouvre* and *Excelsior*, all of them pointing out Spain's bad luck.<sup>30</sup> In doing so, the Spanish newspaper was reinforcing its own point about Spain's misfortune. By incorporating the same view from 'neutral' sources, the narrative was strengthened with the comments of the national Other, in this case the French. This was a clear case of a process of national-discourse building that sought the Other's acknowledgement to consolidate its own myths. Misfortunes aside, some in the Spanish press blamed the referee for the *selección's* defeat against Italy:

The fame of the Spanish fury worried [the enemy] and it had to be contained no matter the cost. Our players did not give a sense of *furia*; on the contrary they appeared subdued. But even playing badly, they could not be beaten. However, the referee was on the pitch for a purpose. As he had no reason to punish our players severely, the referee took a different route and allowed the Italians to do as they pleased. The Italians then gave a lesson in playing dirty. Believing us idiots, or little more, the referee pretended to be impartial and gave those fouls in midfield, but he ignored similar fouls when the Italians committed them (as they did on a number of occasions) in the *penalty* area.<sup>31</sup>

It was not just a matter of bad luck but a question of ill intentions. The biased referee had rewarded Italian cajolery and punished Spanish chivalry. This image of a Quixotic *selección*, honest and noble but beaten, was reinforced four years later at the Amsterdam Olympiad. In 1928, the International Olympic Committee decided no professionals could par-

ticipate in the football competition. Accordingly, the Spanish delegation sent an all-amateur team but, as soon as it got to Amsterdam, realised that many teams included professional footballers. Following a comfortable win over Mexico (7–1), Spain played an Italian team that incorporated well-known professionals.<sup>32</sup> Spain led the match from the 15th minute but Italy equalised in the second half. Spanish journalists complained that the International Olympic Committee had turned a blind eye to the fact that Italy played with professionals.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, Spain should have won the match, but they did not because ‘as on other occasions, adversity had been cruel with our enthusiast representatives’.<sup>34</sup> Two days later, Spain and Italy played again. This time the Italians won 7–1. Still, the Spanish press found grounds to complain about the referee. ‘In the first half the referee was already biased in favour of the Italians, who got several goals in offside positions,’ wrote *La Vanguardia*.<sup>35</sup> The Catalan newspaper recognised that the *selección* had not reached the same footballing level of the *Azzurri* but nevertheless highlighted that the Spaniards had been ‘victims of persistent bad luck’.<sup>36</sup>

Unfair line-ups, biased refereeing and misfortunes all led to the construction of a strong fatalism regarding the Spanish national team in the 1920s. This sense of pessimism was not unique to football. Throughout the nineteenth century, writers, academics, intellectuals, journalists and teachers had contributed to create a domestic image of Spain as a *Mater dolorosa*, an unhappy, suffering mother in perpetual pain for the misfortunes of her sons. This image of the nation was complemented with a querulous patriotism, full of wails and cries for the suffering motherland, and with a strong dose of self-commiseration that was used to justify Spain’s international failures.<sup>37</sup> The defeat in the 1898 Spanish-American War did nothing but strengthen this Spanish national identity built around moaning and self-pity. The loss of Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines was significantly named the ‘Disaster of 1898’ and, influenced by the racialist ideas of the time, intellectuals, scientists and politicians diagnosed the moral and racial decay of the Spanish nation.<sup>38</sup> The idea that Spain was a sick living organism in need of ‘regeneration’ dominated the last decades of the Restoration (1875–1923). The solutions proposed for this national regeneration varied greatly but they all had in common a dramatic concept of Spain as a suffering, decadent nation.<sup>39</sup> This pessimistic take on the Spanish nation was more acute among intellectuals, particularly in the so-called Generation of 1898, yet it too penetrated the spheres of literature, theatre, art, popular music and, crucially, the press. By the end of

the Restoration in 1923, decadence, failure and fatalism had become the main ingredients of the master narrative of the Spanish nation.

As a reaction to the 'pessimistic nationalism' of the Generation of 1898, the Dictatorship of Primo de Rivera (1923–1930) promoted a new, positive image of Spain both at discursive and symbolic levels. Official propaganda represented the nation in more positive terms and heralded the immediate rebirth of the Spanish nation. The regime reproduced nineteenth-century paintings representing key moments in Spanish history on stamps, postcards, almanacs and even the packaging of sweets.<sup>40</sup> This representation of the so-called 'history painting' sought to popularise pictures of a victorious Spain against Muslim infidels, while simultaneously emphasising the Catholic nature of the fatherland. In addition, the *primorriveristas* were resolute in endowing the image of Spain with a more festive character and hence the official press began to depict bullfighting and *romerías* (religious processions) as the expression of the real national character. What is interesting when looking at personifications of Spain as a female figure during the Dictatorship is the process of 'Andalusisation' that the image of the patria underwent. In clear opposition to the nineteenth-century icon of the Mater Dolorosa, *primorriverista* propaganda represented Spain as a joyful and beautiful Andalusian young lady. Against the Castilian sense of austerity, restraint and drama represented in the paintings of the artists of the Generation of 1898, the *primorriverista* icons portrayed joy, youth and beauty in bright colours, much in harmony with the official idea of a rejuvenated nation. Paradoxically, in doing so the *primorriverista* partially perpetuated in the Spanish collective imagination the 'orientalist' representation of Spain as Andalusia created by foreign travellers throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>41</sup>

The *primorriverista* representation of the nation also touched upon masculinity, as football became a mass sport in 1920s Spain. When Spain beat England (4–3) on 15 May 1929 at the Estadio Metropolitano in Madrid, 50,000 people attended – including princes Jaime, Juan and Gonzalo, sons of King Alfonso XIII and the British Victoria Eugenie of Battenberg. In addition, the game was the first football match aired on Spanish radio, with *Radio Madrid* broadcasting live from the stadium. Press coverage was also unprecedented and several newspapers devoted two or more pages to the event. The official newspaper, *La Nación*, highlighted the locals' virility and published cartoons mocking English arrogance.<sup>42</sup> Although all newspapers agreed that Spain had shown top skills and competent tactical awareness, some of them also cited fury and manliness to explain the Spanish victory.<sup>43</sup> There was nothing

exceptional in this discourse. In the 1920s football reports regularly represented the game as quintessentially macho, a feature that was closely related to the Spanish fury.<sup>44</sup> After all, the Spanish myth of the fury was associated with male qualities, such as bravery, courage and physical strength; so it was only natural, the press argued in a tautological manner, that the *selección* would show a virile attitude when being true to its national, 'furious' character. Since its origin in Spanish footballing terms, fury meant virility and manliness was a positive national attribute.

Fury and fatalism remained central in the Spanish football narrative during the Second Republic (1931–1936). True, football commentary was politicised further with the arrival of democracy. Yet both right and left-wing media incorporated the myths of fury and fatalism in their analyses of the Spanish national team. Perhaps no other event epitomised better the consolidation of the fury and fatalism clichés in a highly partisan press than the coverage of the 1934 World Cup in Italy. Benito Mussolini, who had showed very little interest in football during his first years in power, organised the competition as a propaganda exercise for his dictatorship. The fascist regime built a number of gigantic stadiums, subsidised thousands of supporters' train and football tickets and sent Mussolini's sons to represent Italy for the occasion.<sup>45</sup> The propaganda effort was acknowledged in Spain. The special correspondent of the Catholic newspaper *El Debate* praised the progress of Mussolini's regime, extolled the good organisation of the World Cup and celebrated the *selección española* giving the fascist salute before the matches.<sup>46</sup> *El Socialista*, on the contrary, showed a clear awareness of the manipulative potential of football and accused Mussolini of fixing the tournament by bribing referees. The Spanish socialists denounced Mussolini's attempts to provide Italian workers with football victories in order to mask the country's economic problems, to stir nationalist feelings and, ultimately, to 'enslave' the Italian proletariat.<sup>47</sup>

But for all the discrepancies, both *El Debate* and *El Socialista* reproduced the narrative of fury and fatalism when Spain played Italy in the quarter-finals. On 31 May the *selección* drew (1–1) against the hosts in a crucial match that ended with seven Spaniards injured. According to newspaper reports, the Belgian referee Louis Baert tolerated a high level of Italian violence throughout the game, allowed the hosts' goal despite a savage foul on Ricardo Zamora, the visitors' keeper, and disallowed a goal by Ramón de la Fuente for offside after the Spanish player had dribbled past four opponents. The next day Italy and Spain replayed the match in Florence. This time the Swiss referee, René Marcet,

controversially disallowed a Spanish goal and Italy won the quarter-final 1–0. With a mixture of pride and indignation, *El Socialista* underscored the ‘great fighting spirit’ of the Spanish, who could do very little against a referee ‘seeking a blue victory at all costs’.<sup>48</sup> Following the replay, the socialist daily insisted on blaming the referee and accused him of acting on fascist commands. Mr Marcet ‘doubtless received the same instructions [as the previous referee] and from the very first moment our players realised they would not win because there was a man ready to stop all attacks on the Italian goal’. In a similar vein, *El Debate* emphasised the heroism and gentlemanliness of Spain, who had resisted the Italians and the referees against all odds. Spain was knocked out in the so-called ‘Battle of Florence’, but everyone witnessed the ‘*furia*’ and the ‘unquestionable moral triumph of Spain’, according to the Catholic newspaper.<sup>49</sup> Together with the fury and the denunciation of the injustices produced by referees, the Spanish press continued propagating a sort of quixotic chivalry in defeat in the years immediately before the Civil War.

The emergence and consolidation of a Spanish fury and fatalism narrative ran parallel to the rise of Catalan and Basque nationalist discourses associated with sport in the first decades of the twentieth century. In the last years of the Restoration, the *Mancomunitat*, the Catalan regional administration in the hands of the *Lliga Regionalista*, sought to ‘Catalanise’ sports.<sup>50</sup> Additionally, FC Barcelona, supporting the 1919 pro-autonomy campaign organised by the leader of the *Lliga Regionalista*, Francesc Cambó, adopted Catalan as the club’s official language and used the Catalan flag in the stadium. Barça supporters also engaged occasionally in clashes with Real Club Deportivo Español fans, the latter considered pro-Spanish nationalists. In accordance with its symbolic and linguistic policies, the Dictatorship of Primo de Rivera banned the Catalan flag in FC Barcelona’s Les Corts stadium and forced the club to use the Spanish language for its public announcements.<sup>51</sup> On March 1925, the Spanish anthem was booed in Les Corts as a sign of protest. The military authorities of Barcelona reacted by closing the stadium for six months and forcing Hans Gamper, the Swiss-born Barça president, to resign. However, repression backfired and unintentionally increased the role of FC Barcelona as a Catalanist institution. Many saw the linguistic legislation and the sanctions as a direct attack on the club and the number of FC Barcelona *socios* (members) increased considerably as an act of opposition to the military regime.<sup>52</sup> Following the fall of Primo de Rivera, FC Barcelona supported the 1931 pro-autonomy statute campaign and remained close to the Catalanist movement throughout the Second Republic. At the beginning of the Civil War, Barça

president and member of the Catalanist party Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, Josep Sunyol, was captured by a group of Francoists when travelling to Madrid and shot dead.

Basque nationalists too used sports as a means to nationalise the masses. Since its foundation in 1899, Athletic de Bilbao had directors and players linked to the Basque Nationalist Party (Partido Nacionalista Vasco: PNV). Alejandro de la Sota, president of Athletic between 1913 and 1918 and a member of one of the most notorious families of Basque nationalist leaders, funded the *arbertzale* (patriotic) sport daily *Excelsior* in 1924 and advocated using football to indoctrinate the working class. José María Belausteguigoita, the Athletic de Bilbao midfielder and one of the heroes of the 1920 Antwerp Olympics, was from 1910 the man in charge of the PNV football section. In 1930, Belausteguigoita was among the founders of *Acción Nacionalista Vasca* – a liberal split from the conservative PNV.<sup>53</sup> During the Second Republic, the identification between Athletic and Basque nationalism increased and the club supported the PNV-led campaign for Basque autonomy. Following the outbreak of the Civil War, José Ignacio Aguirre, a former player for Athletic (1921–23) became the first president of the Basque Autonomous Government. Many of the Athletic players were ‘enlisted’ in the newly formed Basque national team. Created by the PNV-controlled Basque government, the squad toured to France, Poland, Czechoslovakia, the USSR, Norway, Denmark, Mexico and Cuba for propaganda and fund-raising purposes.<sup>54</sup>

The identification between Athletic and Basque nationalism, however, should be nuanced. Firstly, divisions within the *arbertzale* movement toned down the impact of football as a tool of nationalisation. Throughout the 1920 and 1930s, the Bilbao-based, Spanish-speaking, urban sectors of the PNV prioritised soccer as a rapid instrument of nationalisation. They recognised football’s potential to shape national consciousness in children and youngsters and soon developed a discourse that linked the Basque fatherland to Athletic de Bilbao. Nevertheless, spreading this nationalist discourse met with serious resistance in the PNV’s own ranks. The traditionalist, Basque-speaking, rural supporters of the PNV considered football a modern, liberal, foreign game that prevented farmers from attending mass. Instead of soccer, they promoted the game of *pelota* as a genuinely Basque sport.<sup>55</sup> In short, new sporting cultures did more to separate Basques (including Basque nationalists) than to unite them in the first decades of the twentieth century.<sup>56</sup>

Secondly, many Basques in the 1920s often expressed both Basque and Spanish identities with no apparent contradiction. The heroes’

welcome that the Spanish national team, returning from the Antwerp Olympics, received in Irún, San Sebastian and Bilbao are good examples of popular manifestations of Spanish identities associated with football in the Basque Country. In the frontier town of Irún, the mayor, councilmen, directors of the local team Real Unión and huge crowds awaited the Spanish team at the railway station. When the players left the train, members of the public approached and embraced them in joy. In his welcoming speech the mayor declared that he was 'proud of being the first Spanish authority to congratulate the players on their resounding victory'.<sup>57</sup> The squad later paraded through the streets of Irún, while the municipal band played a *pasodoble* and locals saluted from their balconies, many of them decorated with Spanish flags.<sup>58</sup> The *selección* then went to San Sebastian where the team played a friendly match attended by King Alfonso XIII.<sup>59</sup> Again, newspapers commented on the 'great excitement' of the population, the celebration of the silver medal with a municipal band playing music in the streets and a banquet organised to honour the national team.<sup>60</sup> The following day the squad reached Bilbao, where members of the *Federación Regional Norte* (Northern Region Football Federation) and the provincial government (*diputación*) had organised the reception.<sup>61</sup> The pattern of the celebration was similar to those previously. Reports talked about 'many people [giving] an enthusiastic welcome to the winners' and representatives of all [Biscayan] clubs and the Bilbao Federation waiting at the platform of the railway station.<sup>62</sup> The *selección española* was saluted with fireworks and accompanied through the streets of Bilbao by a band. Significantly, the parade ended at Athletic de Bilbao's headquarters, where the *selección española* was honoured by the directors of the Basque team. In the evening, the party was completed with a banquet celebrated at the Campos Eliseos Theatre, an event that included most of the presidents, managers and directors of Biscayan football clubs. Four days later, the *Federación Regional Norte* requested the Diputación de Vizcaya to grant the gold medal of the province to the *selección española* for its victories at the Antwerp Olympiad.<sup>63</sup>

This compatibility of local, provincial, regional and national identities was related to the flexible framework of sports competitions. In the first decades of the twentieth century, local teams played provincial and regional championships and regional teams were often created for friendly matches. The latter usually played other regional teams, but they would also play clubs, city teams and even national teams. Thus on 21 February 1912 a squad representing Catalonia played France and, on 13 March 1924, Catalonia faced Spain in Barcelona.<sup>64</sup> In addition,

the first state-wide competition, the *Copa Príncipe de Asturias*, created in 1914, was a regional championship in which different teams representing regional federations (Federación Norte, Cataluña, Federación Centro, and so on) competed for the trophy.<sup>65</sup> Regional teams and region-based competitions were also common in many other sports, such as hockey, cycling and racing in the 1920s and 1930s. The implication here is that regional teams were not seen as a threat to the unity of Spain and regional identities were not, in the main, understood as antagonistic to Spanish identity. In many respects, the compatibility of local, regional and Spanish identities in the sporting arena suggests the existence of so-called ‘nested identities’ in pre-Civil War Spain. These nested identities refer to the existence of multiple identities in a single person, inserting his/her local identity within a wider regional identity which is, in turn, included into a national identity.<sup>66</sup> In other words, a Barça supporter could feel emotionally attached to the Catalan regional football squad while still cheering for the Spanish national team in international games with no apparent open conflict between his/her local, regional and national identities. This was, for instance, the case in the friendly played between Spain and Germany on 23 February 1936 in Barcelona, where thousands of Catalans cheered for Spain at Montjuich stadium.<sup>67</sup>

## Early Francoism

Like their Italian and German counterparts, Francoists brutally imposed a centralised fascistic political system and used sports as an instrument of nationalist indoctrination. The fascist-controlled National Board of Sport (*Delegación Nacional de Deporte*) became the supreme institution and General José Moscardó, an obese military officer with little interest in physical exercise, its leader. Moscardó’s initial plans included the absolute subordination of sports to the Francoist state, a special emphasis on gymnastics and the introduction of compulsory biological cards (*ficha biológica*) for all Spaniards.<sup>68</sup> In terms of football, Francoism used the game to fulfil the dictatorship’s political aims. Fully aware of the propagandistic importance of football, the Francoists created their *selección española* during the Civil War. The team’s debut took place against Real Sociedad in San Sebastian in December 1938.<sup>69</sup> But this was a different Spanish national team. Moscardó changed the customary red shirts of the national team for dark blue ones, a colour associated with the Falange, the Spanish fascist party. The regime also sought to turn football stadiums into patriotic churches, where the Spanish nation and its values could be



*Figure 1* Valencia and Español footballers give the fascist salute before playing the Generalísimo Cup on 29 May 1941 at the Chamartín Stadium, Madrid (© EFE 2013)

celebrated. Thus players were commanded to give the fascist salute and sing the Falangist anthem *Cara al sol* before matches started.<sup>70</sup> The choice of Germany, Italy, Vichy France, Portugal and Switzerland to play friendly matches against speaks volumes about Franco's sympathies during the Second World War.

One of the main Francoist targets, at times quite literally, was regional nationalism. For the Francoists, football during the Second Republic had been 'a red orgy of the lowest and vilest regional passions', in which almost everyone behaved 'in a separatist and rude way'.<sup>71</sup> In the words of the former director of the sports daily *Excelsior*, Jacinto Miquelarena, the separatist virus had spread everywhere and even Real Madrid supporters were regional nationalists, that is to say, 'mentally retarded parochial people when confronted with national limits'.<sup>72</sup> The eradication of Basque and Catalan nationalist symbolism became paramount for those responsible for football in the New State. Members of the Falange were parachuted into the executive boards of all first division clubs and Castilian became the only official language

in Spanish football. Additionally, Francoist censors were instructed to get rid of foreign terms in football reports and words such as ‘corner’, ‘amateur’ and ‘match’ were persistently translated into Spanish before publication.<sup>73</sup> The process of linguistic cleansing reached levels of plain absurdity when some clubs were forced to translate their English names into Spanish. Thus Athletic de Bilbao became Atlético de Bilbao and Sporting de Gijón changed to Deportivo de Gijón.

The fascist discourse of the early Franco years was rabidly nationalist, yet often overlooked is the fact that this did not imply the complete eradication of the idea of region within it. As in folk music, tourist guides and literature, some regionalist overtones can be found in 1940s Francoism when it came to sport. For example, the Tour of Catalonia resumed as early as 1939, although the name of the cycling competition was changed from the Catalan ‘Volta’ to the Spanish ‘Vuelta’. Regional teams, a common feature during the Restoration and the Dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, did not disappear overnight at the end of the Civil War. On 16 March 1941, the *selecciones* of Castile and Catalonia played their first match after the civil struggle at Chamartín stadium.<sup>74</sup> Not by accident, the game was scheduled for the very same day that Spain played Portugal in Bilbao. The logic behind programming both inter-regional and international games on the same date was to show a certain tolerance to sporting expressions of regional identities, while at the same time subordinating the latter to the Spanish national identity. Both identities were compatible but the hierarchy was clear. The following year, on 15 March, Catalonia and Castile met again, this time at Les Corts in Barcelona – interestingly, the stadium retained its Catalan name under Franco. The match ended with a Catalan victory (4–3) and was played the very same day Spain defeated Vichy France by 4–0.<sup>75</sup> *El Mundo Deportivo* was delighted with the victory of ‘our regional team’ and proclaimed it had been a perfect day for the Catalans due to the triumphs of Spain over France and Catalonia over Castile.<sup>76</sup> According to the Barcelona newspaper, not only were Catalan and Spanish football compatible, they were also both at the dawn of a new era in which the regional renaissance was to go hand in hand with the national rebirth.<sup>77</sup>

The Franco dictatorship often presented *lo vasco* (Basqueness) as the original Spanish national character. As early as January 1939, the sports newspaper *Marca* ran a special report on traditional Basque sports, paying special attention to the *pulsolaris* (stone lifters). The Francoist newspaper also included an interview with José Irigoyen, a pelota champion whose 16-year-old son had volunteered to fight for the *nacionales*. The pelota game was described as a ‘genuinely Spanish

game, played *par excellence* in the Basque provinces', in a clear attempt to reclaim as Spanish the very sport that traditionalist *arbertzales* considered authentically Basque.<sup>78</sup> Basqueness was also found in football. According to Ricardo Zamora, the goalkeeping legend of the 1920s and 1930s, the Spanish national team's main features were Basque. Long passes, strength and enthusiasm were the real Basque characteristics that had become Spanish, due to the high percentage of northerners playing in the national team.<sup>79</sup> *Marca* also hailed Athletic de Bilbao as the most glorious Spanish team in history and denounced the 'plunder' of its best players – taken by the Basque government to form the Euskadi national team and sent to play in the Soviet Union.<sup>80</sup> Athletic was considered the best possible case of club reconstruction. All teams should follow Athletic, so 'the re-emergence of Spanish football would come immediately after the victorious end of our Crusade'.<sup>81</sup>

In some respects, this identification of Basqueness as the essence of Spanishness followed the old nineteenth-century traditionalist view. According to the Carlists, Catholicism and the *fueros* represented the authentic Spain, whereas liberal and secular ideas were alien to the nation.<sup>82</sup> This understanding of the Spanish nation gained strength during the Third Carlist War (1872–1876) and stalwartly re-emerged in the Basque Country and Navarre in the 1930s.<sup>83</sup> After the Civil War, however, the idea that the Basque Country was somehow the quintessence of the Spanish fatherland also reached the Falangists. The fascist party portrayed Athletic de Bilbao as the 'incarnation of male Hispanic values: virility, impetus and fury'.<sup>84</sup> The Basque club came to represent the *furia española* and was favoured by the Franco regime because it was the only top team that played exclusively with Spaniards.<sup>85</sup> The Falange turned Athletic's Basque-only philosophy, that is, a policy to hire players just from the Basque Country and Navarre, into a Spanish-only philosophy. This was an attempt at the cultural re-signification of Athletic. The club presented by the PNV as the essence of Basqueness during the Civil War was now portrayed as the kernel of Spanishness by the extreme right.

As in the cases of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, Francoism cultivated certain types of regional identities, seeking to introduce an element of populism and grassroots activism into the dictatorship.<sup>86</sup> In all cases, German, Italian and Spanish regions were understood to be totally subordinate to their respective nations and separatist movements were heavily repressed, but this did not mean that fascist dictators intentionally sought to obliterate all regional identities in the 1940s.<sup>87</sup> Hitler, Mussolini and Franco used sports to manipulate local, provincial

and regional identities, seeking to promote a love for the nation.<sup>88</sup> Dual identities (regional and national) reappeared in sports, although transformed, during the first years of the Spanish dictatorship.

Francoist indoctrination took place against the background of a society terrified by the regime's brutal repression and suffocating control of the media.<sup>89</sup> The *selección's* friendly matches with Franco's political allies were conceived to promote international fascism and to foster the identification of the Spanish regime with the national football team. In these games, the dictatorship perpetuated the fury narrative. The concepts associated with the fury (virility, force, courage, sacrifice, fighting spirit...) were music to the Francoists' ears.<sup>90</sup> Interestingly the understanding of Spaniards as fundamentally individualistic remained as part of the discourse too. In the words of Eduardo Teus, journalist and coach of the *selección* in 1941, Spain should not play as a team, for 'it never existed'.<sup>91</sup> Spain should rather bet on the 'improvisation and individualism of our race' to win matches.<sup>92</sup> Along the same lines, in 1941 Juan Deportista, the author of the bestseller *La furia española*, pointed to the lack of individual 'stars' to explain why Spain had not achieved the success of the 1920 Antwerp Olympics ever again.<sup>93</sup> In a Europe dominated by the Nazis, in a Spain where the fascist Falange was at the peak of its political power, a quixotic image of Spanish footballers, individualistic and quick to improvise, swathed the myth of the fury.

The fall of the Third Reich mitigated the influence of the Falangists in the Spanish cabinet. The Roman salute ceased to be official in September 1945 and the dictatorship implemented some cosmetic changes to the political structure of the Franco regime. This process of Francoist 'de-fascistisation' aimed at detaching the Spanish dictator's international image from that of Hitler and Mussolini. However, the regime continued using football to indoctrinate the masses in patriotic values. The Francoist press went on presenting the (few) Spanish international successes as the regime's own. This fusion of the national team and the dictatorship was realised in a society in which football became increasingly important due to the wider audiences reached by the mass media all over the country. In 1940s and 1950s Spain, international matches would be talked about in the press two or three weeks before the event, the very same day of the game and the following days. The matches were also broadcast on the radio, reaching millions in bars, cafeterias and homes. Finally, reports of the national team's games were included in NO-DO films and played at every single cinema in Spain. This combination of newspapers, radio and NO-DO allowed for the presence of

a single football match to be in the public's eye and mind for weeks. As we saw in Chapter 1, the sequence of reading (before the game), listening (live on the radio) and reading (after the game) about the Spanish national team had an cumulative effect that reinforced the impact of the Francoist official message and national stereotypes.

The representation of Spain's games at the 1950 Brazil World Cup is a good example of the cumulative media effect and the Francoist interweaving of the *selección*, the dictatorship and the nation. Following triumphs over Chile (2–0) and the United States (3–1), Spain played England for a place in the semi-finals. Spain won (1–0) thanks to a Telmo Zarra goal that was immortalised by Matías Prats in a famous radio broadcast. The Francoist press, which had been writing profusely about the match days before the event, unsurprisingly found in the Spanish fury one of the key elements to explaining the Iberian victory.<sup>94</sup> Armando Muñoz Calero, president of the Spanish Football Federation, attacked those journalists who had dared to question the chance of a Spanish victory over the English: '[Our players] have known how to rise above all those jealous people because they have faith and are steeped in the current tide of Spanish patriotism. And only have thought that there is one Spain with the best Leader in the world.'<sup>95</sup> The 'best leader in the world' joined a party that he considered his own and sent a telegram congratulating the national team, which was duly reproduced on the front page of all Spanish newspapers: 'At the end of the radio broadcast, through which I followed such an exciting game and brilliant triumph, I send to you my warmest congratulations for your technique and courage in defence of our colours. *Arriba España*.'<sup>96</sup>

Spain finished fourth in the 1950 World Cup and the Francoists exploited the situation. Matías Prats re-recorded the Spain v. England radio broadcast (pretending that he was transmitting live) and footage of the game was used for a NO-DO film which was played in all Spanish cinemas for months. The game was also used to settle scores. On 3 July 1950, two days after England had faced Spain, the Falangist *El Alcázar* reproduced a section of the labour newspaper *Daily Herald*. The section had been published before the game and included a sixteenth-century picture in which Francis Drake ordered a defeated Spanish soldier to be chained by his English captors. The caption read: 'Our players will do even better.' *El Alcázar* ridiculed both the 'historical and forecasting mistakes' of the *Daily Herald*, 'Because neither the pirate Drake, nor his descendants of today did so well that they could beat Spain. The boot of Zarra, putting the ball in the net, has endorsed the sentence published by a British journalist that defeat is becoming England's companion.'<sup>97</sup>

With these comments the Falangist newspaper presented the 1950 match as a new episode in the historical fight against Albion, reclaimed the Spanish Empire's golden era against the international notoriety of the Black Legend, while undermining the English national myth about Francis Drake. Moreover, the comment about England getting used to defeat was a clear reference to the perceived post-Second World War British decadence in a time of rapid decolonisation and economic crisis.

The Francoist appropriation of Spanish victories went beyond the national team. The dictatorship also capitalised on Real Madrid's victories in the European Cup (1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960 and 1966), by linking the regime to the Spanish club and promoting the fury narrative.<sup>98</sup> Following the win in the first European Cup on 13 June 1956, Agustín Pujol, President of the Catalan Football Federation, remarked that Real Madrid had won due to a combination of skill and 'the traditional features of Spanish football: courage and fury'.<sup>99</sup> More importantly, the dictatorship used Real Madrid's success to mitigate its international isolation, while the club benefited from the regime's sympathies. From the mid-1950s, Real Madrid became the unofficial 'ambassador' of Spain abroad and directors, coaches and players were fully aware of it. And yet some sports journalists of the time dissociated the pride of being ambassadors of Spain from that of representing the Franco regime. 'Gilera', a well-known *ABC* writer, put it in the following manner: 'Real Madrid was proud of improving the image of Spain in general, rather than Franco's.'<sup>100</sup> The comment is interesting for it implies players and directors mentally separated Spain from Francoism, despite the dictatorship's efforts to present both as the same thing.

Indeed, this differentiation between the dictatorship and the nation represented via football had occurred in the past. In 1949, a group of supporters, presumably expatriates, waved a Spanish republican flag in a friendly game between France and Spain at Colombes in Paris. The group of republicans was dismissed by *Marca* as 'Spaniards without passports'; but the sports newspaper could not hide the fact that for some Spaniards the *selección* represented a Spanish nation antagonistic to Francoism.<sup>101</sup> The same principle applies to those hundreds of Republican exiles and economic migrants who went to support Real Madrid at the Parc des Princes when the Spanish team played the final of the first European Cup in 1956.<sup>102</sup> These Spaniards felt the dictatorship was brutal and underdeveloped in European terms but found in Real Madrid victories a reason that allowed them to live abroad with their heads held high.

## Late Francoism

The 1960s and the first half of the 1970s are often considered the years in which football acted as a catalyst for Catalan and Basque nationalisms. This period is also seen as the time in which the dictatorship's Spanish nationalism decreased, as alternative national identities gained more and more presence in the stadiums of FC Barcelona and Athletic de Bilbao.<sup>103</sup> The implication of these analyses is that the relationship between Francoist nationalism and regional nationalisms was a sort of zero-sum game in which the growth of manifestations of Catalan and Basque nationalisms around FC Barcelona and Athletic de Bilbao signified the reduction of Spanish nationalism in football. Logical as the argument might seem, the records suggest that the re-emergence of Basque and Catalan nationalism did not entirely correlate with the waning of Francoist Spanish nationalism.

In fact, Francoist nationalism was far from declining during the first years of the 1960s. The regime relentlessly used television to transmit its patriotic message and football soon became one of the dictatorship's favourite means to this aim. TV crucially added to the cumulative nationalising effect of the above-mentioned sequence of reading, listening, reading and watching that newspapers, radio and NO-DO had on football followers. The combination of press, radio, TV and NO-DO multiplied the potential audiences of the official discourse and the promotion of stereotypes associated with both Spaniards and the *selección*. Furthermore, the arrival of television had a knock-on effect on the press, as broadsheets increased the number of pages devoted to football and sports dailies' sales surpassed quality newspapers'.<sup>104</sup> The state-controlled television, TVE, brought football to every single corner of Spain and systematically and shamelessly used sport to foster the Franco regime and the Francoist nation.<sup>105</sup> The Spanish victory in Euro 1964 is a good example of how Francoist televised propaganda linked the dictatorship to the national team. The finals of the European Championship were played in Spain and the dictatorship was fully aware of the importance of TV. It broadcast the matches via Eurovision to maximise the number of viewers. In the words of *Marca*, the important thing about the victory over the USSR was the fact that 'millions and millions of Spaniards could watch it' on television.<sup>106</sup> For the Falangist *El Alcázar* the triumph was a global one, for over 200 million people had seen the game live.<sup>107</sup> Worried about the image of the dictatorship abroad, the dictator himself told his cousin, Francisco Franco Salgado-Araujo, of the importance of the live broadcast; it showed Spaniards' 'unity

and patriotism in many countries of the world'.<sup>108</sup> Significantly, on 29 June 1964, more than a week after the match, TVE played the final again to allow fans 'to relive the sensational Spanish triumph'.<sup>109</sup>

Politically, Francoism did not change its approach to the game and continued its conventional 'appropriation' of the national team in the 1960s. In 1960, Franco had banned the *selección* from playing the Soviet Union in the quarter-finals of the first European Championships (then called the European Nations' Cup).<sup>110</sup> Yet, years later, Franco himself attended the final against the Soviet Union at the Bernabéu Stadium on 21 June 1964, which Spain won 2–1. The following day, the dictator met the entire team at El Pardo Palace, making the most of the Spanish success. The official press presented the match as a celebration of national unity, 'a party in which nothing and no-one Spanish was excluded', a fiesta in which all Spaniards 'from the first [Franco] to the last' had taken part.<sup>111</sup> Nevertheless, this was a 'national unity' that excluded the vanquished in the Civil War. José Antonio Elola, National Delegate for Physical Education and Sports, reminded everyone that the victory had been achieved at the very same time as they 'were celebrating 25 Years of Peace'.<sup>112</sup> José Villalonga, the national team coach, was also happy to link the trophy to the dictator: 'Because it has been a fair triumph, it is even more pleasant for us to offer the victory to His Excellency the Head of the State, who had been an exceptional witness of how these boys have fought for it'.<sup>113</sup> The monarchist *ABC* was unambiguous:

After twenty-five years of peace, behind the applause could be heard authentic support for the Spirit of July the 18th. In this quarter of a century there has never been displayed a greater popular enthusiasm for the State born out of the victory over Communism and its fellow-travellers [...] Spain is a nation every day more orderly, mature and unified and which is steadily marching down the path of economic, social and institutional development. It is a national adventure.<sup>114</sup>

The victory celebrations and comments of Elola, Villalonga and *ABC* show that the idea that the dictatorship promoted football in the 1960s in an attempt to 'de-politicise Spanish society by turning the workers away from politics, and so prevent another mass popular mobilisation such as preceded the Civil War', holds little water when closely scrutinised.<sup>115</sup> It seems that the more the country economically grew, the more the regime presented itself as the maker of success in sport. A few days after the final against the USSR, an editorial in *Marca* explained the triumph at Euro 1964, and some other Spanish international victories,

as the result of the dictatorship's sport policies.<sup>116</sup> José Antonio Elola Olaso directed these policies in his capacity as *Delegado Nacional de Deportes*, but, as the editorial clarified, he always followed 'the guidelines of the Head of the State for the good of Spain'. The dictator was portrayed as the mastermind working in the shadows for the 'greatness of Spain'. Moreover, the regime did not shy away from publicly acknowledging that sporting victories were excellent for nationalising the masses, because they galvanised 'our national pride' and stirred 'our patriotic sensibility'.<sup>117</sup>

More than ever, the myth of the Spanish fury was present in 1964. Victory over the Soviets was explained in terms of strength, guts and bravery. In the second half, *Marca* wrote, success was guaranteed 'with the *furia* of the national team'.<sup>118</sup> The Spanish fury was above technique and sophistication. In fact, the latter could implicitly act as a burden. Spanish players had been extremely skilful in the past but unable to win. In 1964, the fury had led them to 'win games out of courage, and because of courage they [were] European champions'.<sup>119</sup> The message was crystal clear: the Spanish national team had to be true to the national spirit to win. The President of the Spanish Football Federation put it in the following words: 'I have enjoyed the game because Spain won in a Spanish manner, with a lot of courage and guts.'<sup>120</sup> Comparisons to the 'epic battles of Antwerp' became a cliché in 1964. For *Marca*, Spanish players went to head 'corner kicks like Belauste in Antwerp'<sup>121</sup> and Marcelino's winning goal against the Soviets was nothing less than 'a play that would have brought tears of emotion and solace to those who were in Antwerp'.<sup>122</sup> The Spanish coach, José Villalonga, also drew a line connecting the 1920 and 1964 games. With uncanny prophetic abilities, he stated the following: 'To date, we have always heard the epic story of Antwerp, when Spain were the runners-up in the 1920 Olympics. I believe that what our boys have done today could set an example for the next forty-four years.' The widespread use of the fury in the press demonstrates its relevance in the pantheon of Spanish collective mythology. In a Spain that was going through one of the most rapid processes of industrial and social modernisation in its history, the regime resorted to the most visceral and irrational stereotypes about Spaniards.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, the dictatorship maintained its political appropriation of sport. TVE regularly played matches and highlights of the best games of the *selección española* and bullfights on 30 April and May Day, in a gross attempt to undermine workers' mobilisation. Together with batons, bullets and torture chambers, the Franco regime used football nostalgia and bullfighting to deactivate social

protest. This tactic may not have been very successful, as the vast majority of the population recognised the regime's unrefined manipulation of football, but it nevertheless emphasised the dictatorship's message that those protesting against Franco were anti-Spanish. In the last years of the regime, Spanish football teams did not get many good international results, so the regime used other sports to reproduce its nationalist discourse. The tennis tournaments won by Manolo Santana and Manuel Orantes, the gold medal in skiing of Paquito Fernández Ochoa in the 1972 Sapporo Winter Olympics, the silver medal of the basketball *selección* in Euro 1973, the world championships of Ángel Nieto in motorcycling and the victory of Luis Ocaña in the 1975 Tour de France were some of the exemplars used by the Francoists to perpetuate their nationalist narrative.<sup>123</sup> As in previous decades, this discourse underscored the myth of the *furia*, the vocabulary of bullfighting in sports commentary and the idea that the individual genius of Spaniards led them to triumph against all odds. Alongside the discourse of the Francoist political nation came the narrative of the cultural nation that characterised Spaniards as passionate, quixotic bullfighters.

Fatalism was also present in the Francoist sport narrative. What could not be blamed on foreign plots could always be explained as the consequence of misfortunes and referees' bad decisions. The Spanish defeat at Wembley (1–0) in the first leg of the Euro 1968 quarter-finals was a case in point. Domingo Balmanya, the Spanish coach, declared that the result was unfair and accused the referee of helping the English. He was happy with the performance, though, because all his players 'had demonstrated a great deal of courage and will to win a match that was lost due to incredible bad luck'.<sup>124</sup> Similar reasons were put forward to excuse failure three years later, when Spain faced the Soviet Union in the group stages of Euro 1972. Following a defeat in Moscow, the *selección* had to win to reach the second round, but a goalless draw meant the Soviets qualified. Together with a handy referee's mistakes, the sport daily *AS* used the well-known argument of misfortune to explain failure yet again:

A victory was needed [...] but unfortunately the ball did not want to go into the goal of Rudakov. The goalkeeper not only emulated the legendary Yachin but also allied himself with the Goddess Fortune. She was the one on goal, reinforcing the already strong Soviet wall, when the keeper was beaten.<sup>125</sup>

Why was there this continuity of fatalism in the national narrative associated with sport under Franco? In many ways, the pessimistic view of

the national football team coincided with the post-Civil War suffering of Spain portrayed by many Spanish intellectuals and the problematic, uncomfortable past of the nation argued by young historians in the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>126</sup> The failures of the football team fitted well into a larger narrative that described Spaniards as chronically underdeveloped and with a different, particularly dramatic, history when compared to their European neighbours. Fatalism also had a more prosaic reason. Blaming bad luck and referees' errors were ways of eluding a critique of the dictatorship's sporting policies and ultimately of the regime. The narrative of fatalism became a self-fulfilling prophecy, justifying failure and avoiding serious assessment at the same time.

The late 1960s and early 1970s also witnessed the re-emergence of regional nationalisms. The rapid re-industrialisation of Catalonia and the Basque Country and subsequent migrations gave rise to huge social transformations in the last decades of Francoism. In these territories, a subculture of political opposition, laced through a system of close family relations and friendships, emerged and gained some hold in the public sphere. In these years, cultural organisations and primary schools promoted the Basque and Catalan languages, while neighbourhood associations, hiking and mountaineering societies, sports clubs and ecclesiastical groups became the agencies through which regional nationalist ideologies were transmitted.<sup>127</sup> From the 1960s onwards, changes in the dictatorship's legislation on associations meant that these agencies were beyond the direct control of the Francoist authorities and, hence, many Catalan and Basque nationalists sought refuge within these organisations.

Football clubs proved an excellent field to transmit counter-hegemonic national identities. The official magazine of FC Barcelona, *Barça*, began to introduce the Catalan language in the 1950s. But it was in the early 1970s that *Barça* gave a crucial thrust to the use of Catalan in the official magazine. This impetus was due to the fact that some of the new FC Barcelona directors at the time were ideologically close to Catalan nationalism. This group of directors began to re-politicise the club along nationalist lines.<sup>128</sup> During the season 1971–72, FC Barcelona promoted a campaign advocating the use of Catalan in schools; the following season *Barça* started to use Catalan to make announcements over the Camp Nou public address system and flew a Catalan flag in the stadium. In 1974, the events organised to commemorate the 75th anniversary of FC Barcelona included Catalan folk dancing and shows at the Camp Nou, a festival of Catalan music at the *Palau Blaugrana*, a mass pilgrimage to Montserrat and a floral tribute to Hans Gamper. In 1975, some months

before the death of Franco, FC Barcelona reclaimed Catalan as its official language.<sup>129</sup> This ‘Catalanisation’ of FC Barcelona followed a social process by which the club had become a symbol of Catalan identity and anti-Francoism in the late 1960s. In fact, when would-be president Narcís de Carreras famously declared that ‘Barça was more than a club’ in the 1968 electoral campaign, he was referring to the fact that the club transcended the sporting arena and reached a social dimension that others clubs in Spain had not. In 1971, *ABC* reported on the popular identification between FC Barcelona and Catalonia:

It was the journalist and writer M. Vázquez Montalbán [...] who once wrote that FC Barcelona is an institution as rooted in Catalonia as *Omnium Cultural*, the Montserrat Monastery, the Institut d’Estudis Catalans or *L’Orfeó Graçient*. This is a bit of an iconoclastic conclusion but true nonetheless. For the great majority of Catalans, being a member of Barça or a mere supporter of the club is an act of love for Catalonia. Since it is well known that sentimentality – even regional – flourishes in many diverse and unexpected ways.<sup>130</sup>

In the same article, Luis Bonet wrote that the flamenco singer Niño de Baena had recently recorded a celebratory song entitled ‘Club de Fútbol Barcelona’; that Manuel Vázquez Montalbán had written the lyrics for a song called ‘Barça, Barça’, which was to be interpreted by the famous artist Guillermina Motta, and collaborated on the script of an Antonio Ribas’ film also named ‘Barça, Barça’. The number of popular cultural artefacts related to FC Barcelona illustrates the social importance of the club in Catalonia. There is little doubt that Barça acted as a catalyst and vehicle of a Catalan, sometimes Catalanist and often anti-Francoist identity in the early 1970s. But this sentiment associated with Barça did not necessarily imply anti-Spanish feelings. The very fact that many of those writers and artists engaged in promoting FC Barcelona, together with many Barça supporters, were Spanish-speaking Catalans, several born outside Catalonia, shows an implicit differentiation between the political nation represented by Francoism and the Spanish nation understood in cultural terms. In other words, no apparent contradiction was perceived between the facts that Manolo Escobar composed Spanish patriotic anthems such as *¡Que viva España!* and openly declared himself a Barça fan. When Barça won the Spanish league in 1974, Escobar, an Andalusian immigrant to Catalonia, was the leading figure in the celebrations that had thousands partying in the streets of Barcelona.<sup>131</sup>

If opinion polls are anything to go by, the existence of dual identities (regional and Spanish) at the end of Francoism seems unquestionable. In Catalonia, 53 per cent of the population considered itself both Catalan and Spanish, while 60 per cent of Basques declared themselves to have dual identities during the transition to democracy.<sup>132</sup> Athletic de Bilbao also functioned as a vehicle of different identities: Basque, anti-Francoist and Basque nationalist, but not always anti-Spanish. In the last decades of Francoism, a number of Athletic de Bilbao *peñas* (supporters' clubs) were created all over Spain. The team was seen as a working-class team and Athletic's policy of not allowing its players to become rich led many workers outside Biscay to sympathise with the team.<sup>133</sup> The *cantera* policy (the Basque-only-players rule) also gained the club a number of admirers beyond the Basque Country, not because it helped keep any sort of Basque 'purity', but because it represented an investment in local talent. In the province of Biscay, Athletic also embodied a number of political identities. The *cantera* policy was supported across the political spectrum and both Basque nationalist and non-nationalist Basques identified with Athletic. During the transition to democracy, in an increasingly fragmented and violent society, Athletic became more a point of unity for all Vizcaínos, Basque nationalists and non-nationalists alike.<sup>134</sup>

This is not to say that Basque nationalists did not use Athletic de Bilbao and, to a lesser extent, Real Sociedad de San Sebastián as agencies of nationalisation. As in the case of Barcelona, regional nationalists became members of the Athletic and Real Sociedad directors' board from the early 1970s.<sup>135</sup> In 1972, the president of Real Sociedad, José Luis Orbegozo, began to print football tickets in both Spanish and Basque and openly encouraged his players to learn Euskera. The *txistu*, a Basque flute, was played in the terraces of San Mamés, Athletic's stadium, as a form of protest against the Franco dictatorship.<sup>136</sup> However, the recuperation of the Basque symbols took longer in Euskadi than Catalonia. From the late 1960s onwards, *ikurriñas*, the then-banned Basque flag, were waved in the San Mamés stands by members of the public.<sup>137</sup> But the flag remained illegal until 1977. Athletic players, headed by the legendary goalkeeper of the Spanish national team, José Ángel Iribar, also had an important role in the club's identification with Basque nationalism. In October 1975, Iribar convinced his teammates to wear black armbands in protest at the execution of two ETA (*Euskadi Ta Askatasuna*, Basque Homeland and Freedom) and three FRAP (Spanish Revolutionary Anti-Fascist Patriotic Front) members. Iribar commented their gesture was to commemorate the first anniversary of the death of Luis Albert – a former Athletic player

and director – but everyone knew it was a protest against the brutality of the dictatorship. As in the case of Catalonia, by the mid-1970s Francoism had lost the political battle in the Basque Country.

This was not the only combat lost by the dictatorship. Forty years of forced identification between Spain and the Francoist idea of nation, together with the moral, cultural and political discredit of the regime among the younger generations, affected national feelings all over Spain. At the beginning of the transition the identification of political and cultural elites with the Spanish national community was highly problematic.<sup>138</sup> Still, the disrepute of the Spanish nation had its limits. Like many Catalans and Basques, numerous Spaniards developed a sentimental bond with the Spanish nation that did not imply an acceptance of Francoism as a political regime. A case in point is the 1966 final of the European Cup played in Brussels by Real Madrid and Partizan Belgrade. Some of the Real Madrid supporters went to the Heysel stadium with Spanish republican flags.<sup>139</sup> The implications of the gesture were crystal clear: these republican supporters backed Real Madrid for it was a Spanish team and yet they were openly anti-Francoists.

While realising these sorts of acts in public were difficult and risky in Spain, the development of an emotional affinity for the Spanish nation and anti-Francoist postulates simultaneously was not. In the same manner that many Argentinians were able to distinguish between the happiness they felt for Argentina's victory in the 1978 World Cup and the blunt political manipulation that the military junta made of it, a large number of Spaniards were able to differentiate between a Spanish cultural nation related to football and a political nation related to Francoism.<sup>140</sup> The impact of Francoist propaganda on Spaniards was limited in the last decades of the dictatorship when democratic and anti-authoritarian views developed, despite the fact that the vast majority of the population got their news from Francoist radio and television.<sup>141</sup> Many Spaniards learnt to distinguish between official propaganda and information more in tune with their daily experiences. Spaniards got used to reading between the lines, while a new and highly politicised counter-culture emerged using allegory and irony as tools of contestation in a repressive environment.<sup>142</sup>

It was in this particular context of rapid social transformation and the regime's political stagnation that the aforementioned policies of Minister Joaquín Solís to promote sports education, at the expense of Latin if required, were formulated and the scandal of the ban and confiscation of the movie *Furia española* took place. The minister's plan to forge a healthy and patriotic youth had very little impact on Spanish

society, as was the case with most of the sporting projects coming from above.<sup>143</sup> In the 1970s the Falange was unable to mobilise the population effectively and even some social groups that had shown a willingness to keep the Francoist status quo in the 1960s (such as blue-collar workers of a certain age and low-income female workers) began to demand political liberalisation and social justice following the 1973 economic crisis.<sup>144</sup> Conversely, *Furia española* was a very successful film, despite the Francoist authorities' mutilations of the original cut and the protests of some Catalanists, who believed that the film ridiculed Catalonia. Irony and sarcasm in culture were the popular weapons of choice, seeking to undermine a grotesque dictatorship.

Nonetheless, opposition to the Franco regime should not be idealised. Many Spaniards still supported Franco in 1975. The trend in Spanish society demanding more freedom and political change only became majoritarian after the death of the dictator. Even in the last years of the regime, many Spaniards thought that the dictatorship provided them with social peace and economic security – two issues considered more important than democratic freedoms.<sup>145</sup> This acquiescence to the dictatorship could help explain why Francoism, despite its repressive character and moral misery, had a certain impact when transmitting a cultural idea of Spain. On top of this, recent studies have pointed out that Francoism could have been fairly successful when it came to transmitting Spanish identity via football precisely because this sort of 'banal nationalism' had no (apparent) political implications and hence was easily adopted by different sectors of society.<sup>146</sup> The public's passive acceptance of the regime and a warmer reception of sport discourses (as opposed to political ones) facilitated the endurance of some cultural references regarding the Spanish nation under Francoism that were to survive into the democratic period.

The period 1920–1975 witnessed the creation, development and expansion of the fury and failure narrative in football reports. The narrative not only survived more than half a century; it also gradually increased its impact due to the cumulative media effect. The dual fury-failure story had different historical developments, yet both myths were shaped and developed out of a sort of 'game of mirrors' in which stereotypes created in Spain and clichés originating abroad became permanently intertwined.<sup>147</sup> The myth of the fury was first created by foreigners at the 1920 Antwerp Olympics and then sanitised by Spaniards. This idea of the furious character of Spaniards was in turn reinterpreted abroad and then filtered and reproduced at home. Fatalism was more of a domestic product. It encompassed a number of well-established stereotypes linked

to pessimism and failure in early-twentieth-century Spain. However, the fostering of a tragic, dark, fatal sense of Spanishness chronologically coincided with a foreign neo-romantic reinvention of Spain.<sup>148</sup> This reinvention echoed old stereotypes of popular international imagination, such as passion, fanaticism and obscurantism. The Civil War and the subsequent dictatorship perpetuated the international image of Spaniards as cruel, backward, anarchical and mentally inferior; the Franco regime fought this negative vision and promoted an idea of an exotic and passionate country epitomised in the tourist slogan 'Spain is different'. In doing so, the regime played on the attractions of backwardness, inadvertently showing an internalisation on the part of the dictatorship of Spain's supposed failure to modernise.<sup>149</sup>

The fury and failure narrative endured throughout the decades precisely because it was flexible enough to have different uses in diverse historical contexts. The myth of the fury appealed to several social groups in a 1920s and 1930s Europe which defined nations in racial and cultural terms. Fatalism, disgrace and misfortune also received a good reception in Spain. In the first decades of the twentieth century, many sectors of society associated the Spanish nation with ideas of failure, inability and backwardness, together with the figure of a suffering *Mater Dolorosa*. The myth of the fury was useful for the Francoists too. It fitted well into the racist, macho and quixotic master narrative of the first years of the dictatorship. From the 1960s onwards, the fury reinforced the Francoist idea of the nation's uniqueness in Western Europe. Likewise, fatalism and unfair refereeing decisions fed the dictatorship's discourse that portrayed the regime as the victim of international machinations and foreign plots. Domestically, resorting to fatalism also allowed for an absence of criticism of the regime's policies, as reasons for failure were found beyond the dictatorship's power. But despite the use of clichés to circumvent critique and the unremitting utilisation of censorship and other repressive measures, the Francoist narrative of the authoritarian political nation, expressed in the motto 'One, Great and Free', was clearly redundant and a victim of its own anachronistic character by the time Franco died in November 1975. And yet, some cultural elements of the Francoist idea of Spain survived the dictatorship, as demonstrated by the important role that the narrative of fury and failure was to play in defining Spanishness in the new democracy.

# 3

## Transition to Democracy (1975–1982)

On 20 November 1975, the death of Franco brought relief and hope to many Spaniards. It also led to uncertainty and anxiety, as the end result of the process opened up with the demise of the dictator was by no means certain. Franco's successor as Head of State, King Juan Carlos I, had been appointed by the dictator himself and remained a political mystery. Would the King attempt to preserve the dictatorship or would he try to reform the system from within? Initially, King Juan Carlos maintained the Francoist apparatus intact. In the months that followed the death of *El Caudillo*, the King kept Carlos Arias Navarro as Prime Minister and introduced merely cosmetic changes, in an attempt to perpetuate the dictatorship without Franco. But this continuity with the past led to massive popular protests in favour of democracy. In the first months of 1976, an unprecedented wave of demonstrations and industrial action spread all over the country. Between January and April 1976, over 17,000 strikes took place and the country was brought a standstill.<sup>1</sup>

In July 1976, the King was forced to change tactics. Juan Carlos dismissed Arias Navarro and appointed the reformist Adolfo Suárez as the new Prime Minister. A young Falangist, Suárez began to negotiate both with the Francoist hardliners and the democratic opposition. He convinced most of the Francoist elite that the transformation of the dictatorship's political structures was necessary for the survival of the regime without Franco. Simultaneously, Suárez, with a combination of carrot and stick, persuaded the opposition to drop its aspirations of creating a new system totally detached from Francoism and to negotiate the gradual transformation of the dictatorship into a democracy. What followed was fundamentally a process controlled by political elites, which tactically demobilised street protests. In June 1977, Suárez, who had created his own party (*Unión de Centro Democrático*, UCD) for

the occasion, won the first democratic elections in Spain in more than four decades. In December 1978 a new constitution was passed, first, in parliament and, later, in a referendum. In 1979, the first municipal elections took place, while Suárez was triumphant again in the general elections. However, UCD infighting led Suárez to resign in early 1981. The following year, Felipe González's PSOE won the elections with an absolute majority. The October 1982 socialist landslide is normally considered the end of the transition process, because, unlike the UCD cabinets, the new government had no connection, in any shape or form, to the old Francoist elites.

The creation of a democratic political regime had a direct impact on Spanish football. In the period 1975–1982, Francoist sports structures were dismantled and new decentralised and more democratic institutions created. The Spanish Football Federation and professional football clubs also went through a series of renovations, which included abandoning authoritarian structures and adopting some democratising practices. Together with these political changes, the period 1975–1982 witnessed profound transformations in Spanish society, as popular attitudes towards sports changed. In the years after the death of the dictator, the practice of sports considerably increased among Spaniards and the number of sports clubs soared. These quantitative rises not only show a change in Spaniards' mentality, towards a much more favourable approach to sports, but also provided more 'associational milieus', in the shape of clubs, where national and regional identities could be generated, transmitted and reproduced. In line with political and social changes, the Spanish media too went through its very own transition to democracy. New legislation gradually relaxed state control over the media and ended censorship; while the emergence of privately owned newspapers and radio stations helped the promotion of democratic values. Moreover, sports publications reached an all-time high and radio stations and TVE increased the number of hours devoted to football. As a result of these transformations in press, radio and television, the impact of the media grew stronger in the years of the transition.

This chapter argues that the combination of political, social and media changes led to a transformation of the fury and failure narrative. As the Francoist regime was dismantled, the emphasis on courage and bravery diminished, whereas the pessimistic overtones remained central to the national narrative. Furthermore, the transition years saw an unprecedented upsurge of regional and non-Spanish national identities. The officially hegemonic Spanish identity under Franco was soon replaced by counter-hegemonic identities in many parts of the country. Regional

nationalisms gained unheard levels of popular support and Spanish national identities were also profoundly renovated by an increasing presence of regionalist feelings all over the country. In all cases, decentralisation was presented as an intrinsic part of the democratisation process. In this context, football proved a major medium in the shaping and transmission of new, or renovated, national and regional identities. This chapter is divided into four parts. The first section deals with the political, social and media transformations. The second analyses the renovation of the fury and failure narrative. The third section deals with self and hetero representations of Spain at home and in the foreign media. Lastly, the chapter tackles the changes in Spaniards' regional and national identities and the issue of the commodification of football in the 1975–1982 period.

### **The democratisation of football**

The death of Franco had little effect on the organisation of Spanish football in the short term. In the years 1975 and 1976, all sports remained under the control of the *Delegación Nacional de Educación Física y Deportes* (DNEFD), itself a department of the *Secretaría General del Movimiento* – the ministry that gathered together the Falangist party, trade unions, women's associations and youth organisations. For all the rhetoric of Pedro Solís, minister of the *Secretaría General del Movimiento*, about the promotion of sports, even at the expense of teaching less Latin, for all the appeals of Tomás Pelayo Ros, leader of the DNEFD, for a total reorganisation of sports in Spain, the truth of the matter was that state investment in the field remained relatively low and the country suffered from a serious dearth of infrastructures.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, the government of Prime Minister Arias Navarro perpetuated old habits and decided to bring forward the league match between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona to Friday 30 April 1976. In the midst of a huge pro-democracy political mobilisation, the Francoists thought football was still useful in distracting the public. Yet the trick seems to have had little impact, as student and worker demonstrations took place all over Spain on the day of the game.<sup>3</sup>

The process of de-fascistisation of Spanish sports ran parallel to the dismantling of the Francoist regime. As a consequence of the abolition of the *Movimiento Nacional*, the DNEFD was first renamed *Dirección General de Deportes* and then *Consejo Superior de Deportes* (CSD) in August 1977. These transformations went beyond a mere change of name: they created a new legal framework by which Spanish sport came under the

Ministry of Culture and redefined its political goals. According to the new democratic framework, the practice of sports should connect with the restoration of individual freedoms and be free of state interference in associations and clubs.<sup>4</sup> In the field of football, the new CSD director, Benito Castejón, proposed the democratic election of all club presidents. Pablo Porta, president of the *Real Federación Española de Fútbol*, designed a system that granted all those who had been members (*socios*) of a football club for more than three years the right to vote in presidential elections. This process of democratisation was mainly imposed from above, much in accordance with the political reforms of Prime Minister Suárez. However, the reforms also responded to some pressure from privately owned media. For instance, in 1976 the influential weekly *Don Balón* launched a campaign against Tomás Pelayo Ros, demanding a ‘non-political figure’ at the head of the DNEFD and advocated the democratisation of Spanish football structures.<sup>5</sup> *Don Balón* was not alone. In the years 1976–1977, non-governmental press, such as the dailies *As*, *El País* and *Diario 16* and the radio station *Cadena SER*, insisted on the need to implement democratic reforms in Spanish football.<sup>6</sup>

Footballers also contributed to the democratisation of Spanish soccer. Politically, only a small bunch of professional players were die-hard Francoists and many declared their preferences for democratic postulates during the transition. A survey conducted by *Don Balón* one month before the parliamentary elections of June 1977 showed that just one of the tens of footballers interviewed had political sympathies for the extreme-right party *Fuerza Nueva*, while the vast majority of players opted for democracy.<sup>7</sup> Players also took part in the changing political climate and organised their own trade union. In January 1976, at a time when the only trade union allowed was the Francoist *Sindicato Vertical*, Athletic de Bilbao’s José Ángel Iribar and Real Madrid’s Amancio Amaro called the first meetings to unionise professional footballers and improve their working conditions. Two years later, amid fierce opposition by the *Real Federación Española de Fútbol* and the clubs, the *Asociación de Futbolistas Españoles* (AFE) was founded in January 1978.<sup>8</sup> The players’ main demands were to obtain Social Security memberships for footballers; the full payment of agreed salaries and bonuses; and the abolition of the so-called ‘right of retention’ – a clause by which clubs could keep their players as long as they wanted regardless of the footballers’ wishes. However, clubs and the Spanish Football Federation initially opposed all of the footballers’ requests. Tensions escalated in the following months and, in January 1979, the AFE called the first strike in

the history of Spanish soccer. A further six years and three more strikes (September 1981, April 1982 and September 1984) were required for professional players to see their demands fulfilled.<sup>9</sup>

Alongside the attempts to democratise professional football, the transition years witnessed the fostering of the practice of sport by the masses. The 1978 Constitution granted both the central and the regional governments the power to promote sporting activities, yet it was the creation of freely elected municipalities that profoundly transformed and enhanced the popular practice of sport. The 1979 municipal elections led to the formation of the first democratic local governments since the Second Republic. The new municipalities soon showed a strong determination to promote sport and, crucially, to collaborate with private local associations and sport clubs. Thus town halls built bridges with local associations that were unthinkable in the past due to the dictatorial nature of Francoism.<sup>10</sup> Consequently, thousands of popular races, hikes and cycling competitions, together with local football, basketball and handball championships, were organised in conjunction by municipalities and clubs in the last years of the transition, as the practice of sport expanded significantly all over Spain. Data is very telling in this respect. In 1975, a total of 1,628,850 Spaniards were registered in official sports associations (*federaciones*). By 1983, the number had risen to 2,053,604. A similar picture emerges when we look at the number of sports centres in Spain, which doubled in the period 1975–1984.<sup>11</sup>

The growth in the number of people practising sports had begun in the 1960s and went hand in hand with a change in the mentality of many Spaniards who gradually incorporated sport into their daily lives.<sup>12</sup> What decentralisation and the creation of democratic municipal councils did was to hasten the expansion of a network of sportsmen and sportswomen in working-class neighbourhoods and towns, by providing a more flexible political context that encouraged collaboration between public and private institutions. In many cases, sports associations were related to neighbourhood associations, as they shared common goals such as the construction of new sports centres, the improvement of facilities or the creation of green spaces. The overlapping of sports and neighbourhood associations was significant, for both of them contributed to the creation of a democratic civil society.<sup>13</sup> The associations became spaces in which members developed a culture of civic participation and group discussion, but also turned into one of the most important places where national, regional and local identities were produced and reproduced. As we saw in Chapter 2, in the 1960s and early 1970s, neighbourhood associations, hiking and mountaineering societies,

sports clubs and cultural associations became the agencies through which regional nationalist ideologies were transmitted and 'experienced' in Catalonia and the Basque Country. During the late 1970s and early 1980s, the stark rise in the number of sports clubs multiplied the number of spaces where diverse national and regional identities could be reproduced and experienced in a less repressive milieu. In these years, the emergence of sporting nationalising spaces did not mainly occur in Catalonia and the Basque Country. It rather mushroomed all over Spain, as regionalist feelings were experienced and expressed via sports associations in every region of the country.<sup>14</sup> It is important to note that these regionalist feelings were not necessarily anti-Spanish, but they certainly helped to consolidate the bond between democracy and decentralisation (a link widely spread in the years of the transition), while implicitly negating the authoritarian and centralising principles of Francoist Spanish nationalism.

The nationalising importance of sports associations lay not only in the role that big football clubs played in regaining hegemony for alternative identities in the public sphere following the death of Franco, such as by waving Catalan flags at the Camp Nou and having Johan Cruyff wearing the captain's armband in the colours of the Catalan banner. Small clubs also played a crucial part in transmitting national identities on a daily basis. Local clubs, associations and fan clubs acted as 'everyday spaces' where individuals created a series of meanings and interpretations of events that shaped collective identities.<sup>15</sup> During the transition, the clubs provided 'nationalising spaces' where the vernacular language was used, the captain wore an armband with the colours of the regional flag, regionalist/nationalist symbols were incorporated into the club's badge and regional/national flags were waved in local matches. In this sense, local sports associations facilitated the everyday reproduction of national/regional frameworks through ritualised practices and participations.<sup>16</sup> In a context of profound political and social transformations, the practice and/or the following of sports at a local level helped millions of Spaniards to ground their revised national and regional identities.

Together with social and political changes, the transformations in the media were central to the diffusion of national identities transmitted via football. Following the death of the dictator, the Spanish state-controlled media went through a gradual reform. The Francoist regulation of the media was progressively altered, censorship partially abolished in 1977 and the contents of news and other programmes were slowly modified. These changes took place simultaneously with the

re-foundation of *Radio Televisión Española* (RTVE), the new public corporation created following the so-called *Pactos de la Moncloa* – a broad political agreement between the conservative government of Adolfo Suárez, opposition parties and trade unions. Additionally, the Spanish parliament formed a Culture Committee (*Subcomisión de Cultura*) to coordinate the launching of new regional programmes on public radio and TV stations.<sup>17</sup> Thus the process of political decentralisation reached RTVE, which made possible ‘media spaces’ to promote regional identities. Before regional governments created their own radio and TV channels in the 1980s, regional news, regional series and regional sports were broadcast by the state corporation RTVE.

Sports media went through a qualitative change in the years of the transition to democracy. Television and radio witnessed an important growth in terms of audiences and a new sports press emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In this period, RTVE modernised its infrastructures, improved existing and created new production centres in all Spanish regions and extended the broadcast of the second TV channel to the entire country. Much of this modernisation process was incentivised by Spain’s hosting of the 1982 World Cup. The challenge of broadcasting the 52 matches of the competition, transmitting to 120 TV and radio stations around the globe and accommodating 7,000 journalists resulted in a key renovation of RTVE.<sup>18</sup> The 1982 World Cup also had an impact on the number of sports publications that appeared during the transition. Between 1976 and 1982, 36 new sports publications were launched in Spain, 30 of them in the years 1980–1982.<sup>19</sup> The rise in the number of publications came together with a proliferation of private radio stations and shows, which not only increased the impact of sport on Spanish society but also demonstrated the growing influence of privately owned media. As noted above, some of these media openly supported democracy and the democratisation of football in the first years of the transition, while state-controlled media were, unsurprisingly, more ambiguous. This was highly significant, for the rise of private media and the partial abolition of censorship provided the Spanish public with alternative narratives to the official one. Following four decades of Francoist monologue, new media broke the dictatorship’s monopoly on political and footballing narratives. With the institutionalised channels’ low levels of credibility, the existence of alternative information soon created a strong counter-narrative. The crisis of the Francoist political regime also meant the decline of the dictatorship’s narrative on Spain.

## The fury and failure narrative in transition

As the Franco dictatorship turned into a democratic regime, the appeal of the *furia* to explain Spanish footballers' style diminished. After all, the Francoist use and abuse of the stereotype over four decades tainted the *furia* with dictatorial connotations. Yet, contrary to what is sometimes stated, the myth of the fury did not disappear from Spanish newspapers in the years of the transition to democracy.<sup>20</sup> In purely numerical terms, the record suggests a decline in the use of the expression '*furia española*'. For instance, in the seven years from the death of Franco on 20 November 1975 to the socialist electoral landslide of 28 October 1982, the daily *El Mundo Deportivo* included the terms *furia española* 609 times.<sup>21</sup> This was a significant regression when compared to the 751 occasions that *El Mundo Deportivo* used the expression *furia española* in the seven years before the death of Franco (20 November 1968–20 November 1975). More importantly, in qualitative terms, the idea that Spaniards were naturally brave, courageous and gutsy remained an important feature of the football narrative and in national identity. The coverage of the 1977 World Cup qualifier between Yugoslavia and Spain is a case in point. The Spanish media resorted to the old, recurrent clichés to explain the *selección's* victory. If Spain had won the so-called Battle of Belgrade, it was due to its 'fury' and 'determination'.<sup>22</sup> In what was by all accounts a violent match, the Spanish midfielder Pirri had his fibula broken 14 minutes into the first half and the winger Juanito was hit on his head by a bottle. As Juanito was stretchered unconscious from the pitch, some members of the public threw knives at him. According to *ABC*, the 'heroic' and 'noble' behaviour of the *selección* was antagonistic to Yugoslavia's repeated aggression, underpinning the Quixotic image of a group of 'patrician' Spaniards capable of winning graciously in a situation of extreme adversity.<sup>23</sup>

Similarly to the use of the myth of the *furia* under Francoism, the term fury referred to the national team's bravery, sacrifice and grit during the transition to democracy. Likewise, it also defined the same characteristics in clubs and players – including foreign footballers, such as the German Uli Stielike, who was widely considered to be a genuine representative of the *furia española*.<sup>24</sup> As in previous decades, the concept of Spanish fury was applied to other sports, such as cycling, basketball and tennis.<sup>25</sup> The continuity with the past was also highlighted in regular press reports on the origin of the term *furia española*, comments on Spain's epic matches of previous eras and media tributes to the members of the 1920 Spanish team that competed in the Antwerp

Olympics.<sup>26</sup> Additionally, the magazine *Don Balón* included among its prestigious annual awards one called 'Furia española' – granted to the footballer who had shown the greatest courage in the Spanish First Division – while the radio station *Cadena SER* created 'Garra' (fighting spirit) in 1979, a competition that awarded points according to the players' bravery and determination.<sup>27</sup> Interestingly, both *Don Balón* and *Cadena SER* were among those media which had criticised the dictatorship and advocated democracy following the death of Franco. The implication here is that, despite the prolonged use that the dictatorship had made of the *furia española*, the concept could still somehow be detached from its Francoist connotations.

For all its continuities with the past, the media use of the myth of the fury showed a number of novelties. First, the transition to democracy witnessed the employment of the fury to describe the qualities of women's national teams as well. Whether in basketball, handball or hockey, certain doses of Spanish fury were attributed to female national squads to explain their 'natural' behaviour on the pitch.<sup>28</sup> According to this rationale, it was their national identity that infused Spanish sports-women's hot-blooded, brave and courageous style. However, it is important to note that this application of the *furia* to women's style of play certainly does not indicate a feminisation of the stereotype. It rather meant a masculinisation of the female players, for they were constantly ascribed macho features such as strength, guts and bravery.

The second novelty in the *furia* narrative during the transition was the idea that the Spanish fury, as the national feature that distinguished Spaniards from foreigners, had been lost and needed to be recovered.<sup>29</sup> The comments in the press implied a certain nostalgia for a golden age and the necessity to return to the old ways of playing football. Newspapers hardly ever set dates to, let alone discussed, the golden age and the reasons behind the alleged reduction of 'fury levels' were seldom explored. Occasionally, the press pointed to the high salaries paid to sportsmen as one of the reasons for the loss of courage, but most of the time the decrease of Spanish fury was something taken for granted.<sup>30</sup> It was the challenge of recouping the Spanish fury that really seemed to matter. Thus it became fairly common to detect the hoped-for revival of the Spanish fury when players showed a good deal of fighting spirit.<sup>31</sup> The 1982 World Cup provided, at least on paper, an excellent chance to hail the recovery of the fury. The Spanish Football Federation created a World Cup mascot for the *selección*. Predictably, the mascot was a bull dressed as a footballer in the red and blue colours of the national team. Tellingly, the bull was named 'Furia'.

As *El Mundo Deportivo* reflected, the name of the mascot sought not only ‘to honour the old Spanish fury’, but also to incite ‘the current players to recover it’.<sup>32</sup> However, things did not go according to plan for Spain in the World Cup. Following the opening game, a poor 1–1 draw against Honduras, the home team faced Yugoslavia. After the referee awarded Spain a penalty for a foul clearly committed outside the box, the home team won 2–1. Yet again, the local press talked about a vibrant ‘display of Spanish fury’, while the Iberians’ manager, José Emilio Santamaría, praised the ‘unequal fighting spirit’ of his players.<sup>33</sup> But fighting spirit alone did not guarantee good results. Spain went on to lose to Northern Ireland and, in the second group stages, West Germany. A final draw with England could not prevent either the home nation being knocked out of the tournament or Santamaría being fired. Despite the poor performance in Spain 1982, the myth of the fury remained central to the football narrative. After the World Cup, Spain’s newly appointed manager, Miguel Muñoz, declared he had the solution to the *selección*’s woes: ‘We must recover the Spanish fury’.<sup>34</sup>

The narrative of the Spanish fury during the transition to democracy matches well with what Matthew Levinger and Paula Franklin Lytle have labelled the triadic structure of nationalist rhetoric.<sup>35</sup> Nationalist discourses tend to be divided into three parts, namely: the idealisation of a past golden age; the description of present-day decadence; and the promise of a future reascent fatherland that will be achieved by recouping the national qualities of the glory days. This insistence on recovering the fury, as a way to overcome the present decadence of Spanish football and return to the splendour of the past, stands as a powerful case of nationalist rhetoric. It too sent an intrinsically conservative message, as the answers to the perceived decay were to be found not in modernisation and change but in a nebulous past. This ‘decadent’ take on the furia somehow reinforced the second main component of the fury and failure narrative. Failure, due to bad luck and/or unfair refereeing, continued to be pivotal to the narrative of *selección* in the period 1975–1982. When compared to the final years of the Franco dictatorship, the truth is that Spain did not do as badly in international tournaments during the transition to democracy. Under Franco, the *selección* had failed to qualify for the 1970 and 1974 World Cups and for Euro 1972. By contrast, Spain reached the quarter-finals in Euro 1976, qualified for both the 1978 World Cup and Euro 1980 and hosted the 1982 tournament. Still, the discursive link between the *selección* and underachievement was far from being broken in the years that followed the death of Franco.

There was nothing exceptional in this continuity. The association between Spain and failure was well rooted in the national narrative. As we saw in the previous chapter, Spanish intellectuals and historians created a master narrative throughout the twentieth century that described their country as an underdeveloped, somehow incomplete nation, with a particularly dramatic history when compared to its European neighbours. This perception of the Spanish past did not change substantially in the period 1975–1982.<sup>36</sup> Thus the discourse on Spanish football and underachievement reinforced a broader master narrative of national failure expressed in literature, cinema, mass media and academic historiography. According to this narrative, national failure was in some way unrelated to human actions and misfortune featured prominently in football reports during the transition. Almost every defeat of the *selección* in World Cups and Euros was explained in terms of bad luck. For instance, when Spain lost 2–0 away to West Germany in the quarter-finals of Euro 1976, the Spanish press was unanimous as to the national team's lack of fortune.<sup>37</sup> In this particular match, newspapers also accused the referee of being biased against Spain. As was the case under Franco, international football injustices and misfortunes contributed to create a Spanish narrative of national self-victimisation. Two years later, in Argentina 1978, bad luck was posited to rationalise a 0–0 draw against Brazil, following one of the greatest missed opportunities in the history of the World Cup – as the striker Julio Cardeñosa failed to score an open goal once the South American keeper was beaten.<sup>38</sup> In Euro 1980, the Spanish press wrote, yet again, about how unfortunate the *selección* was.<sup>39</sup> There was some justification for it. In their final game of the group stages, the Spaniards missed a penalty, hit the woodwork and had a goal disallowed, only to be defeated by England (2–1). Reflecting on the entire Euro 1980 experience, *El País* concluded that Spain had established a new 'record of misfortunes'.<sup>40</sup> Taking into consideration the reports on the national team in the transition years, it is not difficult to detect the emergence of a pattern in the rhetoric of the Spanish press: Spain played well, deserved better and achieved nothing.

If one tournament was to epitomise Spain's underachievement in the transition years, that was surely the 1982 World Cup. From the very beginning, the hosts posted lacklustre performances and obtained very poor results, including a draw against Honduras and a defeat to Northern Ireland. The draw against the Central Americans and the aforementioned scrappy victory over Yugoslavia were enough to see Spain through to the second group stage on goals scored. However, Spain's by then rapidly diminishing dreams were shattered when they

lost 2–1 to West Germany, a defeat that knocked the hosts out of the tournament. Amid the footballing debacle, the Spanish coach resorted to referring to the proverbial misfortune of the *selección* to justify the unimpressive results.<sup>41</sup> But Santamaría's excuses began to wear thin. The Spanish media ridiculed Santamaría, dubbed him 'Mr Excuses' and mocked his tendency to complain that the *selección* was jinxed.<sup>42</sup> In doing so, the press undermined the discourse that associated failure with misfortune, the very link that Spanish journalists had endorsed in the near past. Nevertheless, criticism of the use of misfortune to cover up incompetent performances and lack of investment in sports was not new in the Spanish media. As early as November 1975, *Don Balón* denounced the country's appalling scarcity of sports infrastructure and teachers, while 'we have political leaders still hammering the idea that all we need is luck'.<sup>43</sup> Along the same lines, a few months before the 1980 Moscow Olympics, *El País* warned about the lack of planning and the excess of extemporisation in most Spanish federations. In the past, the newspaper argued, medals have been won out of 'improvisation or a stroke of genius', but in a time of scientifically trained athletes these genuinely Spanish features were pointless.<sup>44</sup>

Spain's performance in the 1982 World Cup led to an introspective analysis of the *selección*. Some pointed to the Spaniards' 'primitive football technique', when explaining the hosts' failures.<sup>45</sup> Others highlighted Spain's inability to play as a team and lack of long-term planning in the *selección*.<sup>46</sup> In all cases, the press reported on the enthusiasm and fighting spirit of the Spanish players but stressed that devotion and passion were insufficient resources when it came to winning matches.<sup>47</sup> The implication of this critique was clear: the Spanish fury was not enough to succeed in modern football. Guts and zeal were worthless on their own and a Quixotic approach to football was useless. Better planning and improved technique would pave the way to success. Moreover, the critique of the *furia* and the questioning of the narrative that associated misfortune with failure were accompanied by a re-evaluation of Spanish fatalism. A more rational understanding of the shortcomings of the national team could not be shaped by irrational pessimism. After relating Spain's 1982 performance to the Armada, the Battle of Trafalgar, the 1898 loss of Cuba and the chance missed by Cardenosa in the 1978 World Cup, the writer Manuel Vicent ironically penned in *El País*: 'We love whining. Spain has always turned huge defeats into works of art, because in this country pessimism is an axiom.'<sup>48</sup>

The period 1975–1982 witnessed a number of continuities, changes and contradictions in the fury and failure narrative. The cliché of the

passionate Spaniard remained important when the national team won. But the media criticised the Spanish fury as useless following the 1982 World Cup disaster. Likewise, although the press contributed to highlighting the link between failure and bad luck, it also condemned the use of misfortune as an excuse for a lack of proper planning and poor investment. These continuities, changes and contradictions in the fury and failure narrative were pretty much the reflection of the inconsistencies of a country in transition, a shifting nation-state that kept strong links with the past while trying to fully embrace modernity.

### **Self and hetero representations of Spain**

Alongside the stereotypes associated with the fury and failure narrative, the Spanish press sought to represent Spain as a country going through an important modernising process. This discourse worked at different levels. In the political sphere, both Francoist reformers and the democratic opposition agreed on the need to modernise the country, even though they diverged over the means to achieve that goal. The right stressed the economic growth of the last years of the Franco regime and dismissed the need to look back, as many of the high and middle-ranking members of the conservative parties had played important roles in the dictatorship or came from leading Francoist families. The socialists too insisted on a programme of national regeneration, promising change and modernisation without historical retrospection.<sup>49</sup> The elite-driven nature of the transitional model in Spain had much to do with this persistent appeal to modernise the country, as conservatives and socialists alike aimed to contain rising forms of mass political mobilisation, revolutionary or otherwise, that could challenge their predominant role in Spanish politics. Thus the hegemonic message of the transition was an exhortation to transform Spain by reform and to look forward – an idea perfectly encapsulated in the 1982 socialists' slogan 'for change'.<sup>50</sup> Central to the modernisation of Spain was the Europeanisation of the country. Conservatives and socialists portrayed the transition to democracy as a key step in a process of political modernisation by which Spain was catching up with its Western European neighbours. Moreover, an eventual entry of the country into the then European Economic Community (EEC) was presented as the final stage in Spain's long road to 'historical normalisation'. This pro-European discourse was widely shared, as the transition period witnessed a sharp Europeanisation of Spanish identity, according to opinion polls. Tellingly, at the beginning of the 1980s the percentage of Spaniards

supporting European integration was higher than those of citizens in the EEC member states.<sup>51</sup>

The modernisation message also loomed large in the realm of culture. The hegemony of the anti-Francoist intellectuals meant that the equation democracy=modernity became paramount, even if the democratic model that they ended up defending was the very bourgeois liberal system that they had rejected in favour of more radical projects during the last years of the dictatorship.<sup>52</sup> Cinema and music also fostered an essentially modernising idea of the Spanish nation. In the early 1980s, a number of bands and film directors (such as Pedro Almodóvar) showed a will to link Spanish identity with modernity. The so-called *movida madrileña* was a postmodern reinvention of a Spanish national identity, which combined modern elements with kitsch and *castizo* features.<sup>53</sup> Crucially, the *movida* became a huge cultural phenomenon due to the support of TVE and Radio 3, as these public broadcasters provided the originally marginal cultural movement with a powerful platform that reached the entire country.<sup>54</sup> What is more, during the transition, RTVE began to produce television series and historical dramas, such as the hugely popular *Curro Jiménez*, that fostered a new democratic image of Spain.<sup>55</sup>

The 1982 World Cup was considered an excellent chance to portray Spain as a modern, developed and democratic country, both at home and abroad. The UCD governments and the Spanish Football Federation worked hard on the organisation of the event. Their main challenge was to have a flawless World Cup that could end, once and for all, the image of Spain as a sloppy country where things were always done at the very last minute. However, a few weeks before the opening ceremony the FIFA directors showed their concern about a number of delays in the preparations. Rodolfo Martín-Villa, the Spanish vice president, then had to create a special committee that met weekly at the Moncloa Palace to make sure that everything was finished on time.<sup>56</sup> By and large the World Cup took place with no major incidents. But as soon as the World Cup ended, a scandal relating to the finances of the tournament broke out, as the *Comité Organizador del Mundial 82* (the organising committee) was condemned for spending 60 million pesetas on different items that were not initially in the official budget.<sup>57</sup> In the following months, with new accusations of corruption emerging, the *Tribunal de Cuentas* (a governmental agency, literally the Court of Accounts) produced a report revealing a number of serious irregularities and loopholes in the accounts of the Spanish Football Federation and the scandal was subsequently discussed in the Spanish parliament.<sup>58</sup> Despite the defensive

position of Pablo Porta, President of the Spanish Football Federation, who stubbornly denied any wrongdoings, the image of Spain presented to Spaniards as a modern country capable of hosting a major sporting event competently was weakened by these organisational problems and cases of corruption.<sup>59</sup> Instead of the work of a developed country, what remained in the mind of many Spaniards was the idea that the World Cup had been a botched job.<sup>60</sup>

The image of Spain as a modern country was also undermined by the controversy that followed the launch of Naranjito, the official mascot of the 1982 World Cup. Naranjito was a smiley orange dressed as a *selección* footballer with a ball in its left hand. The Naranjito designers, two young employees of an Andalusian marketing company, explained they chose an 'internationally well-known, typically Spanish product' that would project 'the image of a country with benign weather, lots of sun, and friendly people, a picture of happiness, light and colour'.<sup>61</sup> The cheerful fruit was chosen from hundreds of entries in a competition in 1979. The runners-up in the mascot competition were Brindis, a boy in the *selección* gear holding a capote and a bullfighter's hat, and Toribalón, a bull wrapped by a football. However, very few were happy with the jury's decision. Painters, designers, art critics and even footballers savagely criticised Naranjito. The mascot was described as 'depressing', 'horrendous', 'pitiful', 'horrific', 'a botch', 'simplistic', 'unpleasant' and 'a ball with a tail, rather than an orange'.<sup>62</sup> Tellingly, virtually all critics highlighted that the Naranjito design was a recreation of 'the same old stereotypes' of Spain.<sup>63</sup> Unsurprisingly, they saw little innovation and modernity in a design that linked Spain to sunshine and jovial people, much in line with the tourist campaigns of the last years of the Franco dictatorship.

The *selección's* poor performance in the World Cup was yet another factor which hampered the discourse of Spain as a modernising country. Spain's football was compared to that of third world countries. Miguel Muñoz, for instance, wrote that Spain had shown an inferior technical level to that of Cameroon and Honduras.<sup>64</sup> Following the defeat against Northern Ireland, the Spanish press complained: 'We have seen some "third world" football in this tournament, but Spain's performance last night was the most underdeveloped of them all. It hurts because almost the entire world watched it and people could see the gradual devaluation of our game'.<sup>65</sup> This defeat was especially tragicomic because the Northern Irish had been spotted drinking beer and whisky in their hotel's swimming pool just hours before the match. Commenting on the humiliation at the hands of Northern Ireland, while condemning

Germans and Austrians for shamelessly fixing their match that very same day, the conservative *ABC* concluded: 'The disgraceful behaviour offered yesterday [...] by Germany and Austria in order to knock Algeria out paled in comparison to the shame of our national soccer. Our "brave" boys have shown that we are still very far away from the Common Market in terms of football'.<sup>66</sup>

The modernity–underdevelopment dialectic dominated the foreign perception of Spain during the transition to democracy. Questions of how modern the Iberian nation-state was compared to other Western European countries lay at the heart of many of the hetero-representations of Spain. Unsurprisingly, the 1982 World Cup became the yardstick by which modernity and underdevelopment were measured. The French media praised the unprecedented Spanish efforts in organising the competition. Television, radio and press underscored the modernisation of media technology, communications, stadiums, hotels, roads and airports all over the country.<sup>67</sup> In the World Cup opening ceremony, for instance, the French television commentator described FC Barcelona's renovated Camp Nou, which had incorporated an operating theatre for emergencies, a chapel and a hairdresser, as 'something really impressive', one of the most modern stadiums in Europe.<sup>68</sup> On occasions, the technological effort and the huge economic investment were associated with the 'young Spanish democracy', hence drawing a link between modernisation and the recently established political system.<sup>69</sup> Others in the French media seemed more interested in connecting Spain's development to the commercialisation of the World Cup. At the end of the competition, the radio station *France Inter* explained that all the money invested by the government in new technologies, airports, stadiums, roads and communications came from the sale of publicity rights and sponsorships of the World Cup to international corporations.<sup>70</sup> In fact, private investment was only a portion of the total World Cup venture; but, regardless of the accuracy of the statement, the intention to present corporations as the real engine of the country's modernisation was unquestionable.

For all the discourse on Spanish modernisation, the negative stereotypes of the Iberians remained powerful in the French media. The latter emphasised the representation of Spaniards as slack and disorganised people. In some instances the purveyors of stereotypes were vindicated, as the consortium created to commercialise the World Cup football tickets abroad, *Mundiespaña*, made a mess of it and received hundreds of complaints before the beginning of the tournament. Accusations of corruption in the trading of tickets followed suit, which only corroborated the French image

of Spaniards as cheeky and incompetent.<sup>71</sup> *Le Monde* was very clear in this respect: 'Spain has gone against its own interests' with Mundiespaña.<sup>72</sup> Interestingly, the power of stereotypes was so strong that when something did not fit into the preconceived national image, that particular event was defined as strange and unrepresentative. A case in point was the opening ceremony of the 1982 World Cup. Throughout the live coverage of the event, the *Télévision Française 1* commentator was clearly expecting something to go terribly wrong, but disaster never struck. The reporter then said that he was highly surprised that everything had gone as planned in a country where things were done 'at the very last minute'.<sup>73</sup> According to this reading of events, if reality did not match the stereotype, there was something atypical about reality.

Perhaps no other journalist demonstrated the modernity-underdevelopment dichotomy better than the veteran reporter Gérard Edelstein during the 1982 World Cup. In an article for *L'Equipe* entitled '*Et l'Espagne?*' ('And Spain?') Edelstein wrote that the old Spain associated with rural environments, fury, fierceness, pride and emotional deaths was disappearing.<sup>74</sup> The Spain of 'passions cooked in the oven of faith and ardent nationalism' had faded away as a new country emerged.<sup>75</sup> The new Spain was more mundane but also more European. The country had been affected by the huge inflation of the 1973 oil crisis, just like any other Western European country; Spanish women had rapidly improved their working and – more generally – social conditions; the gay scene was more visible than ever; and it was very easy to get illegal drugs. Clearly, democratic Spain still had a number of problems. Culturally, public officers were unproductive 'dilettantes'. Politically, the 'regionalisation' of the country was perceived as the main problem, for it precluded Spaniards from working on a common national project. Nevertheless, Edelstein put forward a peculiar thesis which argued that the strong Arabic influence and the lack of foreigners in the country – with the obvious exception of tourists – had created a Spanish ethnic specificity that allowed for unproblematic changes. Hence, even if Spaniards were not quite there yet in terms of democratic habits or even respect for others, the French journalist concluded, they would eventually learn how to live in liberty.

Some other old stereotypes remained important in the French narrative on Spain. The Iberians were described as hot-blooded, passionate football supporters who could be easily manipulated. When Spanish professional players called for a strike to improve their working conditions in 1979, French TV news talked about the 'draconian' contracts that footballers were forced by their clubs to fulfil.<sup>76</sup> In the words of the

newsreader Patrick Poivre d'Arvor, the industrial action was 'an exceptional event in a country where football has somehow long been the opium of the masses'.<sup>77</sup> Apparently, the use the Franco regime had made of football was not missed on the other side of the Pyrenees. In any case, the idea that Spaniards loved football in the same way that they adored bullfighting was, at times, combined with religious metaphors that compared soccer stadiums to sanctuaries and football-watching to a Catholic rite.<sup>78</sup> This narrative perpetuated the neo-romantic idea of Spain as a country of religious bigots with irrational tendencies. In the same vein, the French press insisted in rendering the World Cup hosts as 'a mixture of extraordinary gentleness and unusual susceptibility' to all sorts of critiques.<sup>79</sup> Aware of the significance of the World Cup to the image of Spain, the locals seemed eager to please, but Spaniards' reaction to criticism also demonstrated a certain inferiority complex that was manifested in a hypersensitivity to foreigners' assessments.

The German press also manifested the modernisation–underdevelopment dichotomy, although it showed little interest in the transformation of the country and mainly focused on Spain's backwardness. Of all topics, it was the scandal of Mundiespaña which filled the most column inches of the papers. The Mundiespaña consortium had been given the monopoly to merchandise the 1982 World Cup tickets abroad. Mundiespaña, run by travel agencies and hotel chains, decided to sell the tickets for the football matches exclusively as part of tourist packages (that included hotel accommodation and meals) at exorbitant prices. The consortium's selling policy resulted in an economic fiasco, with few packages sold abroad and empty seats at almost every game of the tournament. It also generated touting and accusations of corruption. The German press accused Mundiespaña of being an institutionalised fraud and the worst possible publicity for the number one tourist destination in the world.<sup>80</sup> The idea that Spaniards were all swindlers trying to take advantage of the World Cup to rip off foreigners may not be true, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* warned days before the World Cup, but it was spreading fast.<sup>81</sup> For weeks the German press hammered the idea that hotel owners were overcharging tourists, small businesses were ripping off people, and the Civil Guard, the military police in charge of traffic, were fining foreign motorists indiscriminately.<sup>82</sup> As *Der Spiegel* put it, instead of using the World Cup to improve the bad reputation that Spain had due to military coups d'état and ETA bombs, the hosts were behaving as if they were a third world country.<sup>83</sup>

This representation of Spaniards as cheeky thieves came together with a portrait of the country as the kingdom of improvisation where

everything was left to the very last minute. According to German newspapers, the Spanish press itself complained about lack of planning for the World Cup and journalists could see that media communications, buildings, and air and land transportation were not ready with only a few days to go to the opening ceremony.<sup>84</sup> The organisation of the World Cup was called a 'national botched job' and Mundiespaña ironically relabelled 'Mundiestafa' (Worldfraud).<sup>85</sup> The German press was fond of quoting local newspapers for it gave reports a veneer of on-the-ground information about Spain.<sup>86</sup> However, this incorporation of the Spaniards' self-perception was also useful in reinforcing well-established German clichés about the Spanish as superficial, inconstant and corrupt.<sup>87</sup> By the same token, this image of Spaniards as unorganised and careless was used to underpin the Teutonic media self-perception of Germans. Thus the hetero-representations of Spaniards were frequently contrasted with an image of Germans as thorough and well-organised.<sup>88</sup> The utilisation of stereotypes had the effect of reinforcing old certainties (the Spaniards behaved as they were supposed to), while introducing a feel-good factor for the German reader, as the comparison of national characters underlined a supposed Teutonic moral superiority over the Iberians.

During the transition to democracy, the German media also employed a number of additional stereotypes and clichés that perpetuated historical myths about Spain. The idea that Spaniards were a proud, temperamental, fierce and aggressive people was commonplace in football reports.<sup>89</sup> The use of these particular set of stereotypes contributed to corroborate a mythology of Spanish national character that had prevailed in Germany since the nineteenth century.<sup>90</sup> Flamenco and bullfighting metaphors were also customary, as they too fed into the German neo-romantic narrative of Spanish national identity.<sup>91</sup> On top of this, the 1982 World Cup gave way to a profound criticism of the Spanish police. Considered authoritarian and uncoordinated, the Spanish security forces were accused by the German press of overreacting and brutally charging football supporters of different nationalities, including a bunch of English fans 'whose only crime was being ugly'.<sup>92</sup> The complaints about the Spanish police did nothing but perpetuate the German image of a Spain linked to irrational, violent behaviours, an image that perpetuated a continuity between the Franco dictatorship and the new democratic Spain.

Not all representations of Spaniards were negative, however. The German press stressed how friendly, generous, hospitable and fair Spaniards were.<sup>93</sup> These were also well-established clichés of the

neo-romantic tradition that had been revived and strengthened among German tourists in the 1960s and 1970s; a survey published in 1977 showed that the first things that came to West Germans' minds when they heard the word Spain were 'holiday, sun and sea'.<sup>94</sup> Very few journalists really latched on to the transformations the country was going through. An important exception was a report in the political pages of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on what German supporters travelling to Spain should expect. The 'guide' described Spain as a modernising European country, pointed out that Madrid was among the world's leading cities when it came to culture, praised *El País* for becoming one of the best newspapers on the continent in the space of six years and described the Spanish people as politically active in the fight for their democratic freedoms:

Democracy was not a gift of the king to the Spaniards, as many ill-informed foreign politicians repeat over and over. Spain has become a democracy because the vast majority of the people wanted it that way and many Spaniards took to the streets for democracy in 1976 and 1977.<sup>95</sup>

This sort of competent, nuanced analysis was, unfortunately, rare. Most German journalists remained purveyors of stereotypes and painted an overall picture of Spain as a friendly, if chaotic, nation governed by corrupt, authoritarian politicians. The *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* perfectly epitomised this image in its headline: 'Assessment of the World Cup organisation: Chaotic but always surrounded by friendly people'.<sup>96</sup>

The British press also characterised Spaniards as backward – but not so friendly. On the eve of the 1982 World Cup, Spain was depicted as a chaotic, corrupt and dysfunctional country. Together with the possibility of terrorist forays, *The Guardian* talked about 'simple, complete chaos over unfinished stadiums and airports, confusion over passes, tickets, telephones and hotels. Until quite recently profits of more than 5 million pounds were being forecast. Now the aim is to break even. Allegations of "financial impropriety" have, in the meantime, been quickly denied'.<sup>97</sup> For the newspaper, the distribution of tickets for the Mundial 'showed the workings of a society that awkwardly straddles the Third World and modern Europe'.<sup>98</sup> If Spain was a political, social and cultural backwater, this was partly due to the strong legacy of the Franco dictatorship. The British media saw in the brutal, fascistic behaviour of the paramilitary Spanish police a line of continuity with the past. 'Indeed some [policemen] looked like soccer hooligans in uniform, unshaven, over-weight

and not averse to a spot of indiscriminate bashing of heads. But their sheer numbers and their vast array of weaponry – helmets, shields, tear gas, rubber bullets and three armoured cars’ indicated their military character, reported *The Observer*.<sup>99</sup> Additionally, news reports of allegedly neo-fascist Spanish hooligans attacking English fans reinforced the idea that Spain was a country where the extreme right had a very strong political and social presence.<sup>100</sup>

Alongside the description of Spain as a country hampered by its fascist legacy, which indirectly reinforced the UK’s perception of itself as a democratic nation, the British media infantilised Spaniards. The hosts of the 1982 World Cup were often depicted as easily excited people, irrationally nationalistic and with a tendency to exhibit childish behaviour.<sup>101</sup> *The Times* commented on Spanish players in their game against Honduras: [the] ‘more frustrated they became the more childishly they turned to less fair means to gain an advantage.’<sup>102</sup> On some occasions, Spaniards were overly emotional, ‘excitable hosts’.<sup>103</sup> This hot temper also translated into dirty on-field behaviour, ‘naturally’ reflecting a cheating nation that implemented ‘a cynical policy of calculated intimidation designed to stop’ opponents.<sup>104</sup> Childish, irrational, dirty, backward and fascist: such descriptions of Spaniards in the British media fundamentally perpetuated historical stereotypes about the Iberians.

The Italian press presented the Mundial 82 as Spain’s ‘ticket to world respectability’.<sup>105</sup> Hosting the football tournament was a step away from Francoist ‘false neutrality’ and an important move towards the full incorporation of the country into the Western world.<sup>106</sup> The organisation of the tournament was an excellent opportunity to show the world that Spain was changing, even though some sectors of society, such as the armed forces, were resistant to democratic transformations. The Italian newspapers denounced organisational problems and condemned the fact that the Mundial meant a huge economic loss for the Spanish government, while corporations made millions of dollars out of the tournament.<sup>107</sup> However, all things considered, the transalpine media concluded that the World Cup was a ‘success’. After all, Spain was no Third World country and things could have gone worse than they did.<sup>108</sup> Italians considered Spaniards as ‘cousins’, as relatives, albeit somehow underdeveloped.<sup>109</sup> Hence the critique of Spaniards was at times accompanied by doses of patronising sympathy.<sup>110</sup> On some other occasions, disapproval shaded into denigration. After the first phase of Mundial 82, the players of the *selección* were depicted as ‘a bunch of technically semiliterate, tactically evanescent and athletically pathetic cowards’.<sup>111</sup>

Like the rest of the European press, the Italian media used typical national icons such as bullfighting and flamenco to describe Spanish football. For instance, following the hosts' defeat at the hands of Northern Ireland, *La Repubblica* wrote that 'Spain were a dreadful flamenco dancer who did not even know the basic tempos of the dance'.<sup>112</sup> However, the Rome newspaper also referred in its reports to the writers of the Generation of 1898 and the *movida madrileña*, cultural allusions that presumed an important knowledge of Spain among Italian readers.<sup>113</sup> The same applied to politics. *La Repubblica* provided a solid analysis of the political situation in Spain related to the World Cup. The threat of an ETA attack, the problems in the UCD government and the PSOE's criticism of the World Cup organisational fiasco all linked football to politics in Spain. Tellingly, the Italian newspaper also noticed some of the World Cup's implications for Spanish national identities: 'The most important legacy of the Mundial remains the use of the [Spanish] flag, the painless re-appropriation by the masses of a symbol that was considered up until yesterday (up until Tejero) the domain of the extreme right.'<sup>114</sup> *La Repubblica's* comments were acute. They referred to the phenomenon of the reclamation of the Spanish flag that had begun in 1981. As a response to Colonel Tejero's attempted military coup in that year, the Spanish authorities designed a new constitutional coat of arms that jettisoned the Francoist eagle. Seeking to detach the national flag from its Francoist connotations, the new symbolism was promoted in a governmental and press campaign in December 1981. The widespread use of the new flag during the World Cup in the summer of 1982 seems to indicate that the new constitutional emblem was at least partially successful. It was also evidence of a country where national identities were pretty much in the (re)making.

## **Identities in transition**

The years of the transition to democracy were a time of profound redefinition of national and regional identities. It is commonplace in the historiography to highlight that the transition period witnessed an unprecedented rise of both 'old' regional nationalisms (such as Basque, Catalan and Galician) and new regionalist/nationalist movements all over Spain. However, seldom stressed is the fact that the growth of regionalist feelings meant a redefinition of Spanish national identities. Moreover, this reshaping meant that Spanish and alternative identities were simultaneously redefined as part of the same historical process.<sup>115</sup>

Thus Spanish national identities were transformed in relation to renovated regional and alternative national identities; whereas Catalan, Basque and Galician national identities were concurrently reshaped in relation to the new Spanish identities. In this historical process, the number of Spaniards identifying with both their region and Spain grew considerably, as the democratic system transformed the Francoist centralist state into a semi-federal one. Dual identities were Spaniards' main identification in opinion polls, although levels of attachment with region and nation varied significantly.

In the field of sport the compatibility between regional and Spanish national identities was expressed in different ways. On 22 May 1976, the opening ceremony of the Barcelona Provincial Games (*Juegos Deportivos Provinciales*) took place at Terrassa and included a Chinese-style show in which more than 2,000 children produced different images with huge colour boards. The televised spectacle was highly significant because the final mural represented the faces of King Juan Carlos, Queen Sofia and Prince Felipe on two merging Catalan and Spanish flags.<sup>116</sup> Putting aside the dubious taste of the show, the symbolic charge of the event was unquestionable, as it highlighted the compatibility of Catalan and Spanish emblems under the royal figures. Some sectors of the Catalan press also supported the compatibility between Spanish and Catalan identities, by presenting the international victories of Catalans as good news for Spanish sport, much in the same manner as they had done under Francoism.<sup>117</sup> Multiple identities were shown during the 1982 World Cup too. The opening ceremony of the Mundial 82 was designed as a showcase of overlapping identities. The event took place at FC Barcelona's Camp Nou and the stadium's gigantic screens displayed messages in Spanish, Catalan and English. The ceremony included a number of traditional Catalan folk performances, combined with dances from other Spanish regions, and the display of Spanish, FIFA and Catalan flags. Furthermore, Pablo Porta, the Catalan president of the Spanish Football Federation, gave his opening speech both in Catalan and Spanish. Some of his words in Catalan were revealing: 'Barcelonans, Catalans, Spanish all, thank you, thank you very much for the welcome of our visitors.'<sup>118</sup> For Porta, local, regional and national identities were compatible but they were also hierarchically organised. From-below demonstrations of dual identities came from Spain supporters in Valencia, where the *selección española* played during the first group stage of the World Cup. Footage of all three matches that the national team played at the Luis Casanova Stadium show that tens of Valencian flags were

displayed alongside hundreds of Spanish emblems, constitutional or otherwise.<sup>119</sup>

The display of dual identities does not imply the absence of stateless nationalisms in football stadiums during the transition to democracy. We will analyse the growth of regional nationalisms in Catalonia and the Basque Country during the transition to democracy in Chapters 6 and 7. But let us now focus on the development of Spanish national identities in the period 1975–1982. Recent academic studies have made clear that the low esteem of Spanish identity following four decades of Francoist nationalism was less acute than previously thought.<sup>120</sup> In the political arena, very few defended the Francoist idea of Spain during the transition. The extreme right became electorally irrelevant, although many public officers, particularly in the army and the security forces, remained Francoist hardliners with strong political power. More importantly, all parties represented in the Cortes in the period 1977–1982 defended the existence of the Spanish nation, with the logical exception of regional nationalists who considered Spain a mere state composed of different nations. Admittedly, the ideas of the Spanish nation propagated varied substantially from one party to another. *Alianza Popular* (AP), formed by many ex-Francoists and led by the former Franco minister Manuel Fraga, defended an unreconstructed idea of the Spanish nation but accepted a limited devolution. Suarez's party, the UCD, positioned itself as the defender of the 'unity of Spain', while aiming at restricting and unifying the process of devolution.<sup>121</sup> At the other end of the political spectrum, socialists and communists began the transition to democracy with postulates close to those of regional nationalists, that is, supporting, at least on paper, the right of self-determination. However, the left never really questioned the existence of the Spanish nation and gradually changed its positions to endorse the oneness of Spain in the shape of a semi-federal state.<sup>122</sup> Yet, for all the different understandings of the nature of Spain, it is important to note that the arguments over the national/regional question, the constitutional debate and the subsequent discussion on the harmonisation of the process of devolution helped to maintain the Spanish nation at the heart of the country's politics, and hence the media, during the transition.

The debate on the Spanish nation took place alongside a process of regionalisation of Spanish identities. This process emphasised the regional identity of Spaniards but did not question that Spain was ultimately a sovereign nation. The regionalisation of Spanish identity had been kick-started by Francoist elites at the end of the dictatorship – in an

attempt to guarantee their political survival – and later spread throughout the political spectrum during the transition.<sup>123</sup> The regionalisation of Spanish identities took shape in the realm of football too. From the late 1970s, supporters began to display regionalist/nationalist symbols in stadiums all over the country. Football clubs in Galicia, Valencia, Andalusia, Aragon and the Canary Islands, to name a few, became regional emblems of their respective territories.<sup>124</sup> Furthermore, players and directors of football clubs openly backed the creation of statutes of autonomies in their respective regions.<sup>125</sup> With very few exceptions, this support in football stadiums for devolution did not involve a challenge to the idea of Spain as a nation in the same manner that Catalan and Basque nationalism did.

The presence of the Spanish nation was also relevant in cultural terms during the transition to democracy. As pointed out above, the musicians of the *movida*, cinema directors, writers and painters, together with RTVE and private media, contributed to create a new national cultural sphere that promoted a renovated idea of Spain. The unproblematic reconstruction of the Spanish nation in the realm of culture demonstrates that the transition to democracy incorporated and perpetuated the social effects of the Francoist nationalisation of the masses.<sup>126</sup> As we saw in Chapter 2, the informal mechanisms of nationalisation (including football) worked pretty effectively in the last decade of the Franco regime to create a social Spanish identity and a sort of consensus on the desirability of capitalism and the dictatorship. Francoism no doubt ended up ideologically discredited, but the nationalising effects of the military regime had an important social presence in the years following the dismantling of the dictatorship.

Football, as an informal mechanism of nationalisation, remained central to the creation in the period 1975–1982 of a mental framework that presented Spain as a nation. After all, professional and amateur football were divided into national (that is, Spanish) categories: they took Spain as the territorial reference; Spanish club teams competed in the European Cup, the Cup Winners Cup and UEFA as representatives of Spain; and the best players in the country played for the *selección nacional*. These ‘national references’ were repeated by the media on a daily basis and constituted a powerful message that was easy to interiorise in a fairly ‘banal’, unconscious manner. On top of this, most of the media systematically reproduced a narrative of ‘we’ (nationals) and ‘they’ (foreigners) that reminded readers, listeners and viewers that they were Spaniards in a world of nations. It is true that the above national references existed under Franco. Yet the growth of the sports media



Figure 2 Spain and German Federal Republic players enter the pitch in the 1982 World Cup (© Reuters 2013)

and the rise in the social importance of football that we saw at the beginning of the chapter most likely increased the nationalising effect of these ‘national references’ after the death of the dictator. Measuring the effects of this informal nationalisation is a complicated task, but the huge support that the *selección española* received, both in the stadiums and in the shape of television ratings, during the 1982 World Cup indicates that many Spaniards emotionally identified with the national team and felt part of the Spanish national community, at least in footballing terms.<sup>127</sup>

The 'commodification' of football was another factor that contributed to increasing the informal nationalising effect of the sport. The 1960s, 1970s and 1980s were typified by the growing commodification of soccer all over the world. In these decades, sponsors and TV rights led to the creation of a new type of 'armchair supporter' and football stars, such as Pelé, Beckenbauer, Cruyff and Maradona, became global phenomena.<sup>128</sup> The 1982 World Cup was the paradigmatic example of this process of football commodification in Spain. The Mundial was broadcast to the biggest audience in the history of television and attracted an unprecedented number of sponsors.<sup>129</sup> In Spain, the level of commercialisation of World Cup-related products was immense. Sweets, ice creams, key rings, pencils, pens, t-shirts, shorts, footballs, sports bags, pyjamas, mugs and plates all incorporated the the image of Naranjito; the World Cup mascot also had its own cartoon series on TVE, and there were comic books, posters and a number of LPs with songs devoted to this iconic orange dressed in the national team's colours. The target market for these products was clearly children and teenagers, but adults were also exposed to the nationalising effects of the commercialisation of Naranjito. Furthermore, Spanish shops and media were saturated with the Mundial 82 logo; depicting a football on a Spanish flag in the shape of a comet tail, the logo was created in 1979 and incorporated into all official merchandising (including posters with the drawings that the painter Joan Miró created for the event) and sponsors' products and advertisements.<sup>130</sup> TVE often showed the logo when broadcasting news about the Mundial and many newspapers decided to include the symbol on the pages devoted to the tournament.<sup>131</sup> Crucially, the logo also featured prominently on the thousands of celebratory coins and stamps that the Spanish government produced to commemorate the 1982 World Cup.

The *selección española* also took an active part in the commercialisation of football. In the months running up to the 1982 World Cup the Spanish players did a large number of television, radio and press advertisements for companies such as Coca-Cola, Adidas, Kas and El Corte Inglés.<sup>132</sup> The presence of the *selección* in advertisements was so intense that some journalists dubbed the footballers 'mannequins' and mocked the players' greed when their performances in the World Cup began to prove hugely disappointing.<sup>133</sup> Criticisms aside, the commercials show a trend to associate national symbols with corporations in order to sell products with an added 'patriotic' value. The commercialisation of the national team, Naranjito, the 1982 World Cup logo and the Mundial merchandising was not a mere government-directed operation

of nationalisation, but a complicated process by which the media–corporations–state complex inundated Spanish society with consumer goods marked with national symbols. There is no question that the overwhelming presence of the mascot, the logo, the *selección* and the merchandising contributed to the informal nationalisation of Spaniards. Unlike many Francoist symbols of Spain, the Mundial representations of the nation were not challenged by the public; there was a passive or unconscious acceptance of them. From a more active perspective, the commercialisation of ‘nationalised’ products, that is, goods with national symbols on them, led to a process that can be labelled as ‘nation consumption’.<sup>134</sup> By purchasing Mundial 82 goods, individuals incorporated the Spanish nation into their daily lives. Buying a t-shirt, a mug or a football with the Mundial 82 logo resulted in millions of citizens bringing into their lives, and quite literally into their homes, objects that symbolised the Spanish nation. In this manner, individuals related to the Spanish nation in an exercise of ‘possession’ of the patria. They underwent a process of personal appropriation of the nation, associating the fatherland with their very personal universe of everyday affections.

In the transition years, it was assumed by many, such as historian Juan Pablo Fusi, that once the democratic system was consolidated, the relevance of football in Spanish society would decline.<sup>135</sup> According to this view, the Franco regime manipulated the sport to keep the masses quiet and entertained, so the end of the dictatorship would be the beginning of a popular awakening and the subsequent decay of football. Fusi’s forecast was wrong. When the socialists, led by Felipe González, won the general elections in October 1982, football was more relevant in Spanish society than ever. As we have seen, the transition years were a period of political, social and cultural change that increased the impact of football in Spain. These years were also a time of continuities, something that is often forgotten in the idealised interpretations of the Spanish transition to democracy. Thus the ‘fury and failure’ narrative was transformed, with less fury and more failure, but it by no means disappeared. Stateless nationalisms radicalised their discourse and increased their social support, yet a new regionalised, democratic Spanish identity emerged strongly and was manifested in football stadiums all over the country. The self-image of Spaniards was linked to modernisation; however much the foreign press preferred to reaffirm previous stereotypes about the Spanish ‘other’ as backward and irrationally passionate, local media comparisons with France, Germany, Italy and the UK increased the feel-good factor among readers and viewers.

Although the Francoist nationalist ideology became profoundly discredited, the post-dictatorship reconstruction of Spain was relatively unproblematic in the realm of culture, which indicates a certain level of continuity in Spanish national identity. One of the most popular cultural activities in the country, football, became paramount in this process of national reconstruction. Mechanisms of informal nationalisation intensified their impact in an ever more televised social milieu, as the nation became increasingly commercialised and football more and more commoditised.

# 4

## In Search of Modernity's Ark (1982–2000)

'With neither faith nor love for the patria, just faith and love for the *selección* enables citizens to feel proud of being Spaniard.'<sup>1</sup>

(Enrique Gil Calvo)

On 15 March 1999, Santiago Segurola, chief sports editor of *El País*, published an article entitled 'Heroes of a New Age'. The Basque journalist argued that sportsmen in Spain had entered a new era of modernity and success. As the twentieth century drew to a close, Spain had become a 'leading country in sports' that produced international champions in all sorts of disciplines.<sup>2</sup> According to Segurola, 'sport was a reflection of contemporaneity' and the new successes were the result of a modern and efficient country that had put behind it fully the dark days of Francoism.<sup>3</sup> The words of Segurola reveal a self-awareness of the profound and rapid transformations that Spain went through in the last two decades of the century. Between 1982 and 2000, Spain consolidated its democratic system, entered the (then) European Community, achieved important economic growth and built a modest welfare state. Politically, the period witnessed the Felipe González socialist governments (1982–1996) and the first premiership of the conservative José María Aznar (1996–2000). The modernisation of the country became the top priority for both socialists and conservatives, who used sports to foster the image of a new Spain at home and abroad. Unsurprisingly, the modernisation of the country had a reflection on the way Spanish football was portrayed in the media. The use of the stereotypes of the *furia española* and the alleged quixotic character of Spanish players was gradually, if not totally, dropped. However, the narrative of failure and underachievement remained strongly associated with Spanish football in general and the *selección* in particular. This perception of perennial

underperformance stubbornly featured in the press and, somehow, undermined the dominant discourse that characterised Spain as a modern country.

Political, social and media changes led to a transformation of the fury and failure narrative in the period 1982–2000. When in power, both the *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (PSOE) and the *Partido Popular* (People's Party, PP) used football to court votes and promote Spanish national identities. Regional governments too devoted their efforts to reinforce regional/national identities, in a process of regionalisation/nationalisation from above. This process of regionalisation/nationalisation was based on the promotion of (re)invented traditions and idealised, simplified and manipulated narratives of the history of the autonomous communities. Regional mass indoctrination grew markedly as the governments of the autonomous communities endowed themselves with tens of TV channels and radio stations in the 1980s and 1990s. As in nation-states, these processes of identity-building in the autonomous communities were designed to justify the existence of the territorial entity and, ultimately, the very presence of regional governments. Together with the creation of TV and radio channels controlled by the governments of the autonomous communities, the Spanish media was revolutionised by the foundation of private channels and satellite TV in the 1990s, which resulted in an increase in the number of hours of televised football. Additionally, the number of Spaniards practising sports steadily grew in the 1980s and 1990s. This ever-increasing tendency was symptomatic of a changing society. Millions of citizens incorporated sport into their weekly routines and entered sporting associations where local, regional and national identities were created and reformulated at grassroots level.

The following pages briefly analyse the political, social and media transformations that increased the presence of football in Spain in the 1980s and 1990s. The chapter then deals with the reformulation of the fury and failure narrative and the self- and hetero-representation of Spain via football reports. The last section of the chapter explores the twin processes of globalisation and commodification of football during the last two decades of the twentieth century.

### **Political, social and media changes**

Following the PSOE landslide in the October 1982 elections, the *New York Times* published an interview with Felipe González in which the socialist leader described his cabinet as a group of 'young Spanish

nationalists'.<sup>4</sup> Notwithstanding the variety of positions on the 'national question' in the PSOE, the González governments insisted their main objective was the modernisation of Spain. Modernisation for the socialists meant a mixture of Europeanisation, democratisation and the implementation of liberal economic policies. Spain had to become a 'normal' country, similar to its Western European neighbours, and modernisation was understood to be the path to normalisation. Turning Spain into a developed country was also a nation-building project with strong nationalising effects, as the advancement of the state provided Spaniards with a common 'national' goal, while promoting a sense of collective identity.<sup>5</sup>

The socialists used sports as a window through which to view Spain's modernisation. The 1992 Barcelona Olympics were a golden opportunity for the PSOE government to show the world that Spain had modernised. Fully aware of the potential, the socialists created the *Asociación de Deportes Olímpicos* (ADO) in 1988. The ADO was a public corporation that included the *Consejo Superior de Deportes* (CSD), TVE and private companies. It was conceived to fund athletes and coaches, seeking to increase the number of medals at the Olympic Games and thus Spain's international prestige.<sup>6</sup> The 1990 Sport Law (*Ley del Deporte*) was another example of the socialists' utilisation of sports. The legislation passed in parliament explicitly acknowledged that high-level sports were 'considered of great interest to the State [...] because they have the function of representing Spain in official international competitions' and the aim of improving the image of the country via sporting victories.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, following a profound urban regeneration, Barcelona was portrayed as a modern, cosmopolitan city, the very same year that Seville hosted the 1992 Universal Exhibition and Madrid was designated the European Capital of Culture. The combination of financial investment and propaganda seemed to work. Firstly, Spain won almost as many medals in Barcelona (a total of 22) as it had obtained in all the previous Olympics put together (26), which probably gained Spaniards some international prestige but also certainly boosted their national pride. Secondly, opinion polls at the time showed that Spaniards perceived the sport-related transformations of the country as part of a process of national modernisation.<sup>8</sup> Many Spaniards interiorised the official message and began to see their country as modern, developed and fully European, following the 1992 events.

In the field of football, the PSOE refrained from scheduling FC Barcelona vs. Real Madrid games to demobilise protestors as the Francoists did, but did not hold back from associating itself with the

*selección nacional* on a number of occasions. For instance, in December 1983, Spain needed to beat Malta by a difference of 11 goals to qualify for Euro 1984. At half time, the Spaniards were 3–1 up and the possibility of scoring nine goals in the following 45 minutes seemed very slim. However, the *selección* ended up winning 12–1 and managed an improbable qualification. González understood the patriotic connotations of the Spanish triumph, even if it was against a humble opponent, and telephoned the players to congratulate them right after the end of the match in a clear attempt to link the government to the victorious fortunes of the national team. The socialist-controlled TVE broadcast a repeat of the entire Spain vs. Malta match a few days later, pretty much in the same way as the Francoists had done with the replay of the 1964 Spanish victory over the USSR on TVE (see Chapter 2).

On other occasions the socialists were a bit more subliminal, if not sophisticated. In June 1986, just a few days before new elections for the Spanish parliament were held, TVE infamously included the acronym 'PSOE' at the bottom of the screen in the evening news' highlights of Spain's 5–1 victory over Denmark in the second round of the World Cup.<sup>9</sup> Subliminal advertisement aside, González fully appreciated the nationalising relevance of the *selección*. In June 1984, he travelled to Paris to watch the final of the European championship between France and Spain, seeking to relate the national team to his government.<sup>10</sup> In the following years, the socialist PM would regularly send some of his ministers to accompany the squad to World Cups and European Championships – a policy that was also followed by the Spanish royals who frequently attended matches of the national team.<sup>11</sup>

The People's Party triumph in the 1996 elections meant the end of a long period of socialist rule. It was in many respects a bitter victory for the conservatives, as their expectations of obtaining an absolute majority in parliament did not materialise and José María Aznar had to reach an agreement with the Catalan and Basque nationalist right. The agreement gave Aznar the number of MPs needed to form his first government (1996–2000) and somehow slightly curbed the anti-regional nationalist discourse of the Spanish right. As in the PSOE, the concept of Spain had varied interpretations inside the PP, ranging from traditional religious, centrist options to decentralising, neo-liberal views. During Aznar's first term in office, the conservative government combined a traditional discourse (that emphasised the mythological medieval origins of the Spanish nation) with the representation of Spain as a modern country with a key role to play in the European Union.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, the right devised a programme to develop 'a culture of national awareness'

among Spaniards.<sup>13</sup> Apparently, according to the PP, Spanish citizens had a limited interest in their fatherland and the Aznar government thought it could reverse the situation. This plan of mass nationalisation from above was based on the creation of a Spanish Institute of Strategic Studies, *Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos* (where universities, the media and military veterans could co-operate in spreading national consciousness) the promotion of the national flag and anthem, the fostering of national festivities, such as the *Día de la Hispanidad* (a celebration of Spain and its former colonies), and an education reform seeking to emphasise Spain's common history.

The conservatives went further than the socialists in the implementation of neo-liberal economic policies and privatised most of the state-controlled companies in the energy and telecommunications sectors. The peculiarity of these sales of public corporations was that the Aznar government appointed loyal conservatives as CEOs before the firms were sold, hence keeping political control of the companies. A good example is the case of Telefónica, the Spanish equivalent of British Telecom. The government appointed Juan Villalonga, a school friend of José María Aznar, as the firm's managing director before the company was privatised. Later, and predictably, the PP government supported Telefónica in its commercial battle to obtain the TV rights for Spanish football. The so-called Football War pitted Vía Digital (a Telefónica company) against Sogecable (a firm of the PSOE-leaning Grupo Prisa). Fully aware of the political implications, the conservatives favoured Vía Digital so the government could influence such a strategic sector as televised football.<sup>14</sup>

The Football War is a telling case of the importance of soccer in the mass media in the final years of the twentieth century. This was a global phenomenon. Football gained unprecedented media presence all over the world in the 1980s and 1990s, a trend that has been labelled the 'sportisation' of the mass media (*deportización de los medios*).<sup>15</sup> It was certainly the case that the 1960s and 1970s had witnessed a steady rise of football coverage in the media. Yet the expansion of private channels and satellite TV in the following decades led to an explosion of football on the small screen. This rise in the number of TV football hours had a knock-on effect, as European newspapers realised that the more pages they devoted to football the more copies they sold.<sup>16</sup>

In Spain, the growth in the number of hours (or inches) dedicated to sport occurred in all media. In the printed press, the sales of the Spanish sports dailies grew considerably in the last 15 years of the century, reaching a total of 825,000 copies in 1997.<sup>17</sup> Interestingly, the 'big four' (*Marca*, *As*, *Mundo Deportivo* and *Sport*) created regional

sections all over Spain to secure readers outside Madrid and Barcelona, while other sports dailies appeared in Valencia, Seville and Corunna in the 1990s. Football also intensified its presence on radio in the final two decades of the twentieth century. Radio stations gradually devoted more time not only to football broadcasting but also to general sports programmes full of pundits and opinionated hosts. Late-night programmes, in particular those fronted by José María García and José Ramón de la Morena, became hugely popular. In 1995, de la Morena's and García's programmes reached a combined figure of 2,590,000 listeners. In 2000, despite the decline in José María García's audience, both programmes still attracted the impressive figure of 2,375,000 listeners.<sup>18</sup>

Television also went through a process of sportisation. The state broadcaster, TVE, increased the number of hours devoted to sport, from 565 per year in 1977 to 2,138 in 1988. Percentage-wise, in 1977 TVE dedicated 11.1 per cent of its broadcasts to sport. By 1988 the percentage had reached 19.9 per cent.<sup>19</sup> The appearance of regional television all over Spain throughout the 1980s also led to a growth in football programmes. Autonomous-community governments in charge of regional television soon realised that football programming was a good investment. First, it secured a high number of viewers and, secondly, it was useful for promoting the regional/national identities of the governing elites among the public in their respective autonomous communities. In 1989, the Federation of Regional Televisions reached an agreement with the *Liga de Fútbol Profesional* to broadcast exclusively Spanish First Division games, thus breaking the old TVE monopoly for the first time. Moreover, the competition for football rights paved the way for a new situation in the 1990s, when the creation of private channels, especially Canal+, resulted in even more hours of televised football.<sup>20</sup>

It is important to note that the steady and unprecedented increase of football in the press, radio and television took place against the backdrop of a changing Spanish media.<sup>21</sup> The privatisation and regionalisation of the media were outcomes of political manoeuvres by the Spanish government, the autonomous communities and communications corporations. When in power the PSOE used public television channels and radio stations to portray the socialist governments in a positive light. When Aznar won the 1996 elections, the PP followed suit in the manipulation of state-controlled mass media. The same logic was applied by regional governments all over Spain in the 1980s and 1990s: election winners utilised public media to promote the party in

government. Both the national and regional governments combined political self-promotion with a planned and sustained support of mass and elite sport for nationalist reasons.<sup>22</sup> However, the private media did not strictly reproduce state/regional narratives. Unlike in the years of the Franco dictatorship, private media had a certain level of autonomy under the democratic regime.<sup>23</sup> However, most of the privately owned media did contribute to the construction of a hegemonic discourse that the PSOE and PP had developed through the state's and autonomous communities' communications apparatuses. This discourse was based on a historical idealisation of the transition to democracy, an agreement about the state's territorial framework and a consensual defence of the status quo.<sup>24</sup> The private media's contribution to this hegemonic discourse can be easily detected in football reports; the reproduction of a single Spanish national sporting narrative was more important than the party-political differences among newspapers. For example, while the PSOE-leaning *El País* tended to represent a pluralistic picture of Spain when reporting on football, and the conservative *ABC* produced a unitary discourse,<sup>25</sup> both newspapers contributed to the symbolic process of nation-making through sport and the perception of national unity by reproducing a footballing discourse that emphasised the existence of a Spanish collective identity.

The rise in the number of hours and inches devoted to football and the consolidation of a hegemonic discourse in defence of the status quo in both public and private TV channels, radio stations and print media led to an upturn of the 'cumulative media effect' in the transmission of Spanish national identities. In the 1980s and 1990s, individuals could 'experience' the nation, as never before, in their daily lives via football reporting and broadcasting. This increased 'cumulative media effect' was not merely a quantitative issue, that is, more time and space devoted to football in the media. It also happened in a changing Spanish society where popular participation in sports grew steadily. Between 1980 and 2000, the proportion of Spaniards practising one or more sports on a weekly basis went from 25 per cent to 38 per cent.<sup>26</sup> In the same period, the proportion of Spanish citizens who declared 'some' or 'much' interest in sports grew from 48 per cent to 60 per cent.<sup>27</sup> These data provide a good indication as to why mass media found a fertile social ground for the expansion of sports reporting and broadcasting in the final two decades of the twentieth century. Clearly, this was the very same ground that facilitated the popular assimilation of national narratives and, consequently, Spanish identities represented in the sports media.

## Narratives of modern fury and ancestral failure

The 'fury and failure narrative' remained a central component of the national discourse during the 1980s and 1990s. Contrary to what has been sometimes suggested, the media often resorted to the *furia* stereotype to account for Spain's last-minute victories and agonising comebacks.<sup>28</sup> The aforementioned 12–1 victory against Malta in 1983 provided an excellent opportunity to deploy an entire arsenal of clichés. The game was played in Seville and *El Mundo Deportivo* pointed to the 'flamenco soul' (*duende*) to explain the inspiration of 'an old-style national team with all that Spanish fighting spirit that seemed lost in the mist of time'.<sup>29</sup> *ABC*'s headline was explicit: 'The *furia* is back.'<sup>30</sup> Significantly, the conservative newspaper stated that the victory against the humble Maltese 'had been celebrated all over Spain like a historic deed, like the goals of Zarra and Marcelino'.<sup>31</sup> By linking the 1983 victory to the historic triumphs over England in 1950 and the USSR in 1964, *ABC* drew a line of continuity with the past which emphasised the narrative that represented Spaniards as passionate, courageous creatures always willing to fight till the end. Moreover, some Spanish players seemed to internalise the stereotype fully. 'We have demonstrated that we are Spaniards and have shown a lot of courage,' reflected the left-back José Antonio Camacho.<sup>32</sup>

The result against Malta was extraordinary but the appeals to the Spanish fury in the 1980s were not. In 1984, the victories of the *selección* in the Euro were used to retell the story of the birth of the Spanish fury in Antwerp in 1920 and connect them to the 'sites and dates of memory' of the national football narrative (for example, Maracanã, Rio de Janeiro, 1950; Santiago Bernabéu, Madrid, 1964).<sup>33</sup> Following Spain's comprehensive victory (5–1) over Denmark in the second round of the 1986 World Cup, King Juan Carlos declared live on José María García's radio programme that he was 'moved' because he had seen 'the Spanish fury on the ground'.<sup>34</sup> The monarch encouraged the *selección* to go all the way to final, but four days later Spain lost on penalties to Belgium in the quarter-finals. Still, Alfredo Relaño wrote in *El País* that Spain had provided 'an impressive demonstration of fury that largely justifies the name our national team is known by, here in Mexico: the Red Fury'.<sup>35</sup>

In the 1990s, remarks on the fury remained customary in press reports and ordinary Spaniards' conversations in bars.<sup>36</sup> Predictably, when Spain won the gold medal in football at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, some newspapers could not resist drawing comparisons with the 1920

Antwerp Games. In the 1992 Olympic final, Spain beat Poland (3–2) with a last-minute goal in a vibrant match played at the Camp Nou. For *El Diario Vasco* the same fury, the same guts and the same fighting spirit that had led Spain to victory in 1920 were behind the 1992 triumph. 'The gold of the *Furia Española* has returned to our football seventy two years after Antwerp,' concluded the Basque newspaper.<sup>37</sup> *El Mundo Deportivo* went as far as to contrast an idealised, pure, old-style Spanish team with an ugly and increasingly business-related modern football: 'At a time when soccer is reaching its most commercialised levels, the fury was dressed again in red and the young Vicente Miera's squad showed all the pride in the world to reach the top of the podium.'<sup>38</sup>

The fact that Javier Clemente was *entrenador* (coach) of Spain from 1992 to 1998 may have also contributed to the perpetuation of the stereotype of the fury. The Basque coach had a taste for physical football and a certain disdain for sophisticated soccer that some of his players fully internalised. Thus the Spanish defender Rafael Alkorta declared that 'the heart was the best strategy' to go through to the next stage in the 1998 World Cup. In line with the fury discourse, Alkorta argued that tactics were 'pointless', for it was players' 'nastiness', 'courage', 'guts' and 'fighting spirit' that won matches.<sup>39</sup> Spain were knocked out in the group stages of France 98 and Clemente dismissed two months later, following a humiliating defeat against Cyprus in the first qualifying match for Euro 2000. But the myth of the fury persisted even after the Clemente era. As we saw in Chapter 1, the *selección's* remarkable comeback against Yugoslavia in Euro 2000 rekindled the fury narrative. The two goals scored in injury time inspired all sorts of clichés about the epic national courage and exceptional bravery that characterised Spaniards. The myth of the Spanish fury accompanied the *selección* to the very end of the twentieth century.

Failure, the second main component of the football narrative about Spaniards' national characteristics, also featured prominently in the 1980s and 1990s media. Chronic underachievement, bad luck and biased referees were often put forward to explain Spain's defeats. The reverse of the fury was the representation of Spain as a victim of fate, history or men in black. Thus, when Spain lost to France in the final of Euro 1984, self-pity returned to the media. 'What a terrible misfortune! What a terrible misfortune!,' cried the TVE commentator as the ball slipped through the hands of Luis Arconada and crossed the goal line in the 1984 final.<sup>40</sup> *La Vanguardia* reported that the match was decided 'when Platini scored from a non-existent foul with the unlucky cooperation of the Spanish keeper'.<sup>41</sup> The Barcelona newspaper

added that 'the "intelligent" performance of the Czech referee Christov, who had always kept in mind that the match was played in Paris, made the task difficult for the Spanish team'.<sup>42</sup> *El Mundo Deportivo* was less subtle and published the following: 'A joke of a goal prevented us from winning the title. And the referee was the best player... of the French!'<sup>43</sup> On some pages, the Catalan daily verged on xenophobia, as reports used the derogatory *gabachos* to refer to French players and openly accused the home team of stealing the match via the Czech referee.<sup>44</sup>

Not all defeats of the *selección* were blamed on bad luck and/or referees. The press sometimes acknowledged the superiority of other teams and Spain's physical and technical shortcomings, but these were exceptions rather than the rule.<sup>45</sup> The idea that the national football team was a victim of fate was so embedded in Spanish society and culture that newspapers began to theorise about the *selección's* underachievement in the early 1990s. The defeat of Spain at the hands of Yugoslavia in the second round of the 1990 World Cup brought about the usual clichés of a *selección* that played well, deserved better and lacked good fortune at the crucial moments.<sup>46</sup> Underachievement was becoming a 'philosophy of failure' for the national team, according to the press.<sup>47</sup> An editorial in the Madrid daily *El Mundo* talked about the 'history of a frustration' created by the repeated failure of Spanish sportsmen at international competitions and demanded the formation of a Ministry of Sports to help individuals to reach a high competitive level.<sup>48</sup>

Perhaps no other match in the history of the *selección* contributed to spreading feelings of frustration, unfairness and misfortune as the 1994 World Cup Spain vs. Italy. The Spanish national team faced its old enemy again in the quarter-finals of the competition. In a highly tense contest, the *Azzurri* scored in the first half, but the Spaniards equalised early in the second half and continued to dominate the match. The last minutes of the contest were an emotional rollercoaster. The Spaniards openly went for the win and striker Julio Salinas missed a great chance to score six minutes before the end, when his unopposed shot was miraculously saved by the Italian goalkeeper Gianluca Pagliuca. Conversely, the Italian Roberto Baggio scored in the 88th minute, following a miscalculation by the Spanish keeper Andoni Zubizarreta. Many Spanish spectators thought that the speculative Italian tactic had paid off, whereas the *selección's* bravery had been penalised. Yet the most dramatic moments were still to come. Three minutes into injury time, the Italian defender Mauro Tassotti intentionally elbowed Luis Enrique in the face inside the

penalty area, but the Hungarian referee, Sandor Puhl, and the linesmen chose to ignore the incident. Tassotti broke Luis Enrique's nose and, adding insult to injury, the referee sent the Spanish player off the pitch because he was bleeding and let the Italian defender go unpunished. Two minutes later the game was over. A few days after the match, FIFA chose Sandor Puhl to referee the 1994 World Cup final between Italy and Brazil.

The 1994 defeat against Italy brought unprecedented levels of fatalism to the failure narrative. The footage of Luis Enrique shouting, crying and showing his face covered in blood to the referee became an instant classic of Spain's misfortunes and frustrations. The aggression was immediately incorporated into the popular imagination, mocked on TV programmes and made an impact on a generation of young Spaniards.<sup>49</sup> In the twenty-first century a number of pop and rock bands referred to Tassotti's elbowing in their songs and album titles.<sup>50</sup> In 1994, radio stations and newspapers found Spain's bad luck and a perfidious referee to be reasons for failure yet again.<sup>51</sup> Some reports compared the defeat in 1994 to that of the 1934 Italy World Cup sixty years earlier, highlighting biased umpiring and Italian good luck as common denominators and, hence, giving the failure narrative a veneer of 'historical inevitability'.<sup>52</sup> Concentrating on these factors prevented a more rigorous analysis of the *selección's* trajectory in the World Cup.<sup>53</sup> What is more, the narrative of fatalism was fed with reports from the foreign media. As in previous World Cups, the Spanish press reported on how foreign newspapers agreed on the *selección's* superiority, lack of fortune and referee mistreatment.<sup>54</sup> By highlighting these features and ignoring more critical remarks in the foreign press, Spanish newspapers underpinned the very stereotypes that constituted the bases of the failure narrative. In other words, partial, severely edited views of *selección* from the 'national others' were used to reinforce the Spanish discourses of eternal failures and ancestral defeats.

All components of the failure narrative became clichés and were fully interiorised by many Spaniards in the 1990s. Following Spain's defeat on penalties to the home team in the quarter-finals of England 96, TVE news reported that the *selección* was the better team on the pitch, but biased refereeing, 'responsibility, bad luck and perhaps a certain defeatist spirit' were too much of a burden for the Spaniards.<sup>55</sup> It is difficult to understand how an alleged 'defeatist spirit' could have affected Fernando Hierro and Miguel Ángel Nadal in missing their penalties (one shot violently hit the crossbar, the other was saved by David Seaman) but the fact of the matter is that TVE incorporated a supposed



*Figure 3* Andoni Zubizarreta grieves over Spain's elimination at Euro 96 (© Reuters 2013).

fatalistic attitude as a motive for Spain's elimination. Two years later, as Spain were knocked out of France 98 in the group stages, psychological attitudes re-emerged in the shape of analytical tools. According to *El País*, the lack of a 'winning mentality' was to replace the fury as the main national feature of Spaniards.<sup>56</sup>

It is important to note that this narrative of football underachievement and national losers matched well with the widely spread academic and political discourse that represented Spain as a historically failing nation. In the 1980s and 1990s, the idea that Spain was a feebly built nation-state and that, consequently, Spaniards had been weakly nationalised were commonplace not only among intellectuals, university lecturers and politicians but also in the media.<sup>57</sup> Some academics reflected on the links between Spanish football and the alleged weak nation-building. In 1998, the sociologist Enrique Gil Calvo argued that sports were the key when it came to creating a Spanish identity 'in the only European state that, due to different reasons, failed in the

attempt to build a national identity'.<sup>58</sup> Other European countries had large panoplies of patriotic symbols, but Spain was different:

As Spain lacks a national culture, the *selección* (together with the Spanish Olympic teams) constitutes almost the only symbol able to express a common, collective identity, overwhelming citizens with emotion by making them feel members of the same community. This is why football is so important in Spain. With neither faith nor love for the patria, just faith and love for the *selección* enables citizens to feel proud of being Spaniard.<sup>59</sup>

Gil Calvo was right in pointing out that football was crucial in the nationalisation of the Spanish. Nonetheless, the sociologist seemed to ignore that the very narrative of failure that he promoted in his analysis was in itself a contribution to the building of a Spanish national identity. As we have seen, underachievement and fatalism were essential features in the Spaniards' national self-perception. In fact, the failure narrative was so embedded in Spanish identity that one could easily talk about success in the creation of a national football culture based on pessimism and disappointment by the end of the twentieth century.

### **Self- and hetero-representations**

Notwithstanding the perpetuation of the fury and failure narrative in the 1980s and 1990s, the Spanish media increasingly represented home sportsmen as successful, talented and proficient competitors on the international stage, much in line with the PSOE and PP governments' portrait of the country as a modern, European nation-state. This combination of discourses was somewhat paradoxical. After all, identifying Spaniards with passion and ferocity projected a certain primitivism and backwardness that clashed with the official idea of a new, competitive, modernised Spain. As early as 1983, Juan José Fernández, chief editor of the *El País* sports section, called upon Spanish sportsmen to abandon the 'fury' and the 'anarchic individualism' that characterised them.<sup>60</sup> As a 'democratic, modern, European country', Spain should concentrate less on football, 'responsible to a large degree for the Spanish sportive subnormality', and focus more on planning the development of a variety of sports to succeed at international level.<sup>61</sup> Spaniards ought to leave their old-fashioned, 'pointless' Quixotic individualism behind and embrace 'general planning' and detailed organisation as the main means to achieve international success in modern times.<sup>62</sup>

The 1992 Barcelona Olympics confirmed the modernisation of Spain to the Iberian press. A long editorial in *El País* argued that in sporting and organisational terms the Games were 'a historic success' and demonstrated that Spain was 'a modern country, endowed with an efficient Administration and an active and plural civil society'.<sup>63</sup> Moreover, the Barcelona Olympics and the 1992 Seville Universal Exhibition were the expressions of 'a Spain fully integrated into the contemporary World, [a country] that is comfortable with itself and wishes to have a leading role in the history of Europe and the World'.<sup>64</sup> The times of the 'national botch job', the Spanish 'weak mind-set' and 'the inferiority complex proper of isolated and resented communities' were over.<sup>65</sup> Although a few writers criticised the nationalist euphoria and the commercialisation of sports produced by the Games, most journalists and politicians shared a celebratory, complex-free mood.<sup>66</sup> For instance, José Miguel Abad, one of the leading political figures of the Olympic Organising Committee, solemnly wrote that the 1992 events had 'destroyed the historic negative stereotypes about our abilities'.<sup>67</sup> According to the Madrid daily *El Mundo*, the Games were a 'collective success' that restored to Spaniards a 'national consciousness' and the gold medal in football set the historical record straight.<sup>68</sup> Apparently Spain deserved better in footballing terms and justice was delivered during the Olympics.

The celebratory, self-affirming, patriotic discourse that emerged in 1992 was to cast a long shadow throughout the 1990s. In the years that followed Barcelona 92, Spanish international victories in tennis, cycling, track and field, swimming, golf and rallying were attributed to the competent planning and the 'legacy' of the Games, even if some of them were not Olympic sports.<sup>69</sup> The recurring triumphs in the Tour de France, Roland Garros, golf majors, swimming, athletics and motor-sports world championships magnified the sense of underachievement of the football *selección*.<sup>70</sup> 'This one does not fail' read the front page of the sport daily *AS*, when Miguel Indurain predictably took the leadership of the 1994 Tour de France, three days after Spain were knocked out of the USA Football World Cup.<sup>71</sup> This feeling of inferiority and under-performance produced by the national squad was amplified by the success of Spanish football clubs in international competitions. Between 1992 and 2000, Spanish clubs won three Champions Leagues and three Cup Winners Cups. In the year 2000 Spain topped the UEFA country coefficient ranking, a rating based on the results of each nation's clubs in the five previous UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League seasons.<sup>72</sup> Simply put, Spanish clubs were the best in Europe in the second half of the 1990s.

The 'normalisation' and Europeanisation of the country in sporting terms implied a progressive undermining of the myth of the Spanish fury. The *furía* began to be associated with the Francoist dictatorship and seen as an uncomfortable remnant of a backward past. Thus when the People's Party MP Luis Ramallo talked about using 'hot Spanish blood' to overcome eventual difficulties in the 1994 USA World Cup, *El País* denounced it as right-wing and silly to refer to the clichés of the Spanish fury and fighting spirit as factors that could be used to improve the *selección's* performance.<sup>73</sup> Two years later journalist Luis Gómez portrayed Spain's cultural modernity and economic growth as the death knell of the *furía*. 'The Spanish fury, a tool to disguise so many shortcomings, happily expired.'<sup>74</sup> According to Gómez, Spaniards had got rid of their inferiority complexes and had got used to victories in many disciplines due to proper planning, the adoption of professional training techniques and generous sponsors. The implications of this sort of discourse were clear: the *furía* represented the conservative past, international failure, improvisation and Quixotic individualism, whereas modern Spain was all about good organisation, teamwork and economic growth in an increasingly neo-liberal system. In 2000, the young socialist MP Carme Chacón perfectly summarised this dichotomy in an article entitled 'Sports Planning or Spanish Fury'.<sup>75</sup> For Chacón, the old Francoist discourse of guts and courage had been replaced by a modern narrative of success following the PSOE sports policies of appropriate organisation, competent coaching, political leadership and solid government funding. Still, Chacón warned, Spain ran the risk of returning to the dark ages under José María Aznar, should the conservative government not keep to the socialist path of modernisation.

It almost goes without saying that the European media hardly characterised Spain in such an idealised light. The French hetero-representation combined clichés with a specific patronising approach. The Gallic press often resorted to the typical images of flamenco dancers, bullfighting, conquistadors and people partying in the streets when reporting on the games between France and Spain.<sup>76</sup> In a front page that included a picture of six French players dressed as matadors, *L'Equipe* headlined 'Olé les Bleus' on the day of the Euro 84 final.<sup>77</sup> French TV too was fond of clichés. For instance, the TF1 programme 'Telefoot', on the Euro 92 qualifying match between France and Spain, included flamenco music, footage of fiestas and a bizarre photomontage of the black player Basile Boli dressed as a matador, in what seems to confirm a French taste for footballers in golden tights and short jackets.<sup>78</sup> When the *selección* faced *les bleus* in the group stages of England 96, French

TV commentators reminded viewers of the Iberians' football 'fiestas' of the past and described how the Spanish supporters had created a 'warm atmosphere, a real atmosphere of Southern Europe' in the cold stands of Elland Road at Leeds.<sup>79</sup>

Not all representations were so sympathetic. The French media also portrayed Spaniards as uncivilised. Following the Euro 84 final, the *France Inter* radio correspondent in Madrid described the 'indignation' and 'choleric frustration' of Spanish supporters, who blamed the referee for their team's defeat.<sup>80</sup> When 300 of these supporters gathered in protest in front of the French embassy in Madrid, threw eggs and burnt a tricolour flag, the Gallic radio felt justified in underscoring the stereotype of Spaniards as feral bad losers and passionate, 'choleric' people.<sup>81</sup> Furthermore, the Iberian public's systematic whistling at the French anthem and recurrent throwing of fruit and other objects onto the pitch understandably contributed to consolidate the figure of the uncivilised Spaniard among the Iberians, northern neighbours.<sup>82</sup>

Although it was never mentioned in the French media, throwing fruit onto the pitch was a popular Spanish political protest. In the 1980s and 1990s, Gallic farmers habitually blockaded the French-Spanish border, emptied Iberian lorries and destroyed fruit cargos. The purpose of these attacks was to denounce the French government's lack of protection of the home agricultural sector, but the actions enraged many Spaniards, who saw the French as arrogant bullies who placed themselves above international law. The interdependence between football and politics was also clear in the run-up to Spain's entry into the European Community. Taking a patronising approach, President François Mitterrand declared after the French victory in Euro 84 that he was travelling to Madrid to console the Spanish on their defeat, 'by promising them that their entry into the EC would still follow the agreed schedule'.<sup>83</sup> Additionally, the Spanish self-representation as a young and modern nation with no links with its recent past was undermined by the French media's tendency to highlight the dictatorial history of the Iberians. The 1950s Real Madrid triumphs in the European Cup, the Euro 1964 Spanish victory and the political roles of FC Barcelona and Athletic de Bilbao under the dictatorship were recurrent topics when Spanish squads faced French teams.<sup>84</sup> Franco lived longer in the French media than in the Spanish press.

*Furia* and bullfighting were also part of the imagery used by the Italian press to typify Spain in the 1980s and 1990s.<sup>85</sup> Italian newspapers tended to be, nevertheless, more analytical and less cliché-orientated than the French media. The *furie rosse* (red furies) were often

described as a spirited, physically strong, hard team, but not in derogatory terms.<sup>86</sup> After all, and despite the numerous games that Italian clubs had lost against the Iberians, *Il Messaggero* acknowledged that Spain remained 'likeable' as a footballing nation.<sup>87</sup> Interestingly, the Transalpine newspapers created a counter-narrative regarding Spain's relation with referees. Contrary to the Spanish self-image of a nation constantly damaged by biased refereeing, the Italian press often emphasised that the Iberians were helped time and again by sports officials.<sup>88</sup> This counter-narrative not only challenged one of the main pillars of the fury and failure narrative, but also acted as a justification of Italian underachievement. For instance, the upsurge of Spain in the Barcelona 92 Olympics medal table was explained by some journalists as the result of 'the referees' unsuppressed desire to help the home athletes'; by contrast the *azzurri* performance in the games was presented as a matter of misfortune and justified by the 'transitional era' that Italian sport was going through.<sup>89</sup>

The British media were stronger purveyors of stereotypes than their Italian counterparts. Both tabloids and broadsheets drew upon similar images and recycled British clichés about Spain.<sup>90</sup> Thus paella, castanets, bullfighting, Gibraltar and Francis Drake remained at the centre of football reporting, although some more recent topics, such as disputes over fishing rights, were also incorporated into the arsenal.<sup>91</sup> The traditional British view of Spaniards as cruel, crude, ferocious and fanatical did not change much in the 1980s and 1990s. Somehow, British newspapers reproduced the fury and failure narrative, but stripped from it any positive connotations. Hence, the *selección* under Javier Clemente was not depicted as courageous but rather as 'uncompromisingly tough' and 'tenacious in their negative objectives'.<sup>92</sup> As in the old times, the Spanish fury meant that the Iberians were savages. In Euro 96, *The Times* considered that Spanish defences were 'always hard', described Miguel Ángel Nadal (the uncle of the tennis champion Rafael) as 'ferocious', a 'hit man', and labelled Abelardo Fernández, the *selección* centre back, as 'violent'.<sup>93</sup> In a way, there was no discrimination here. The British press often gave this sort of disparaging treatment to all foreign teams, perpetuating negative stereotypes and prioritising clichés over analysis.<sup>94</sup>

The British media specialised in the underachievement component of the fury and failure narrative. The bond between Spain and disappointment was always present in British imagery. To a point, this was a self-fulfilling prophecy, for every time Spain was eliminated from a competition, the idea that the *selección* punched below its weight

re-emerged. But the emphasis on Spain's underachievement also played a self-healing role, as it partially concealed England's own underperformance in international tournaments. Crucially, the *selección's* failures were also used to reiterate the idea that Spaniards were mentally weak. Seeking to provide an explanation for Iberian underachievement, the British newspapers invoked fear, anxiety and nerves.<sup>95</sup> Spaniards did not live up to expectations because they were not psychologically capable of performing at the highest level. The signals of these alleged mental problems could even be found in literature: 'Tilting at windmills has long been recognized as a Spanish obsession, never more so than where their football is concerned – all those pointless attacks, all that frustration,' wrote George Caulkin in *The Times*.<sup>96</sup>

Like the British press, the German media replicated the fury and failure narrative mainly in negative terms. True, Spanish teams were sometimes portrayed as courageous, physically strong and spirited.<sup>97</sup> Yet most of the time Iberian players were viewed in Germany as dirty, violent, dodgy and out-of-control.<sup>98</sup> There is no doubt that matches like the 1987 Bayern Munich vs. Real Madrid contest contributed to perpetuate Spaniards' bad reputation. In this game, the Real Madrid player Juanito intentionally and brutally stepped on Lothar Matthaus' neck when the German midfielder was lying on the pitch during this first leg of the European Cup semi-final. Understandably, the German press underlined the savage character of the Spanish striker, something that Juanito himself acknowledged: 'I have behaved like an animal and I apologise.'<sup>99</sup> The characterisation of Spanish players as temperamental brutes reached the *selección* too. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s German newspapers talked about the 'legendary merciless toughness' of the Spanish defenders, who knew 'every dirty trick in the book'.<sup>100</sup> In addition, Spaniards were accused of a lack of discipline and of individualism.<sup>101</sup> According to the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, before Euro 88, the national squad's dressing room was riddled with infighting, the coach Miguel Muñoz had no real power and players did as they pleased. One thing was clear: 'Muñoz could not teach discipline to the *selección*.'<sup>102</sup> The Teutonic tabloids were also very fond of bullfighting imagery and vocabulary. Thus the '*olés*' and the representations of Spain as an enraged bull continued to rumble in the pages of the German newspapers.<sup>103</sup> The portrayal was not trivial. It helped to perpetuate the German stereotype of the wild, backward, irrational Spaniard.

The German media dealt with *selección* underachievement too, although it never played such an important role as in the British press, perhaps because, unlike England, Germany seldom underperformed.

Still, Spain's humiliating defeat against Norway in the first game of Euro 2000 led the German press to wonder about Iberian underperformance.<sup>104</sup> The defeat against the Scandinavians was magnified because it occurred just a month after two Spanish teams had played the final of the Champions League. For the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, the 'shadow of the past', that is, previous failures, prevented the *selección* from delivering.<sup>105</sup> In a similar way to the Spanish press, the German newspaper seemed to suggest that history had a role in playing football and Spain's underperformance was related to former underachievement. Unlike their Spanish counterparts, the Teutonic media considered that the Spanish coach José Antonio Camacho's comments about his team's 'bad luck' were merely poor excuses. In a way, the *selección's* failures fitted well with the view of Spain as the country where 'life is taken a bit easier' – an impression that for many Germans was reinforced during their holidays.<sup>106</sup> Additionally, in the late 1990s, the German media attempted to portray a 'positive' version of German national identity linked to liberalism and democracy when covering football tournaments.<sup>107</sup> In this context, the representation of Spain as a country with an unchanged national character and a victim of the 'shadow of the past' stood out against a German nation freed from the burdens of history.

It hardly needs to be said that this peculiar reproduction of the fury and failure narrative in the German media precluded any sort of reading of Spain as a modernised country. It was only at the end of the twentieth century, following the success of Spanish clubs in European club competitions, that some German publications praised Spanish football's impressive technique, modern tactics and long-term planning in youth programmes.<sup>108</sup> However, these readings of Spanish football were rare. The emphasis on brutality, lack of discipline, backwardness, underachievement and enraged bulls dominated the German narrative on Spain. This unpolished and stereotypical characterisation of the Southern Europeans has to be understood as a product created for German self-consumption. By contrast with this representation of the Spanish, the German press ultimately underscored the stereotype of the Teutonic national as civilised, disciplined, modern and rational.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Spain's economic growth and cultural modernisation led to a gradual 'normalisation' and Europeanisation of the country's auto-representation. In this new self-portrait, Spaniards progressively abandoned the stereotypes of the passionate matador and the eccentric Don Quixote, as these characteristics were associated with an irrational, isolated, backward and dictatorial past. Yet Don Quixote

and bullfighting remained in good shape in the hetero-representation of Spain. French, Italian, British and German media continued to use a number of old stereotypes of Spain, as a means to redefine their own national identities by comparison with their trite representation of the Iberians' national characteristics.

### **Globalisation, commodification and dual identities**

Football underwent an important transformation in the last two decades of the twentieth century. The 1980s were characterised by an increasing commodification of the game in a liberalised sports market, growing television sponsorship and the subsequent consolidation of big global stars. The 1990s were considered the first decade of the post-modern era of football. This time was typified by the further commodification of the game, directed by the interests of television, and an increasingly liberalised player market. As a result, inequality between rich and poor players, clubs and nations grew globally.<sup>109</sup> Moreover, the so-called Bosman ruling opened up the football market to unprecedented levels. In December 1996, the European Union Court judged that limitations on the number of EU players were illegal. The court dictated that all European workers were free to move and work inside the Union without restrictions, hence clubs could not limit the number of EU players. The verdict meant the destruction of the barriers to the circulation of players inside the EU and the arrival of a larger number of footballers from outside the EU, who covered the spots left by Europeans.<sup>110</sup> Hence, the Bosman ruling increased the internationalisation levels of European football, while reinforcing European identity. Yet it also facilitated a neo-liberal approach to a player market where clubs bought and sold footballers as mere commodities. In fact, football fans got used to the most radical neo-liberal policies via the evermore globalised and 'commodified' football markets.<sup>111</sup>

Spain was no exception in the twin processes of globalisation and commodification of football. Most professional Spanish teams went from non-profit social clubs owned by the fans to public limited companies controlled by a few rich stakeholders. Even those teams with a reputation for representing the working class, like Rayo Vallecano and Real Betis, ended up in the hands of tycoons. Players in Spanish teams, like Maradona in the 1980s and Ronaldo in the 1990s, became global celebrities and clubs sought to reach both national and international audiences. International corporations and TV channels contributed to the commodification of football and increased the profile of soccer in

Spanish society. Crucially, this process took place at a time when Spain was both consolidating its democratic system and transforming itself into a full-scale capitalist consumer society.<sup>112</sup> In other words, Spanish society's transformations in consumption occurred when football was fostering cultural values based on neo-liberal ideas, the commodification of workers and capitalist accumulation.

As we saw in Chapter 1, some scholars have argued that the process of globalisation led to a sort of dissolution of national identities. In the case of Spain, the argument goes, post-national football and the creation of a decentralised state yielded a process of Spanish de-nationalisation and regionalist nationalisation, which implied the dismantling of 'the identity-based hegemony of the Spanish national team and Real Madrid' and the building of new identities linked to the Autonomous Communities.<sup>113</sup> In this line of interpretation, some commentators saw in the growth of regional/non-Spanish national identities the reason behind a strong popular identification with football clubs and the supposedly weak support for the *selección*. In the view of the journalist Josep Ramoneda during the 1994 World Cup, Spaniards had detached themselves from the representations of the state and, unlike the *selección*, clubs channelled national passions. In consequence, 'some teams are more than a club, Spain are less than a national team'.<sup>114</sup>

There is no doubt that the creation of the Autonomous Communities, and their concomitant media apparatuses, fostered new and old regional/non-Spanish national identities in the 1980s and 1990s. Regional governments financially helped the top regional teams and clubs increased their level of identification with their respective Autonomous Communities. Additionally, unlike the *selección*, clubs played on a weekly basis and were internationally successful, two factors which facilitated popular identification with local teams. Yet it is debatable that the process of globalisation led to a dissolution of Spanish identity exemplified in a lack of interest in the *selección*. In fact, the record suggests otherwise. Opinion polls, match attendances and media coverage all indicate that support for the *selección* was far from being in decline in the 1980s and 1990s.<sup>115</sup> The Spanish media also reported a strong popular interest in the national team and players and politicians seemed to be fully aware of the huge expectations raised at home when the *selección* played in World and European Cups.<sup>116</sup> As in the rest of Europe, from the early 1990s, fans began to gather in public places to watch the *selección*'s games with their faces painted with the national colours. They also gathered to celebrate the *selección*'s victories in a ritualised manner.<sup>117</sup> Tellingly, in the Spanish capital, the place

chosen to celebrate Spain's victories was the Cibeles Square, the same place that Real Madrid fans used to acclaim their team's trophies, hence producing a certain overlapping between Real Madrid and the national squad. In those years, foreign media noticed a surge in Spanish nationalism associated with the *selección*. For instance, in 1991, French TV remarked that people in Catalonia were more interested in FC Barcelona than in the *selección*, but the programme observed that this sort of attitude towards the national team was changing all over Spain.<sup>118</sup> During the 1994 World Cup, the *Il Messaggero* correspondent in Spain reported on the new 'euphoria' generated around the *selección* that was 'to be detected in bars, radio stations, TV channels and newspapers'.<sup>119</sup>

It is also important to take into consideration that Spanish clubs competed as such in international tournaments. This meant that clubs played under the Spanish flag, participated in international competitions because of their achievements in the Spanish league and cup and were supported by Spaniards all over the country. The clubs could certainly promote their local and regional/national identities, but most media reporting of their international games constantly talked about them as Spanish teams, hence reinforcing a mental framework that referred to the Spanish nation and ultimately fostered Spanish identities. In this fashion, it was unsurprising that the FC Barcelona president, Josep Lluís Núñez, declared that Barça was 'the only Spanish team reaching a European final' in 1989.<sup>120</sup> Neither was it unexpected that Andoni Zubizarreta, the Barça goalkeeper, affirmed on TVE Catalunya that his club was 'the first Spanish team [to win] a European Cup in the last 25 years' in 1992, nor that TVE labelled the year 2000 Champions League final between Valencia and Real Madrid 'the fiesta of Spanish football'.<sup>121</sup>

The multiple identifications of clubs with cities, regions and nations were facilitated by Spaniards' nested identities. As I pointed out in Chapter 2, these nested identities refer to the existence of various identities in a single person, inserting her/his local identity within a wider regional identity which is, in turn, included into a national identity. Nested identities existed among Spaniards under Franco and grew considerably during the transition to democracy. This trend did not change in the 1980s and 1990s. Surveys show that dual identities (regional and Spanish national) were the norm all over Spain.<sup>122</sup> Even in Catalonia and the Basque Country, where, predictably, the highest proportion of those who identified exclusively with the region was to be found, the vast majority of the population showed different levels of identification with Spain. Data from the first half of the 1990s revealed that

13 per cent of Catalans and 27 per cent of Basques felt exclusively from their region/nation, whereas 84 per cent and 67 per cent respectively identified in one way or another with Spain.<sup>123</sup> Furthermore, figures for people declaring dual identities grew throughout the 1980s and 1990s, mainly due to the fact that many citizens who previously felt exclusively Spanish began to adopt regional identities too.<sup>124</sup>

It is against this particular backdrop that one has to understand the several cases in which sports were used to express Spaniards' dual identities. Successes of Spanish football clubs in international competitions were often presented in the media as a victory for both the team's region and the Spanish nation. Thus when FC Barcelona won the Cup Winners Cup in 1989 and the European Championship in 1992 many in the media referred to Barça as both a Catalan and Spanish club.<sup>125</sup> By the same token, Real Zaragoza's victory in the 1995 Cup Winners Cup final was considered by the Minister of Education as the triumph of 'all Aragonese and all Spaniards'.<sup>126</sup> Compatibility of regional and national identities was at times presented as part of Spain's modernity. In 1986, the FC Barcelona president wrote that the new democratic and decentralised state, which explicitly acknowledged Catalan identity and distinctiveness, was 'beneficial for a modern and normalised Spain'.<sup>127</sup>

The link between modernity and multiple identities was present in the Barcelona Olympics too. The Games' ceremonies combined Catalan and Spanish anthems, flags and symbols and, more importantly, the public displayed both Catalan and Spanish flags when cheering for the Spanish athletes. According to *El País*, these symbolic combinations were significant for they demonstrated 'substantial advances towards the accommodation' of the different ideas of Spain.<sup>128</sup> Academic studies have later shown that dual identities were a 'stabilising factor contributing to national integration' in 1992.<sup>129</sup> The Barcelona Olympics were a good reminder of the flexibility and multi-dimensionality of identities. The footage of thousands of supporters chanting 'Spain, Spain, Spain' and displaying Spanish and Catalan flags in the football final at the Montjuic Olympic Stadium was also the clear expression of dual national identities from below. In following years, the combination of Spanish and regional/national flags became more common. This was the case, for example, of the Valencia supporters in the 2000 Champions League final versus Real Madrid, who displayed Valencian and Spanish flags.<sup>130</sup> Later the same year, tennis fans exhibited Catalan and Spanish flags at the Davis Cup final played in Barcelona.<sup>131</sup> Throughout the different tennis matches against Australia, the crowd supported the home team chanting 'Spain, Spain, Spain'. Following the last game won by

the Spaniards, the Catalan public celebrated the local victory by singing 'Que viva España'.<sup>132</sup>

In the last two decades of the twentieth century, the processes of globalisation did not erode national identities but rather brought about a redefinition of them.<sup>133</sup> The re-elaboration of Spanishness was carried out in terms of modernisation, Europeanisation and 'normalisation'. This implied a transformation of the national narrative that gradually marginalised those stereotypes considered backward, while stressing the modern characteristics of Spaniards. The cumulative media effect, the flexibility of dual identities and the new role of nation-states on the global stage facilitated the impact of the new national narrative. Spaniards bought into the idea that they were modern and European, although some features of the pre-democracy narrative remained. Football was crucial in the redefinition of Spanish identities. Successful clubs promoted modernisation and dual identities while the *selección* perpetuated the failure narrative. Yet the association of the national team with underachievement did not mean popular detachment from the *selección*. It instead led to a sort of love-hate relationship that ultimately showed Spaniards' strong emotional link with the team. Understandably, the more Spanish football clubs and other sportsmen and women succeeded internationally, the more frustration grew at the failures of the *selección*. Only in the twenty-first century was this vicious circle to be broken.

# 5

## From Patriotic Bulimia to Nationalist Obesity (2001–2012)

‘The Spanish fury never existed’

(Ángel Cappa)

On 8 June 2012 the eyes of world were on Spain. Following weeks of market turmoil, mass media all over the planet reported that the Spanish economy was on the brink of collapse. The financial storm was so bad that it threatened the existence of the European monetary union. European Union leaders raced to put measures in place and pressured Spanish officials to seek aid. The next day, the Spanish Minister of the Exchequer, Luis de Guindos, announced that Spain had asked euro-region governments for a bailout of €100 billion to rescue its crippled banking sector. Spain became the biggest euro economy to seek international aid.<sup>1</sup> Speaking for the first time since the rescue of the banks was agreed, at a press conference on 10 June, the Spanish Prime Minister, Mariano Rajoy, tried to present the financial bailout as a victory for his country. To the astonishment of journalists, Rajoy also declared that he had to cut the conference short because he was travelling to Gdansk to watch Spain’s first game in the Poland and Ukraine Euro 2012. Questioned about the appropriateness of the football trip, at a time when Spain was going through one of the most precarious economic moments in its history, the PM was unapologetic. He said that the ‘situation had been resolved’ and that the national team ‘deserved’ his visit.<sup>2</sup> Rajoy only lamented that he could not be in Paris at the same time to watch Rafael Nadal win Roland Garros.<sup>3</sup>

Moral issues aside, Rajoy’s trip to Poland shows how important the *selección* had become for politicians by 2012. Winners of Euro 2008 and the 2010 World Cup, the national team had turned into an icon of national pride, a paradigm of teamwork, collaboration and success.

Fully aware of the squad's symbolic power, a few days before Euro 2012 Rajoy visited the national team in Madrid, where the *selección* was preparing for the European championship. In this photo opportunity, the Prime Minister asked players to win the title because this would make millions of Spaniards forget about the economic crisis. Vicente del Bosque, the Spanish coach, sensibly replied to the PM that it was not the *selección's* role to solve the country's problems either way.<sup>4</sup> A month later, Rajoy travelled again, this time to Kiev, to watch Spain play the final of Euro 2012. Despite growing criticism of Ukraine's poor record in human rights, Rajoy decided not to miss yet another chance to associate himself with the *selección* and took his place in the grandstand with the Spanish royal heir, Prince Felipe.<sup>5</sup> Spain thrashed Italy 4–0 and street celebrations took place all over the country. In the following months, the Spanish economy plummeted, the recession deepened and the country suffered record levels of unemployment.

Things were very different a decade earlier. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the Spanish economy grew steadily, prime ministers did not travel to see Spain's opening matches in international tournaments and, more importantly, the *selección* did not play finals of European championships and World Cups. In fact the old association of the *selección* with failure remained pretty much alive in the first half of the 2000s. Some authors even theorised about Spain's underperformance. The sociologist José Ignacio Wert coined the term 'patriotic anorexia' to explain why Spanish players lacked 'eagerness, competitive nerve and courage' when wearing the national strip.<sup>6</sup> Apparently, Spaniards were deficient in Spanish nationalist feelings due to, first, the abusive use that Francoism had made of Spanishness and, second, the strength regional and alternative national identities had gained all over the country since the transition to democracy. According to Wert, the media and civil society should foster a modernising, democratic patriotism so Spaniards could normalise the public expression of Spanish feelings and, simultaneously, improve their football results. It is highly debatable that Spaniards suffered from any kind of patriotic deficit, let alone that the *selección's* performances were the consequence of a lack of Spanishness, but Wert's position was characteristic of a group of conservative scholars and politicians who felt at the time that Spaniards were not properly nationalised and needed an injection of patriotism.

This chapter accounts for the transformation of Spanish national identities in the period 2001–2012. The first part briefly analyses political, social and media continuities and changes that hastened the cumulative media effect and with it the increased impact of football in Spain.

The second section explains the endurance of the failure narrative in the first half of the 2000s decade and the adoption of a discourse of success in Spanish football reports from 2008 onwards. The third part deals with the foreign gaze on Spanish soccer. It examines the European media's discursive change that transformed the representation of the Iberians from backward, perennial underachievers to modern, serial winners. The last part of the chapter explores the effects of globalisation and the world economic crisis on national identities and football in Spain.

### **Political, social and media continuities and changes**

In March 2000, José María Aznar was elected for a second term in office. This time the conservatives obtained an absolute majority, so the People's Party did not have to rely on the parliamentary support of the Catalan and the Basque nationalist right. As a result, a renovated Spanish nationalism surfaced in the second Aznar government (2000–2004). This renewed nationalism was partially laid out in the document entitled 'The Constitutional Patriotism of the Twenty First Century'. The document was passed at the 2002 PP conference and argued that the Constitution of 1978, with its stress on liberty and plurality, should be the basis for a new concept of Spain. The conservatives, nevertheless, combined this 'civic' nationalism with an ethnic patriotism based on a historical and cultural identity that had its roots in white, Castilian-speaking, Catholic Spain. Thus conservatives blended appeals to constitutional patriotism, as a mechanism of national integration, with the more traditional and exclusivist narrative of a common Spanish history and political identity forged through the centuries, in an attempt to head off regional nationalist claims.<sup>7</sup>

Aznar shared José Ignacio Wert's thesis about Spaniards' patriotic deficit and, in his second term, continued to implement policies designed to infuse nationalist feelings in the population. The 2003 education reform not only introduced a traditional history curriculum but also made the teaching of religion (either Catholicism or the 'Religious fact' [*Hecho Religioso*]) obligatory. In addition, conservatives sponsored non-academic pro-Francoist revisions of the past and financed a number of TV and radio stations that gave vent to reactionary Spanish nationalist sentiments on a regular basis. Under Aznar, the pomp and circumstance of nationalist Spain was at its most overt since the transition to democracy. The government devoted many of its efforts to promoting Spanish nationalism through public ceremonies, symbols and,

crucially, sport.<sup>8</sup> The idea behind this recuperation of national symbols and rituals (which included a military ceremony to honour a disproportionately large Spanish flag at Plaza de Colón in Madrid) was to fight regional nationalisms on their own terms. As the right-wing political science professor Edurne Uriate put it, Spaniards had to leave behind the complexes inherited from the Franco dictatorship, recover the idea of a strong Spanish nation and stop making concessions to regional nationalists.<sup>9</sup>

In 2002, a number of public institutions and private companies launched an initiative called *Proyecto Marca España* (the Spain Brand Project) to coordinate efforts to construct an image of the country in tune with its new economic, social and cultural realities. Aware of the fact that Spain had a problem in the way it was seen abroad, the conservatives sought to modernise the image of the country.<sup>10</sup> To this end, the government funded a number of agencies and public companies promoting the Spain brand in the fields of culture, foreign affairs, international cooperation and sport.<sup>11</sup> It also commissioned the *Real Instituto Elcano* to review the transformations in both the way Spaniards saw foreigners and the international image of Spain. This branding of Spain was later continued by the governments of José Luís Rodríguez Zapatero. The socialists kept on financing important campaigns at home and abroad to publicise the nation and the *Gobierno de España* (Spain's Government) brand, with a special emphasis on Spanish sporting victories.<sup>12</sup> Under both the PP and the PSOE, nonetheless, the national brand was often distorted in the interest of ideological agendas in Spain and there was no clear cultural policy shaping the activities of the extraordinary range of different public agencies representing the country abroad.<sup>13</sup>

The Zapatero premiership (2004–2011) turned national identities and territorial organisation into one of the main political issues in Spain. In its first term in office (2004–2008), the socialist minority government had to rely on the support of the left (*Izquierda Unida*) and radical Catalan nationalists (*Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya*) in the Spanish parliament. Zapatero soon rejected Aznar's support for George W. Bush and Tony Blair's invasion of Iraq, withdrew Spanish troops from the middle-east country and realigned Spain with France and Germany. The socialists also passed legislation expanding civil rights, such as gay marriage and a more permissive abortion law. They also designed a new education system that included the teaching of constitutional and human rights. These reforms reflected a more secularised idea of the Spanish nation and met with the total opposition of the PP. Under

pressure to reform the Catalan statute of autonomy, Zapatero backed a new regional charter that many (including the PP and members of his own party) thought went too far in terms of decentralisation but that Catalan nationalists considered insufficient. The new Catalan charter had a knock-on effect, as a number of autonomous communities reformed their statutes, and polarised Spanish political discourse around the issue of nation and identity.

Zapatero's second term in office (2008–2011) was marked by the world economic crisis. The socialists continued applying their first-term business-friendly economic policies, but due to the banking crisis the PSOE government rescued troubled financial institutions and accelerated the privatisation of public services, ultimately placing the loss on the shoulders of the taxpayers.<sup>14</sup> Seeking to reduce Spain's public deficit and under considerable pressure from the EU and the IMF, the PSOE opted for a reform of the labour market that facilitated dismissals and reduced workers' salaries and rights. Not by accident, the socialists passed the labour market reform the very same day that Spain played their first match in the 2010 World Cup. The socialists also began a series of radical cuts in social services which seriously undermined the already rather weak Spanish welfare state. As a result, the Spanish economy fell into recession, unemployment doubled and the number of Spaniards living under the poverty line rocketed. When Zapatero left office in December 2011, Spain had the fourth largest gap between rich and poor of the European Union.<sup>15</sup> Only Lithuania, Latvia and Romania had larger disparities between incomes than Spain.

Despite the economic crisis, or perhaps because of it, the PSOE governments were keen to capitalise on Spanish sportsmen and women's international success. When he first came to power, Zapatero increased state funding for elite athletes, yet he later reduced public investment as the crisis bit further.<sup>16</sup> Thus the *Consejo Superior de Deportes* (CSD) saw its budget cut from €194 million in 2008 to €120 million in 2011.<sup>17</sup> In December 2008, the socialist PM pledged to create a Ministry of Sports, when receiving the winning Spanish Davis Cup team at the Moncloa Palace. However, budget restrictions meant that Zapatero never fulfilled his promise. In any case, the PM was always eager to associate himself with the victories of the football *selección*. Following the team's triumph in Euro 2008, he received the *selección* at the presidential palace and declared that the victory 'completed the transition of Spanish football'.<sup>18</sup> The implication here was that the country had finally put the Franco regime behind it and reclaimed a title that had been first won in a 'black and white' Spain under the gaze of the military dictator in

1964. For Zapatero, the 2008 victory was the symbol of a modern Spain that 'normalised' its situation in European footballing terms. The historical 'abnormality' of the *selección* not winning international trophies had been corrected. Two years later, the *selección* returned to Moncloa with the World Cup. This time Zapatero 'nationalised' the victory by stating that the Cup belonged to all Spaniards and demonstrated the strength of Spain as a nation when united in a common goal.<sup>19</sup>

Like his predecessor, Zapatero was keen to use television to nationalise Spaniards. A new parliament regulation of 2007 established that the public corporation *Radio Televisión Española* (RTVE) had a duty to 'contribute to the construction of Spain's identity', while taking into consideration the country's different nationalities and regions.<sup>20</sup> To prepare the ground for this instilling of national identity, the new regulation brought about the domestic and international promotion of Castilian, together with the support of vernaculars in those regions with a second language; increased the news coverage of the royal family; and prioritised the RTVE acquisition of TV rights for those sporting events where Spanish teams participated.<sup>21</sup> Additionally, in 2007 Zapatero supported the private channel *La Sexta*, a broadcaster controlled by friends of the PM, when fighting to acquire the TV rights for the Spanish First Division. The government's intervention in favour of *La Sexta* damaged the interests of Grupo Prisa, the socialist-leaning news corporation, and led to the so-called 'second football war'.<sup>22</sup>

The transformation of RTVE took place in the context of a profound reshaping of the relationship between professional sports and the mass media. The first decade of the twentieth-first century witnessed an acceleration of the 'sportisation of mass media', as football further increased its already large presence in the press. As we saw in Chapter 4, this process developed in the 1980s and 1990s, but 'sportisation' reached unprecedented levels at the turn of the century. Radio broadcasting offers a case in point. Between 1995 and 2009, the main radio stations in Spain doubled the number of hours devoted to sports.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, the 2000s witnessed the birth of the first stations specialising in sports, such as *Radio Marca*, *Rock & Goal* and *Ona FM*, and the creation of radio stations by Real Madrid, Sevilla, Real Betis and Deportivo la Coruña. In the printed press, the number of readers of the 'big four' sports dailies (*Marca*, *AS*, *Mundo Deportivo* and *Sport*) grew steadily in the period 2001–2010. Interestingly, the economic crisis had little impact on their circulation figures. The big four went from 3,977,000 readers in 2007 to 4,576,000 in 2010, gaining 619,000 readers, whereas the broadsheets lost over 670,000 in the same period of time.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, in the last

decade, two new sports dailies have come out in Seville and Valencia, *Estadio Deportivo* and *Superdeporte* respectively, and football magazines and professional clubs' publications have flourished.

Spanish TV also went through a phase of increasing 'sportisation'. The new private terrestrial channels opted for sports programming to increase their audience, TVE launched a new specialised sports channel (*Teledeporte*) and Real Madrid, FC Barcelona and Sevilla football clubs created their own channels. The public seemed to respond well to this extended sports coverage. In the period 2004–2010 it is possible to detect a sustainable rise in sports events in the rankings of the most viewed programmes of the year. Tellingly, throughout the first decade of the twentieth century, the most viewed programme of the year was consistently a football match, with the exception of 2003 when the Eurovision Song Contest topped the rankings.<sup>25</sup> Football also gained importance beyond live broadcasting. The coverage of soccer in TV news programmes grew significantly over the first decade of the new century. This was important because reporting on football in the news regularly projected onto the screen a particular 'national language' that activated a series of cultural and political processes which emotionally connected viewers to the Spanish nation-state.<sup>26</sup> Additionally, by 2006, TVE three o'clock news dedicated as much time reporting on the *selección* as they did on Real Madrid and FC Barcelona, generating a growing public interest in the national team.<sup>27</sup>

In these years of rapid development in communications, the internet has revolutionised the way in which football fans 'experience' the game. The internet facilitated the proliferation of online written, radio and TV news in the shape of football webpages, blogs, 2.0 channels and video platforms like YouTube.<sup>28</sup> Figures are revealing. In 2005, the *Marca* webpage had 1.5 million visitors per month and came third on the table of most visited online newspapers in Spain. By 2010, *Marca* online had 3.6 million visitors and topped the table; *AS* came third with 1.8 million and both *Sport* and *Mundo Deportivo* reached over a million readers per month.<sup>29</sup> The growth of football information online has been particularly significant in a globalised world, where the internet has been used to reinforce rather than lessen national identities.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, the web provides uninterrupted access to live football, highlights, reports and videos of recent and old matches. This 24/7 access to football allows not only for a never-ending presence of the game in the new media but also for 'experiencing' national identities through soccer with neither time nor geographical limits. The internet has strengthened the cumulative media effect, as previews and post-match analysis, together with the

actual game, can be read, listened to and seen online virtually ad infinitum. The novelty here is that once a match has taken place the football fan can re-enact the game again and again and, hence, re-experience the sense of national belonging that comes with it.

The increasing 'sportisation' of the media went hand in hand with a further commodification of football in Spanish society. In the first decade of the twentieth century the practice of sports stabilised but football continued to rise. In 2000, 600,000 Spaniards were registered by the Spanish Football Federation. By 2010, the figure had grown to 800,000.<sup>31</sup> There can be few doubts that the active practice of soccer facilitated the impact of the media narratives on football and, thus, the grounding of national identities. Participation in local competitions and Sunday leagues, as well as practising sports at school, created a sort of instinctive habit that integrated sports into the national matrix of everyday activities.<sup>32</sup> The acquisition of national identities via football was related to consumption as well. Opinion polls showed that sports developed further as products of mass consumption in the first half of the 2000s. The development was twofold. Firstly, sports expanded as public shows both in the media and in the daily life of towns and cities. Secondly, sports gear, equipment and merchandising grew as products of consumption for personal and family use.<sup>33</sup> A survey conducted by the *Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas* (CIS) in 2007 showed that 55 per cent of Spaniards had bought football tickets in the previous 12 months and 42 per cent of soccer followers had some team merchandising at home.<sup>34</sup> Unsurprisingly, football has remained the most important sports product of mass consumption in twenty-first-century Spain.

### **The death of the fury and failure narrative**

Spain's victory in Euro 2008 rendered the fury and failure narrative obsolete once and for all. Yet it is easy to forget that the situation was significantly different in the first years of the twenty-first century, when the diminishing use of the *furia* myth was overwhelmed by the failure stereotype. As we saw in Chapter 4, the fury component began to fade away progressively from the national narrative in the 1990s, for it clashed with the image of a modern Spain. In the 2000s, the tendency grew and few mentions of the Spanish fury were made in the press. The term was increasingly associated with old-fashioned, at times kitsch, behaviours – such as the *selección's* visit to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela to ask Saint James for 'divine help' before the celebration of Euro 2004.<sup>35</sup> In addition, some attempts to recover the *furia*, at least at

a discursive level, did not take off. For instance, in 2002, the newspaper *Marca* announced it was giving an award to the *selección* player that best represented the spirit of the Spanish fury at the Japan and Korea World Cup. Journalists from different media voted to give the trophy to FC Barcelona's Carles Puyol.<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless, the *furia* trophy was short-lived. The next competition took place at Euro 2004 in Portugal. Puyol won for a second time, but the trophy was never awarded again.

By contrast, the idea of underachievement associated with the national team dominated the football narrative of the early 2000s. Unquestionably, results had much to do with this representation of Spain. In the 2002 World Cup, the *selección* were knocked out by South Korea on penalties in the quarter-finals. In Euro 2004, Spain could not progress beyond the group stage. In the 2006 World Cup, Zinedine Zidane's France defeated the *selección* in the second round of the tournament. Every defeat became another brick in a discursive wall of frustration, fatalism, failure and injustice. In 2002, Spain had two goals disallowed and a series of offside flags hindered their progress in the quarter-final game against the hosts, South Korea – a team that benefited from biased refereeing throughout the tournament. The Spanish newspapers were outraged. Together with some customary mention of Spain's bad luck, they described the match as an 'armed robbery', an 'unfair disgrace' in a 'disgusting' World Cup marked by corruption.<sup>37</sup> Press, players, coaches and supporters, including the King of Spain, attributed responsibility for the defeat to the referee and his officials.<sup>38</sup> Some self-criticism can be found to explain Spain's defeat against the Koreans, but most of the media blamed FIFA for appointing officials from countries with little footballing tradition, like Egypt, Uganda and Trinidad and Tobago, to referee such an important game.<sup>39</sup> The implication was that referees from third world countries were more malleable and would follow FIFA's secret instructions to have the Koreans in the semi-finals for commercial reasons.

No explicit accusations of corruption were to be formulated in Euro 2004, when Spain found themselves eliminated by Portugal and Greece in the group stage of the competition. In this case the discourse of failure concentrated on Spaniards' mental weakness and the *selección's* absence of a well-defined national style.<sup>40</sup> Some players resorted, once again, to citing a lack of good fortune to explain the fiasco, but journalists thought that Spanish footballers were overrated and questioned their quality.<sup>41</sup> 'Same as usual. Another failure of the *selección*,' read the front page of *Marca* following Spain's defeat at the hands of Portugal.<sup>42</sup> *El Mundo* concluded that 'failure is innate to Spain' and they 'will fail

again in the 2006 World Cup'.<sup>43</sup> Two years later, the narrative of the media was not very different when Spain lost to France in the 2006 World Cup second round. A lack of talent and competitive spirit, mental feebleness, and overrated players were put as the reasons for defeat.<sup>44</sup> 'Same old Spain,' summarised a headline in *El País*.<sup>45</sup> 'As usual, but a bit earlier,' commented the front page of the Barcelona daily *Sport* referring to the fact that Spain had not even reached the quarter-finals on this occasion.<sup>46</sup>

Two elements account for the power of the failure narrative. Firstly, the Spanish media used the foreign press to reinforce their views of the *selección*. As they had done in the twentieth century, Spanish newspapers reported on national others' views when in agreement and ignored the most critical remarks. Following the controversial 2002 defeat against South Korea, Spanish newspapers reported that the European press agreed on the referee's biased behaviour against the *selección*.<sup>47</sup> Underpinning the victimisation-of-Spain narrative, *El País* published a letter by the Russian chess champion Gary Kasparov who referred to the match as 'the most viewed robbery in history'.<sup>48</sup> In 2004 and 2006 the Spanish media highlighted those international press reports that stressed the players' weak character and the persistent underperformance of the *selección*.<sup>49</sup> In all cases, the Spanish media reinforced the very stereotypes that constituted the basis of the failure narrative.

Secondly, the idea that history repeated itself was a key feature in the failure narrative. Underachievement and disappointment were presented as part of Spain's historical destiny. Every time the *selección* was knocked out of a European Championship or World Cup, the media analysed the defeat by looking back in time and talking about failures in previous tournaments.<sup>50</sup> Every new defeat was presented as the latest disappointment in a long history of failures. For instance, following Spain's elimination at Euro 2004, the popular TVE programme *Informe Semanal* devoted an entire report to analysing the *selección's* historical failures in international competitions. Entitled 'New Times, Old Defeats', the report talked poetically about Spain's historical misfortune as a 'recurrent nightmare' and identified 'lack of character' as a 'disease with a long historical record among *selección* players'.<sup>51</sup> This 'historisation' of failure endowed Spain's losses with an aura of inevitability and strengthened the narrative of underachievement.

Spain's victory in Euro 2008 necessarily put an end to the failure narrative. In the Austria and Switzerland European championship, the *selección*, or *la Roja* (the Red One) as the team was nicknamed, played a very skilful and modern style of football based on high-tempo short

passing and prioritising possession. This style was labelled *tiqui-taca* and was universally praised. The Spanish press interpreted the 2008 victory as the ultimate proof of the country's modernity and diversity. The *selección* players were portrayed as the 'sons of plurality', who knew 'how to be competitive and did not recognise in themselves the fatalism of their forebears'.<sup>52</sup> As a result, the new generation had overcome old regional issues and internal disputes. It was 'everybody's team, as patriotic as it was global'.<sup>53</sup> In some cases, this celebration of the *selección* had political implications. The conservative press used the victories of the national team to attack regional nationalists. On 8 August 2008, for example, an editorial in the monarchist *ABC* stated: 'In confusing times for the territorial structuring of the State, sports are playing a very relevant role because they bring together common emotions and show the power of unity against absurd separatist temptations'.<sup>54</sup> In subsequent years praising the *selección* as the symbol of a modern, plural but united Spain to criticise 'backward', 'short-sighted', 'parochial' regional nationalists became commonplace in the right-wing press.<sup>55</sup>

The new 'narrative of success' was grounded in the open rejection of the old stereotypes associated with the national football team and the celebration of Spain as a world power in sports. The *furia española* was presented as 'pre-democratic', the antithesis of the modern, victorious Spain.<sup>56</sup> Past appeals to the fury were seen as old-fashioned and in bad taste.<sup>57</sup> Some went as far as to deny the very existence of the Spanish fury. This was the case of the Argentinian coach and former second in command at Real Madrid, Ángel Cappa, who declared in a 2010 interview that the Spanish fury had 'never existed'.<sup>58</sup> Others blamed the fury and Spanish individualism for the poor results of the past and argued that it was only when the *selección* decided to embrace teamwork, 'tenacity and talent' that the national squad had gained international respect and titles.<sup>59</sup> The rationale was that leaving behind ancient stereotypes and inferiority complexes that hampered Spaniards' performances had allowed for a string of successes in many different sports. In the summer of 2008 the Spanish media proudly heralded the 'golden age of Spanish sports'.<sup>60</sup> *El País* pointed to the modernisation of Spain to account for the transformation: 'Democracy and European integration have brought more investment, a better diet, a development of the health service and the modernisation of managers and facilities'.<sup>61</sup> Hereafter, the Spanish press repeatedly cited international victories in basketball, tennis, cycling, Formula 1, handball, motorcycling, volleyball and, of course, football to emphasise Spain's leading position in a wide range of sports.<sup>62</sup>

Nevertheless, it is important to note that this revival of Spanish nationalism did not happen overnight. Winning had an undeniable impact on Spaniards' morale, but demonstrations of a new national pride were not uncommon before the *selección* won its second European title in 2008. From the beginning of the decade of the 2000s the idea that Spain's history was 'normal' when compared to its European neighbours increasingly took hold among scholars.<sup>63</sup> The 'narratives of exceptionalism' were gradually debunked and a certain consensus about the country's 'normal' past was achieved, not only in academia but also, and more importantly, in the press and the political arena. The normalisation of the past contributed to the justification of the constitutional political system. By the early 2000s, most of the main newspapers in the country, *El País*, *La Vanguardia*, *El Mundo* and *ABC*, reproduced grand narratives related to the Spanish nation that celebrated the status quo.<sup>64</sup> The idea that Spain was a modern country, second to none in Europe, led to a widespread sentiment of national pride, which overturned most feelings of inferiority that the past could have created among Spaniards. The 2007 Nike commercial campaign captured this new national self-satisfaction under the tenet 'Being Spanish is not an excuse anymore. It is a responsibility'.<sup>65</sup> Likewise, the front page of *Marca* the day Spain played their opening game in Euro 2008 epitomised this new sense of national self-esteem verging on arrogance. The sports daily published a picture of a smiling toddler in the *selección* strip sitting on a Spanish flag under the headline 'The New Spain' and added: 'We have dazzled the world in science, economy, gastronomy, arts, tennis, cycling, basketball, motorcycling and Formula 1 ... and now we want to be the best at football too.'<sup>66</sup>

The new 'narrative of success', where sporting victories were associated with the modernisation of the country, began to emerge in the 1990s and was consolidated in the 2000s.<sup>67</sup> Contrary to what is sometimes suggested, the *selección* acted as an important conduit of national pride in the years before 2008.<sup>68</sup> In 2004, the press highlighted the great 'red tide' (*marea roja*) of 20,000 supporters that accompanied the *selección* to Portugal and the many thousands that have followed the team in the streets of Spain.<sup>69</sup> The same year, the veteran sports journalist Julián García Candau observed that the *selección* had reached its biggest popular support in history.<sup>70</sup> Two years later, huge screens were set up in Madrid, Valencia, Zaragoza, Santander and Palencia, among others, to watch *la Roja* games at the World Cup in Germany. The 2006 gatherings provided thousands of citizens with the chance to wear their *selección* shirts and to wave Spanish flags, in what constituted a massive

demonstration of national pride. The phenomenon was noticed in the press. Following the elimination of Spain from the 2006 World Cup, an editorial in the conservative *El Mundo* criticised the players but praised the popular manifestation of a new 'latent patriotism' linked to the *selección*.<sup>71</sup>

Other fields seem to confirm the growing social and cultural importance of the *selección* before the 2008 European title. In the above-mentioned 2007 CIS opinion poll, over 50 per cent of Spaniards declared they were 'very' or 'quite' interested in the national squad and another 25.4 per cent showed limited concern. Only 23.8 per cent declared no concern for *la Roja*, most of them because they had no interest in football whatsoever. Tellingly, when asked whether they would feel disappointed if the *selección* did not qualify for Euro 2008, 75.6 per cent answered affirmatively. At a cultural level, the relevance of the *selección* before 2008 was traceable too. In popular music, many pop and rock bands included references to the national team, mainly to express support for the squad and curse their historical failures.<sup>72</sup> The song simply entitled 'Progressing beyond the Quarterfinals' (*Pasar de cuartos*), by the band Pignoise, is an excellent example of the expectations and frustrations that the *selección* produced among youngsters. In a similar vein, Aarón Sáez's 'Cardeñosa's Goal' (*El gol de Cardeñosa*) went over the list of Spanish misfortunes in the last three decades and referred to the hype surrounding the national squad and its eventual collapse into disappointment. These songs are relevant because they refer to a social process by which Spaniards seemed to thrive in the course of creating high expectations regarding the national team followed by tragic defeats. Like the English, the other great European underachievers, regular 'tragedies' in the shape of eliminations from international tournaments meant Spaniards went through concomitant cathartic experiences of sharing the pain with fellow citizens.<sup>73</sup> In the same manner that the failure narrative created a common identity, the collective experience of grieving for the *selección*'s defeats was an effective form of Spanish nation-building too.

The Euro 2008 victory was represented by the Spanish media as the final step in the normalisation of the country in footballing terms. The final win in Vienna against Germany meant Spaniards were at last able to correct the 'historical abnormality' of failing to win trophies with the *selección*, while repeatedly winning championships with football clubs and in many other sporting disciplines. But the 2008 trophy also denoted the definitive 'normalisation' of Spanish nationalism at both discursive and symbolic levels.<sup>74</sup> The 'narrative of success' was mainly

a patriotic discourse that celebrated the achievements of the Spanish nation. In 2008, expressions of Spanish pride inundated the media, a process that was later intensified with the victories of 2010 and 2012.<sup>75</sup> Clearly, the interpretations of Spanish triumphs varied depending on the political orientation of the mass medium but, with the logical exception of those supporting regional nationalist views, the vast majority of the media rejoiced in the common national project represented by *la Roja* and cheered Spain's superiority. This marked an important change, for in the past blunt demonstrations of Spanish pride, let alone superiority, were less common in football coverage.

Yet the outburst of Spanish nationalism was not merely a from-above media fabrication. In 2008, tens of thousands of Spaniards in their *selección* red shirts filled squares and public spaces to watch *la Roja* games in big screens all over the country. Spain's victories throughout the tournament turned these gatherings into immense street parties, where manifestations of Spanish pride were normalised in the shape of chants such as the popular '*yo soy español, español, español*' (I am Spanish, Spanish, Spanish) – basic, repetitive but extremely telling in terms of national self-reaffirmation. Alongside street celebrations and nationalist chants, the weeks of Euro 2008 witnessed a widespread use of Spanish constitutional flags among supporters. Many Spaniards draped the national emblem from their home balconies and carried constitutional flags to the squares where they watched the *selección* games. Sociologists have described this process as a re-signification of Spanish national symbols.<sup>76</sup> As we saw in previous chapters, in the 1980s and 1990s Spanish national symbols retained a powerful Francoist undertone in the eyes of many citizens. Euro 2008 allowed for a process of re-signification that expunged Spanish symbols of those old connotations with the far right and presented a positive, inclusive, modern and victorious image of the nation. Crucially, the reclamation of Spanish national symbols was in the main carried out by youngsters and teenagers. These demographic groups were all born under the democratic regime and did not know the Spanish constitutional flag with a strong political meaning.<sup>77</sup>

This process of bottom-up recovery of national symbols through football was not unique to Spain. Germany, also a country with a fascist past, went through a similar process of normalisation of the national flag in 2006, when it hosted the World Cup.<sup>78</sup> Nonetheless, it is important to qualify the phenomenon of symbolic normalisation in Spain. Firstly, the reclamation of the Spanish flag was not equally widespread all over the country. As we shall see in the following chapters, the process was less marked in Catalonia and the Basque Country. Secondly, while the

constitutional flag experienced an unquestionable resurgence, attempts to endow the national anthem with lyrics and to create a hymn for the *selección* have repeatedly failed due to a lack of popular support. The first endeavour of this sort came in 2007, as the Spanish Olympic Committee promoted a popular competition to provide the Spanish anthem with a set of lyrics. A jury chose the winning lyrics but the election was severely criticised and the Spanish Olympic Committee decided to abandon the project.<sup>79</sup> In March 2009, the Spanish Football Federation commissioned a hymn for the *selección* from the comedian César Cadaval.<sup>80</sup> Ironically, the lyrics unintentionally included a number of syntactical mistakes and incorporated every single cliché imaginable: the ‘Spanish fury’, ‘the red fury’, ‘Spanish red passion’, ‘Olé España’ and ‘Viva España’. The music was an old-fashioned *sevillana* that underlined the twentieth-century traditional Andalusian image of Spain. The song was interpreted by a second-rate singer, José Manuel Soto, and the unknown band *Siempre Así*. It had no impact whatsoever and soon fell into oblivion. The latest attempt to provide the Spanish national anthem with lyrics came from the *Fundación Denaes*, an organization for the defence of the Spanish nation. On 6 December 2012, the Spanish anthem with the new lyrics, written by the Basque professor Jon Jurasti, was sung by the Cuban-Spanish artist Yelena Brooks during the celebration of Constitution Day in Madrid.<sup>81</sup> It may be too soon to tell, but the meagre media coverage that the new anthem received seems to indicate that this new attempt will not make a strong impact.

For all its territorial and lyrical limitations, the new Spanish nationalism associated with the *selección* reached unprecedented historical levels in the last years of the first decade of the twenty-first century. Interestingly, the victory in Euro 2008 consolidated the narrative of success at the very same time as the world economic crisis began to hit Spain badly. The subsequent victories in the 2010 World Cup and Euro 2012 enhanced popular manifestations of Spanishness as the recession bit deeper.<sup>82</sup> *La Roja* has provided a valve to release Spanish pride as a sort of ‘emotional palliative’, at a time when the economic and social crises have projected the image of a devastated country at home and abroad.

## Hetero representations of failures and fiestas

The foreign media’s image of Spanish football in the twenty-first century can be divided into two periods. In the years 2001–2008, the old narratives, myths and stereotypes remained pretty much in place. In the

era 2008–2012, the European press carried out a partial revision of narratives, myths and stereotypes about Spain, seeking to adapt their discourse to the *selección's* new status as European and World champions.

Spain's results in the 2002 and 2006 World Cups and the 2004 European Championship did little to mitigate the international association between *selección* and failure. The English press continued to regard Spain as the 'great underachievers'.<sup>83</sup> Two principal reasons were offered for the failure of the national side. First, Spain was a disunited country fraught with regional tensions that had a negative effect on the squad. Created in the twentieth century, this argument about regional tensions became a classic of the English press in the 2000s.<sup>84</sup> It was simplistic and yet endowed the journalists' analyses with a veneer of knowledge about the political situation in Spain. Logical as the argument may seem, the truth is that regionalist/nationalist rivalries among players of the *selección* were never an issue.<sup>85</sup> No quarrels in the squad were known to be related to questions of regional identity nor did Basque and Catalan players show less commitment to Spain's national team than, let's say, Andalusians or *Madrileños*. Therefore, the English press kept the mantra of regional divisions alive but was unable to explain how these alleged tensions actually translated into the underperformance of the *selección*.

The second reason for the *selección's* underachievement lay in the Spaniards' intrinsic mental weakness, according to the English media.<sup>86</sup> Before the start of Euro 2004, *The Guardian* pointed out that Spain's problems of underperformance were 'likely to be psychological'.<sup>87</sup> Five days later, following a draw between Spain and eventual champions Greece, *The Times* highlighted that Spaniards suffered from 'deep-laid national anxieties, historical reasons for a feeling of one-downness' and a 'gloomy fatalism, dismal resignation to the fact that sadness lies around the corner'.<sup>88</sup> In 2006, *The Sunday Times* insisted on the Iberians' 'neurotic defeatism' and their 'habit of starting World Cups a jangle of nerves and finishing them early'.<sup>89</sup> The same reportage entered anthropological waters and explained that Spaniards were parochial 'mummy's boys' used to having longer and later lunches than elsewhere in Europe, so the *selección* would find it difficult to perform as they were playing at three o'clock in the afternoon. The foreseeable result was 'another Spanish anti-climax at a major football event: indifference at home, and a gifted team who manage to look like blundering outsiders, like homesick caricatures for whom the idea of having to sit down to a meal not prepared by their mother or to mix with folk from outside the pueblo seem challenges too great to bear'.<sup>90</sup> Luckily for Spain,

added *The Sunday Times* with no apparent irony, they had a number of players – such as Luís García, Xabi Alonso, Cesc Fàbregas and José Antonio Reyes – playing in the English Premier League. As a consequence of their English experience, these Spaniards were used to having earlier and shorter lunches and had become worldlier. The implications were unmistakable: in order to improve, Spanish players needed to be exposed to the Anglo-Saxon world.

Less inclined to psychological/anthropological analyses than the English, the French media nonetheless also talked about Spain's inferiority complexes and historic curses, especially when playing *les Bleus*.<sup>91</sup> In the twenty-first century, the Gallic victory in the Euro 1984 final was remembered every time Spain played France, as a way to underline French historic footballing supremacy over their Iberian neighbours.<sup>92</sup> The comments in *Le Monde* following *les Bleus'* victory over Spain in the 2006 World Cup perfectly epitomise the French sense of superiority: 'For the Spaniards, football is a game of twenty-two players and, in the end, the French always win.'<sup>93</sup> Adaptations of Gary Lineker's famous adage aside ('Football is a simple game. Twenty-two men chase a ball for 90 minutes and, at the end, the Germans always win'), the French media continued portraying Spaniards as happy and loud but also uncivilised people – pretty much in the same manner as they did in the 1980s and 1990s. For instance, when Spanish supporters booed the *Marseillaise* in 2006, French TV noted that this had been the only incident of its kind in the entire World Cup.<sup>94</sup> Spaniards were, in that sense, special.

Spaniards were also rightly accused of racist behaviour. In October 2004, Luís Aragonés, the *selección* coach, was caught on Spanish TV during a training session referring to the French player Thierry Henry as a 'black shit', in an attempt to 'motivate' the Arsenal striker's team-mate José Antonio Reyes. Aragonés later declared he was not racist but his comments understandingly caused uproar in France and, especially, England. Things only got worse the following month when Aragonés lost his temper in a press conference before a friendly between Spain and England in Madrid. When questioned about the Henry issue, he reminded English journalists about the racially prejudiced past of the British Empire: 'I remember the colonies. I know who is racist!' the coach ranted.<sup>95</sup> The English Football Association then had the national squad wearing T-shirts bearing the slogan 'Let's Kick Racism out of Football' in the training session the day before the friendly at Real Madrid's Bernabéu Stadium. Sadly, thousands of local supporters monkey-chanted England's black players throughout the match, projecting an international image of Spaniards as racist bigots.<sup>96</sup>

The German media shared many of the English press's views about Spain. Always fond of bullfighting metaphors, the Germans too pointed at political factors to account for the *selección's* record of underachievement.<sup>97</sup> Somehow showing little knowledge of the semi-federal territorial framework established in Spain in the late 1970s, *Der Spiegel* argued that failure was the result of 'irreconcilable regional rivalries among regions aspiring to autonomy and a centralist state with its overpowering capital Madrid'.<sup>98</sup> The 'facts' that fans' allegiances were more tightly bound to their clubs than to the *selección* and the supposed in-fighting of Real Madrid and Barcelona players in the national team were presented as 'natural' by-products of regional tensions, although no concrete examples of how these alleged strains affected the game, let alone the results, of the *selección* were provided.<sup>99</sup> The German media also found psychological reasons behind Spain's underperformances. A 'chronic fear of defeat', 'tournament neurosis' and 'Spanish fatalism' were some of the symptoms detected.<sup>100</sup> As usual, the representations of the national other were used to highlight the positive traits of the national self. Thus German TV talked about the psychological advantage that Joachim Löw's players held over Spain in the Euro 2008 final, because the Iberians had a great deal of respect for Germany, a team that historically was used to winning titles.<sup>101</sup> In a similar vein, the day before the 2008 final, the newspaper *Die Zeit* combined psychology with history to argue that the Spaniards saw Germans as their 'almost invincible *bête noire*' and added: 'Of course history plays on Sunday. On the one hand, we have the Spaniards, who do not win a thing from time immemorial; on the other, we have the Germans, who supposedly always win.'<sup>102</sup>

Spain's victory in the 2008 final forced a change of narrative. The European media turned their discourse about the Iberians' psychological feebleness, fatalism and individualism upside down. The 2008 title first, and the 2010 and 2012 trophies later, proved the winning mentality of a team that sacrificed the concept of star players in the name of the collective good.<sup>103</sup> The *selección's* style was acclaimed as a 'Spanish collective work of art' and the simple, down-to-earth and polite behaviour of the players was internationally praised.<sup>104</sup> As the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* remarked in 2008, these young footballers had become the symbol of qualities not usually associated with Spain such as 'a perseverant fighting spirit, the ability to succeed, a desire for victory and unlimited self-confidence'.<sup>105</sup> The psychological problems and historic curses were over. Spain's economic growth and their new successful image in the global milieu have turned them into the

‘Germans of the South’.<sup>106</sup> By stripping from the Iberians the old stereotypes of mental feebleness and a loser’s mindset and instead associating them with stereotypes linked to the Germans, the press converted Spaniards into a Mediterranean version of themselves. The typecasting exercise is very revealing of the strength of the bond between stereotypes and nations, as the transformation of a set of clichés associated with a national group (such as from psychological weakness to unlimited self-esteem), implied the imagined ‘conversion’ of that particular nation (Spain) into another (Germany).

The previous picture of a country riddled with regional and interclub tensions was rapidly redrawn. Following Spain’s victory over Germany in 2008, the German press did not see the potential for quarrels in the fact that most of the *selección* comprised Real Madrid and Barcelona players. On the contrary, it was an advantage because players were Champions League-experienced.<sup>107</sup> According to *The Observer*, big TV audiences for *la Roja*’s games during Euro 2008 in Catalonia and the Basque Country demonstrated ‘the old divisions were giving way to a new unity’.<sup>108</sup> *The Guardian*, itself a great purveyor of the regional disparities discourse, published a piece on the eve of the 2010 World Cup final that asserted that the Spanish tradition of feuding had subsided and ‘the Catalan-Castilian schism [had] healed’.<sup>109</sup> It almost goes without saying that no evidence of such a schism in the *selección*, or of the healing process for that matter, was provided. Moreover, regional diversity went from burden to benefit. In June 2012, James Lawton, chief sports writer of *The Independent*, wrote that Spain had forged an exquisite team because they ‘gathered in all the assets of the football nation, the ferocity of the Basques, the hard brilliance of the Castilians, and the joyful exuberance of the Catalans’.<sup>110</sup> Victory itself was presented as actual proof that Spaniards could achieve greatness when they forgot regional discrepancies and united in a common pursuit.<sup>111</sup>

The U-turn regarding the impact of the supposed regional tensions shows the way the media adapted their narratives on nations to changing realities. In this process of adaptation, the same myth, the influence of regional disparities on the national squad, was used to explain two opposing realities, Spain losing and winning. Like their Spanish counterparts, the European media tried to explain the reasons behind Spain’s success story in sports. State funding from the time of the Barcelona Olympics, solid investment in youth training programmes and the overcoming of psychological barriers were among the factors repeatedly put forward.<sup>112</sup> These views of Spanish success in sports were often at the centre of a positive representation of Spain as a growing, modern,



Figure 4 Young supporters celebrate Spain's victory at the 2010 World Cup (© Reuters 2013)

successful nation.<sup>113</sup> *The Independent's* report 'European Champions (of Everything)', praising Iberian food, culture, architecture and fashion and presenting Spanish society as one of the most tolerant, advanced and modern on the continent, is a case in point.<sup>114</sup> In many respects, this positive portrait of a united, modern Spain matched the optimistic and upbeat narrative of the new Iberian nation that the Spanish press had generated in the 2000s.

The creation of a new, positive representation of Spain by the international media during Euro 2008 did not imply a total renunciation of old stereotypes and clichés. Matadors and bulls remained central to the iconic and discursive representation of the country. The European press also covered the street celebrations of the *selección's* titles and depicted Spaniards as 'passionate', 'hot-blooded', and 'specialists' in fiestas.<sup>115</sup> The German tabloid *Bild* reported 25 million Spaniards went out to revel all night long on the evening the *selección* won the 2010 World Cup.<sup>116</sup> The following day, the popular reception of the World Cup champions in the streets of Madrid was described as absolute 'madness' and the 'biggest party in the history of Spain'.<sup>117</sup> This emphasis on the popular celebrations that followed *la Roja's* victories reinforced the stereotype of Spaniards as party people and Spain as a fiesta paradise. On some occasions,

the fiesta label was accompanied by the siesta cliché.<sup>118</sup> As the German *Zeit Online* argued, the phenomenal fiesta of the night Spain won its second European title in 2008 would be followed by a long siesta.<sup>119</sup> For *The Guardian* the Spaniards had to decide whether they would have a fiesta or a siesta in Euro 2012 – the first option meaning the renewal of the title and the second the return to their traditional underachievement.<sup>120</sup> The appeal of the fiesta and siesta stereotype was huge precisely because millions of Europeans travelled to Spain to party and rest on a yearly basis, so they had pre-established a mental association between the country, alcohol and afternoon naps based on their own personal experiences. The subtext of the fiesta and siesta tandem was, however, that Spaniards were naturally lazy. They were certainly talented playing football, the country had surely modernised but they had an irresistible drive to party, sleep and leave important things for *mañana*.<sup>121</sup>

The fiesta-siesta archetype helped to square the circle of having millions of Spaniards celebrating in the streets, while suffering the worst economic crisis in living memory. Most of the European media presented the popular celebrations of Spanish victories as a temporary, psychological ‘balm’, as a way to relieve the pains of unemployment and economic devastation.<sup>122</sup> Some media went a step further in their analysis. For instance, a few months after Spain won Euro 2008, *The Economist* warned PM Rodríguez Zapatero that, ‘after the fiesta’ years, he had to implement more radical reforms of the labour market in a country where workers were ‘not especially productive’.<sup>123</sup> Two years later, a report published during the World Cup in *Der Spiegel* asked what had gone wrong with a nation that was ‘cool’ and had the best sportsmen, film directors, actors, cooks, weather, banks, fashion companies and footballers in the world.<sup>124</sup> The German magazine, quite rightly, pointed out that ‘Europe’s California’ was not only suffering from a runaway housing boom turned to bust, but also from a lack of investment in research and technologies and the dramatic failure of an education system that had 30 per cent of students dropping out of school. Yet Spaniards did not seem to realise the severity of the situation and, like the *selección* supporters, thought that the ‘fiesta was to continue’.<sup>125</sup> These representations of Spaniards as irresponsible and lazy show how prejudice prevails over rational analysis when dealing with national identities.<sup>126</sup> Stereotypes are used to understand and simplify the realities around us and the fiesta-siesta tandem became a very handy cultural tool in order to explain why the recession was particularly hard in Spain, regardless of the actual and highly complex economic and political reasons behind the crisis.

## Globalisation, nation-branding and economic crisis

The results of the Spanish national team in the twenty-first century were unique but the emergence of a new patriotism related to football was not. In 2004, Portugal suffered an eruption of nationalism and popular flag-waving when the country hosted the European Championships, that took the media by surprise.<sup>127</sup> As I pointed out above, in 2006 Germany, a country that, like Spain and Portugal, had suffered a difficult past due to its links with fascism, went through a phase of reclamation of patriotic symbols and a public exhibition of national pride.<sup>128</sup> In all cases, football facilitated the process of reclaiming the nation-state and the 'normalisation' of patriotic expressions. The widespread expansion of these new football patriotisms at a popular level and the increasing impact of international soccer competitions in the world media in the first decade of the twenty-first century seem to indicate that the processes of globalisation do not accelerate the demise of the nation-state.<sup>129</sup> Moreover, in contrast to those scholars who heralded the decrease of the nationalist components in the sports media's discourses and 'a certain loss of interest in national teams' due to globalisation,<sup>130</sup> we have witnessed an unprecedented growth of both patriotic narratives associated with existing nation-states and popular demonstrations of nationalist pride related to football in the last decade.

The rise of a new Spanish football nationalism did not imply a reduction in the variety of Spaniards' identities. On the contrary, the contemporary process of 'glocalisation' shows that globalisation is marked by trends towards both uniformity and differentiation.<sup>131</sup> In fact, the new Spanish football patriotism developed while dual identities (Spanish and regional) increased all over Spain and, to complicate things further, the support for an independent Catalonia reached historically high levels.<sup>132</sup> I will deal with the support for Catalonia's independence in the next chapter, but now let us concentrate on the issue of dual identities and football. The duality of identities could be observed among the *selección's* fans too. Although this was a phenomenon detected in previous decades, from the beginning of the 2000s Spanish supporters increasingly exhibited a combination of Spanish constitutional flags and emblems from their autonomous communities in a demonstration of coexisting loyalties.<sup>133</sup> Further symbolic compatibilities were to be found in Catalonia, where Catalan and Spanish flags adorned hundreds of balconies during the 2010 World Cup and Euro 2012. This symbolic coexistence has been facilitated by the fact that, in the last few years, *la Roja* has turned into the 'glue' of a 'Spanish sporting republic' that unites

many Spaniards beyond their political and identity differences.<sup>134</sup> This is not to say, however, that the new Spanish football nationalism does not have political implications. We saw that the conservative media regularly uses the victories of the *selección* to boast about the advantages of keeping Spain's unity and to accuse regional nationalists of narrow-minded, selfish, destructive behaviours. Additionally, the revival of national pride and symbols denotes an implicit support for the constitutional status quo.

Modern Spanish nationalism has also manifested itself when the country's sportsmen have been criticised or mocked abroad. Perhaps the best example of this was the 'Guignols affair' of 2012. In March 2012 the French *Guignols*, the Gallic equivalent of the British *Spitting Image* show, ran a number of sketches portraying well-known Spanish sportsmen, such as Iker Casillas, Rafael Nadal and Pau Gasol, as performance-enhancing drugs takers. In one of the more controversial sketches, the Spanish champions signed with syringes a declaration of public support for Alberto Contador – the cyclist given a two-year ban for a positive test for the stimulant clenbuterol during the 2010 Tour de France. The denunciation was not novel. The former tennis player Yannick Noah had written in November 2011 a polemical article in *Le Monde* accusing the Spanish champions of using a 'magic concoction' to win on the international stage.<sup>135</sup> But whereas Noah was dismissed as 'ignorant', the *Guignols*' joke was not taken lightly in Spain.<sup>136</sup> The parodies led to a wave of popular indignation among Spaniards, who complained massively in the media and social networks about French 'envy' and 'bitterness'.<sup>137</sup> The overreaction to the satire demonstrated the extent to which sports champions had been turned into modern Spanish national heroes, whose honesty could not be questioned, even by latex puppets. Under this patriotic light, casting shadows over Spanish sportsmen meant questioning the entire country. It showed the hyper-sensibility of a society where many Spaniards had developed a new and strong sense of national pride associated with sports.

Fully aware of popular outrage, the Spanish government began a diplomatic offensive. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, José Manuel García Margallo, accused Canal+ France, the channel broadcasting the show, of a 'lack of ethics' and the *Consejo Superior de Deportes* presented a formal complaint to the French Minister of Sports.<sup>138</sup> Furthermore, seeking to ride on popular indignation, the Prime Minister, Mariano Rajoy, the Vice-President, Soraya Sáenz de Santamaría, and the Minister of Education, Culture and Sports, José Ignacio Wert, all publicly complained of the 'bad taste' of the sketches, considered the parodies an 'unacceptable'

attack on the 'Spain Brand' (*Marca España*) and defended the 'honour' of Spanish sportsmen.<sup>139</sup> Even King Juan Carlos had something to say on the subject and told Rafael Nadal in a royal audience in front of the press that those responsible for *Guignols* were 'stupid'.<sup>140</sup> In defending the reputation of Spanish champions, the conservative government followed the socialist tradition of backing Iberian sportsmen accused of doping, as Prime Minister Zapatero did when Alberto Contador first tested positive for clenbuterol in 2010. In the case of *Guignols*, the affair provided an excellent opportunity for the PP cabinet to wrap itself in the national flag, seeking to divert Spaniards' attention from a controversial labour market reform that the government knew would be highly unpopular.<sup>141</sup>

Other criticisms by the international press have also gone down badly in Spain, especially those exposing the dire socio-economic condition of the country. The use of the derisive term PIIGS in the Anglo-Saxon press to refer to the Eurozone's most financially troubled and debt-laden countries, namely Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece and Spain, has been heavily resented in the Spanish media.<sup>142</sup> Additionally, some foreign representations of the country, such as the July 2012 front page of *The Economist* in which the letter 'S' was dropped from the word 'Spain', were profusely commented upon by the Iberian media.<sup>143</sup> Like his predecessor, PM Mariano Rajoy has tried to change this negative image of the country with a further promotion of the *Marca España*. Spanish sporting victories and *La Roja's* triumphs in particular are at the forefront of a publicity operation that seeks to portray Spain as a serious, successful, competent country where investors and tourists can feel confident.<sup>144</sup> To this end, the conservatives created a Spain Brand High Commissioner to coordinate all promotional agencies and stressed the need to incorporate Spanish corporations into the Spain Brand Project.<sup>145</sup> Not by accident was Carlos Espinosa de los Monteros, Vice President of the textile giant Inditex, chosen by the PP as Spain Brand High Commissioner.<sup>146</sup> The government also decided to use King Juan Carlos to promote the *Marca España* abroad, as the monarch was considered a good representative of the nation.<sup>147</sup> However, playing the royal card could backfire. Recent scandals, including the trial of Juan Carlos's son-in-law for the embezzlement of public funds through a charitable foundation, the revelation that the king went on an extravagant luxury safari to hunt elephants in Botswana, despite the recession in Spain, and rumours of his majesty's serial marital infidelities, have damaged the prestige of the monarch both at home and abroad.<sup>148</sup>

For all the efforts made by the Zapatero and Rajoy governments, the image of Spain abroad has gone through an important decline in recent

years. Some of the problems seem to be a matter of strategy and coordination. In 2002, Javier Noya, senior researcher in Foreign Image and Public Opinion at the *Real Instituto Elcano*, studied the negative image that Spain had abroad and proposed a coordinated plan to improve the economic returns of the Spain Brand.<sup>149</sup> Ten years later, Noya still complained about the Spanish 'lack of a strategy in nation branding'.<sup>150</sup> 'We never had a state policy to defend our image,' he lamented.<sup>151</sup> Other specialists also warned about the lack of coordination and flagged the risks of having nation-branding rely solely on sports results.<sup>152</sup> The economic crisis has seriously damaged the image of the country and politicians such as Nicolas Sarkozy and Mario Monti have presented Spain as the paradigm of economic failure.<sup>153</sup> The recent deterioration of the Spain Brand has even been quantified. Between 2009 and 2011, the *Marca España* lost almost 38 per cent of its value, going from €950.820 million to €591 million, according to the report 'Nation Brand 100' produced by the consulting company Brand Finance.<sup>154</sup>

The economic crisis has facilitated the preservation of old stereotypes about Spain. An April 2012 study conducted by the *Instituto DYM* showed that foreigners from 48 different countries mainly associated Spain with football, bullfighting and sun.<sup>155</sup> Outsiders also emphasised passion as the main feature of the national character, while there was no mention of Spain's research, technology or industry – indicating the limitations in the outreach of the modern *Marca España*. The economic recession has also resulted in the re-emergence of prejudices about Spain in northern and central Europe.<sup>156</sup> From 2008 Germans increasingly saw Spaniards as corrupt, lazy scroungers – a very similar view to the one they had 30 years ago and not dissimilar to the one they currently hold of the Greeks.<sup>157</sup> The strengthening of the 'fiesta-siesta tandem' has come from the German media and politicians because they know that it is relatively safe to play the populist card. In 2011, for example, Chancellor Angela Merkel declared that the Spanish had too many holidays and worked too little.<sup>158</sup> The accusation is, quite simply, false. EU data has regularly shown that Spaniards work more hours and have fewer days of holiday per year than Germans.<sup>159</sup> But, whatever the reality, accusing Spaniards of intrinsic laziness fits pretty well into the German perception that southern Europeans are idle and that northern neighbours are paying the bill of the economic crisis. 'OK, we will give you the money, but you have to give us your national football team instead,' a presenter on German TV joked when the bailout to Spain was announced during Euro 2012.<sup>160</sup>

The reinforcement of stereotypes has also functioned in the opposite direction and Spaniards increasingly see Germans as inflexible,

authoritarian and arrogant, a view enhanced by the negative perception of Angela Merkel's imposition of austerity measures on Spain.<sup>161</sup> This re-emergence of national stereotypes and myths at a time of crisis is unsurprising. Using stereotypes and myths is symptomatic of an attempt to hold on to what is familiar and traditional in an increasingly precarious and troublesome environment.<sup>162</sup> In a society where politicians and the media constantly use euphemisms and twisted discourses, stereotypes ring true precisely because they do not seem to change. Subsequently, stereotypes allow citizens to inhabit comfort zones that can be easily understood and which reaffirm group membership.

This is not to say that Spaniards' perceptions of themselves have not changed during the economic crisis. The narrative of success and the self-image of Spain as a European economic and political power have been gradually eroded by the recession. The idea that the Spanish economic collapse was a failure of the country as a whole has led to a national crisis of confidence.<sup>163</sup> At the same time, international sports victories, and in particular the titles of the football *selección*, have acted as a social balm. The unity and generosity of the national squad is often presented as a counterexample to that of politicians and bankers.<sup>164</sup> The members of *la Roja* have shown sensitivity to their new social role and identity. 'We are aware of the situation that the country is going through and are ready to perform well. Relax, we are not going to fail you,' declared the Barcelona player Gerard Piqué before the start of Euro 2012.<sup>165</sup> Nevertheless, there is a limit to the soothing effect of the *selección's* victories. As Piqué's teammate Sergio Busquets put it, 'winning the European Championship will not solve people's problems'.<sup>166</sup> Spain did triumph in Euro 2012, becoming the first team in history to win three major tournaments in a row. The media stressed the importance of the historic victory for the Spain Brand and the feel-good factor extended all over the country for a few days.<sup>167</sup> However, the deterioration of Spain's economy and social rights continued apace. In the following months, the economic recession deepened, unemployment attained an all-time high and the privatisation of public services accelerated, as the number of citizens living below the poverty line reached unprecedented levels in democratic Spain.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Spaniards did not suffer from a patriotic anorexia, as José Ignacio Wert suggested in 2001. Rather, they had a bulimic relationship with the national team, embracing the *selección* with excitement and later rejecting it because of its failures. Yet the failure narrative and the communal experiences of creating high expectations and sharing tragic defeats were forms of Spanish

nation-building too. The first years of the decade also witnessed the emergence of a new Spanish nationalism related to the *selección*, as football increased its importance on political, social and media levels. The titles of 2008, 2010 and 2012 resulted in a sort of 'patriotic obesity' which included the reclamation of Spanish symbols and the consolidation of a narrative of success and the growth of national pride to unprecedented levels. Paradoxically, the transformation of *la Roja* into the best football team in the world coincided with a brutal economic crisis that acted as a sort of shock 'diet' for recently inflated Spanish patriotic pride.

# 6

## Football and Identities in Catalonia

‘Catalonia is dying. They are killing her and we have to react’  
(Joan Laporta, President of FC Barcelona)<sup>1</sup>

On 10 July 2010, hundreds of thousands took to the streets of Barcelona behind the slogan ‘We are a nation’. The demonstration was supported by all Catalan parties, with the exception of the conservative People’s Party and the anti-Catalanist Ciutadans, and was reported as the biggest in the history of Catalonia.<sup>2</sup> The protest was conceived as a response to the Spanish Constitutional Court, which had published a review of the region’s revised statute of autonomy denying Catalonia was a nation in its own right. The day after the demonstration, Spain won the Football World Cup for the first time. Thousands of Catalans celebrated the triumphs of the *selección* in Barcelona. The streets of the Catalan capital were taken by a tide of young supporters in red T-shirts waving Spanish constitutional flags and proudly chanting ‘I am Spanish, Spanish, Spanish’.<sup>3</sup>

These two patriotic displays in the same city in the space of 24 hours are good indicators of the plurality of national identities in Catalonia. In the Principality the exhibitions of Catalan and Spanish identities in public is fairly common and not always antagonistic. In fact, most people hold dual identities and find feeling both Catalan and Spanish unproblematic. Yet, despite this high level of dual patriotism and multiple loyalties, Catalonia is also a territory of nationalist confrontation. Over a century, Catalan and Spanish nationalisms have competed for political and cultural hegemony in the Principality and football has been an important device in the creation and promotion of identities and narratives in this prolonged conflict. As we saw in Chapter 2, FC Barcelona was associated with bourgeois Catalan regionalists from the

beginning of the twentieth century, whereas its local arch-rivals, Real Club Deportivo Español, found support among many of the Barcelona pro-Spanish working class. FC Barcelona's public support for the 1918 *Lliga Regionalista* campaign in favour of Catalan political autonomy, the club's clashes with the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, and the institution's backing of the 1932 Catalan Statute of Autonomy consolidated the Catalanist representation of Barça as the symbol of Catalonia. In the last years of the Franco regime, FC Barcelona regained its association with Catalan identity and its role as an advocate of Catalan nationalism/regionalism. In the famous words of the left-wing intellectual Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, the club represented 'the unarmed army of Catalonia'.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, Barça also performed a role of social integrator of Spanish immigrants. These newcomers used the club to assimilate themselves into Catalan society, but did not necessarily embrace Catalan nationalism. In contrast, the cliché about RCD Español was that it was the team of those immigrants unable or unwilling to integrate into Catalan society.<sup>5</sup>

Dual patriotism, fights for cultural and political hegemony and the use of football as an instrument to transmit national identities have remained central in Catalan society since the death of Francisco Franco in November 1975. In the following pages I analyse the role of FC Barcelona as the alternative national team of Catalonia; the recreation of Catalonia's national football team; and the dialectic between Catalan and Spanish national narratives via soccer reporting. The first section of the chapter deals with the transition to democracy, devolution and the re-establishment of the Catalan government (1975–1980). The second part explores the years 1980–2003, an era characterised by the political hegemony of right-wing Catalan nationalism. The final section examines the era 2003–2012. This period opens with the formation of a left-wing Catalanist government and the election of the secessionist Joan Laporta as president of FC Barcelona in 2003 and concludes with the formation of the present-day pro-independence, conservative Catalan government in December 2012.

### **The Transition in Catalonia (1975–1980)**

The death of General Franco increased the role that FC Barcelona played as a conduit of Catalanism and democratisation. In 1976, the club occupied a leading position in the *Congrés de Cultura Catalana*, an association that gathered over 1,500 agencies of different sectors of Catalan society in defence of the promotion of the vernacular

language and the restitution of autonomous regional governments. The Barça president, Agustí Montal, publicly proposed the democratisation of Spanish football and sent his general secretary, Joan Granados, to France in order to give Josep Tarradellas, the president of the Catalan government (Generalitat) in exile, a membership card for FC Barcelona. The club also facilitated the organisation of the Catalan national team's first match after the death of the dictator.<sup>6</sup> The game was played on 9 June 1976 at the Camp Nou between the Soviet Union and a Catalan team made up of Barça and Español players. The Catalan squad featured Catalan and non-Catalan players (the Dutch footballers Johan Cruyff and Johan Neeskens played in the home team) but the symbolic connotation of the event was unmissable.<sup>7</sup> Members of the public displayed Catalan flags and banners demanding political freedoms. Before the match, the Barcelona Municipal Band played the Soviet anthem followed by the *Cant de la Senyera*, a song with Catalanist overtones that had acted as a de facto substitute for the banned Catalan national hymn *Els Segadors*. The dictatorship's authorities at the box did not appreciate the choice of music and the police forced the municipal band to play the Spanish national anthem, which was subsequently booed by some members of the public. After the match, Joan Garandos was sent to the local police station and later fined 100,000 pesetas.<sup>8</sup>

Economic penalties did little to prevent the political association of Barça with Catalanism. On 20 February 1977, hundreds of Barça and Athletic supporters paraded onto the Camp Nou pitch with *senyeras* and *ikurriñas* (the Catalan and Basque flags, respectively) before a league match between FC Barcelona and Bilbao.<sup>9</sup> On 13 April 1977, the club's general assembly passed a resolution declaring that 'Catalonia was prepared to live free and in harmony with other peoples of the Spanish state forever, under equal conditions in a real democracy'.<sup>10</sup> In the assembly, the president's intervention insisted on representing FC Barcelona as a 'Catalan institution par excellence' and demanded a statute of autonomy for Catalonia following the club's political tradition: 'Let me publicly declare that FC Barcelona is in favour of the statute for our people [...] like the Barcelona supporters were in 1932. Up with Barça. Up with Catalonia.'<sup>11</sup> Agustí Montal also furthered his contacts with Josep Tarradellas throughout 1977. On 11 September 1977, a million people marched through the streets of Barcelona demanding 'freedom, amnesty and a statute of autonomy', an impressive demonstration that led the Spanish PM, Adolfo Suárez, to create a provisional Generalitat and to allow the return of the Catalan government in exile. Josep Tarradellas returned to Barcelona on 23 October 1977 and visited the Camp Nou the

following week. Before the Barça vs. Las Palmas match, a group of children with big boards formed the sentence 'Welcome home, President' in front of a huge *senyera* displayed in the middle of the pitch.<sup>12</sup> The Catalan anthem, *Els Segadors*, was played on the Camp Nou loudspeakers and the public waved thousands of *senyeras*, while Montal honoured Tarradellas with the club's gold medal. The ceremony presented an entwined representation of FC Barcelona and Catalonia at both symbolic and discursive levels. 'My dear president: Barça and you are one and the same, you both personify the best virtues of our people,' Montal told Tarradellas. 'Our club is great because it always remained loyal to Catalonia,' replied the President of the Generalitat.<sup>13</sup>

Far from diminishing its political connotations, football increased its role as a device to channel identities in Catalonia. Like other Spanish regions, Catalonia witnessed a sharp increase in the practice of sports during the years of the transition. In the case of the metropolitan area of Barcelona the growth was intensified by the actions of a widespread network of neighbour associations which fostered sports at a grassroots level.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, the election of democratic town halls in 1979 paved the way for a close collaboration between local football clubs and local governments in a more horizontal manner, thus increasing the political overtones of sport at different municipalities.<sup>15</sup> The Catalan media was transformed too. In September 1976, Radio Barcelona began to broadcast football games in Catalan. Joaquim Maria Puyal, the radio commentator, soon became a celebrity in Catalonia.<sup>16</sup> Equally important for the creation of a media space in the vernacular was ever-increasing numbers of programmes that Spanish television (RTVE) broadcast in Catalan during the transition to democracy, which by 1977 included daily news and sports programmes.<sup>17</sup>

Somewhat more significant in political terms was the launch of *Avui* on 23 April 1976. *Avui* was the first newspaper published in Catalan after the death of Franco and followed a strong regional nationalist editorial line. It allowed for the reproduction of a Catalanist discourse based on the view of Spain as Catalonia's national 'other'. *Avui's* master narrative considered Catalonia a nation and Spain a mere state. The discourse associated Catalans with modernity, culture and democracy, while representing Spaniards as naturally backward, unrefined and authoritarian. The name of the national 'other' varied from the 'Spanish state' to 'Castile' to 'Madrid' (the latter usually shorthand for the Spanish government), depending on the sort of grievance that was denounced – economic, historical, political. Yet the idea of Catalonia as a victim nation was recurrent. This 'disjunctive discourse' presented

Spanish and Catalan identities as incompatible and displayed a fairly crude narrative of the good nation in an eternal fight with the evil state.<sup>18</sup> During the years of the transition, *Avui* reproduced this patriotic narrative in football reporting and consistently showed Barça as the representation of the Catalan nation and Real Madrid as the quintessence of centralism and authoritarianism. Thus *Avui* celebrated UEFA's decision to ban Real Madrid from European competitions for a year in May 1976, portrayed the Real Madrid president, Santiago Bernabéu, as an enemy of Catalonia and the team's supporters as centralist vandals.<sup>19</sup> On top of this, the Catalanist newspaper regularly denounced the referees and RTVE commentators as biased in favour of Real Madrid.<sup>20</sup> By contrast, FC Barcelona was portrayed as a victim of Real Madrid's links with the Franco regime and Catalan supporters as civilised fans who knew how to behave politely in victory and defeat.<sup>21</sup>

There is no doubt that the 'disjunctive discourse' found a positive reception among many Catalans, as it replicated the regional nationalist clichés about Spain and Catalonia. However, it is worth pointing out that most of the Catalan media did not reproduce this model. *La Vanguardia Española*, the best-selling Catalan newspaper, 'Catalanised' its vocabulary, dropped the *Española* part of its name in 1978 and began to spell Catalonia in Catalan, *Catalunya*, instead of the Spanish *Cataluña*. Yet, far from the more radical discourse of *Avui*, *La Vanguardia* adopted a moderate and conservative Catalanist line that did not exclude the representation of Catalans as Spanish, although it prioritised the former identity over the latter.<sup>22</sup> Likewise, *El Mundo Deportivo* combined a 'Catalanisation' of its discourse and language and the representation of Barça as a Spanish team. For instance, when FC Barcelona won the Cup Winners Cup on 16 May 1979, the front page of *El Mundo Deportivo* read '*Campions!!!*' ('champions' in Catalan).<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, the inside pages of the sports newspaper unproblematically described Barça as 'a Spanish representative that had won a European cup'.<sup>24</sup> As in the case of *La Vanguardia*, the emphasis was on the Catalan character of the team but Barça's Spanish nature was acknowledged too. These reports of FC Barcelona's twin Catalan and Spanish identities were stressed further by the Madrid-based media. Thus a commentator from TVE remarked that the victory in the Cup Winners Cup was 'a happy moment for Spanish supporters and in particular for all Catalan fans'.<sup>25</sup> *Marca* congratulated Barça for the victory over the Germans of Fortuna Düsseldorf and added that most of the winning team supporters were to return to 'Barcelona, to Catalonia, to Spain' that very night.<sup>26</sup> On the other side of the national spectrum, *Avui* headlined: 'Catalan triumph at the European final.'<sup>27</sup>

Whatever the compatibility of Barça's Catalan and Spanish identities in the media, the truth of the matter is that the celebrations of the 1979 title turned into a massive political demonstration demanding a statute of autonomy for Catalonia. After Barça's victory, hundreds of thousands took to the streets of towns and cities all over Catalonia. In Barcelona, the revellers chanted the traditional 'Up with Barça and Up with Catalonia', together with the newly invented 'We already have the cup, now we want the statute'.<sup>28</sup> Josep Tarradellas knew how to seize the political opportunity and decided to join the party from the Saint Jordi Palace, the home of the provisional Catalan government. In a somewhat theatrical *mise-en-scène*, the veteran politician came out onto the palace's main balcony carrying a Catalan flag as thousands of Barça supporters sang *Els Segadors*. Tarradellas then reiterated the union between football and politics: 'We already have the cup. Barça won it for Catalonia and our flag.'<sup>29</sup> The following day, a million people gave Barça players a heroes' welcome in the streets of the Catalan capital.<sup>30</sup> Upon arrival from Switzerland, the footballers first visited the Mercè basilica to offer the title to the female patron of Barcelona, the Madonna de la Mercè, and then moved to Saint Jordi Palace. From the same balcony that Josep Tarradellas had used the previous evening, the socialist mayor of Barcelona, Narcís Serra, stated that when 'Barça won titles outside Spain it was like the city of Barcelona had triumphed too' and remarked that this victory in the Cup Winners Cup had arrived the very same year Spain had a real democratic system.<sup>31</sup> Serra, who had been elected two months earlier in the first democratic municipal elections since the Second Republic, thus linked democracy and himself to FC Barcelona's successful destiny. In turn, Josep Tarradellas insisted on portraying Barça as an 'example of tenacity' that all Catalans should follow to achieve a new statute of autonomy.<sup>32</sup> The players later went to the Camp Nou where they showed the trophy to the fans, as the latter sang *Els Segadors* and a group of dancers performed *sardanas* – a traditional Catalan dance – on the pitch.

The massive mobilisation associated with Barcelona's victory in the Cup Winners Cup is a good indicator of the Catalanist outburst of the transition years. Five months after the victory in Basel, the people of Catalonia voted massively in favour of a Catalan statute of autonomy in a referendum. The text had been previously agreed by a committee of Catalan representatives in the Spanish parliament and senate and it granted wide powers to the region, including the creation of a Catalan government, parliament, police, education system and health service.<sup>33</sup> The first regional elections in 1980 confirmed the Catalanist turn of

Catalan society, as the right-wing coalition *Convergència i Unió* (CiU) finished in front. Led by Jordi Pujol, CiU sought the modernisation of the Catalan economy, the defence of Catalan culture and the democratisation of Spain. Backed by the regional bourgeoisie, the Church and the banking elites, CiU did not aim at creating a separate state, but at granting Catalonia a high level of devolution and a special national status within Spain.<sup>34</sup> Many at FC Barcelona shared the views of conservative Catalanism.<sup>35</sup> Agustí Montal, president of *Barça* between 1969 and 1977, in a number of interviews declared his loyalty to both Catalonia and Spain, defended the presence of *senyeras* at the Camp Nou and remarked that *Barça* fought to strengthen both Catalonia and Spain.<sup>36</sup> In September 1982, Montal announced he was running for the Spanish senate as a CiU candidate.<sup>37</sup>

Yet *Barça* was 'more than a club' because it was able to integrate different political ideologies. Left-wingers were also to be found among *Barça* supporters. In the last years of Francoism, the communists of the *Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya* (PSUC) promoted among its cadres the support of *Barça* as a form of resistance. During the transition, the PSUC viewed the club as a mass movement that represented anti-Francoism and Catalan popular nationalism. This interpretation of *Barça* as the people's team was done regardless of the club's board of directors, whom the communists saw as the quintessence of the Catalan upper bourgeoisie.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, *Barça* continued to act as a vehicle of social integration for those born outside Catalonia during the transition years. In 1977 President Montal commented that *Barça* fans were united by a 'Catalanist sentiment' that was used 'as a means to integrate immigrants, because we think that everyone living in Catalonia is Catalan'.<sup>39</sup> Not everybody agreed. *Avui* divided *Barça* supporters into Catalans and those 'living and working in Catalonia'.<sup>40</sup> Whether considered Catalans or not, immigrants tended to join *Barça* over RCD Español and the xenophobic banners against Spanish workers occasionally displayed at the celebration of Catalonia's national day (the *Diada*) were unthinkable in the Camp Nou.<sup>41</sup>

The issue of national identities was also present in *Barça*'s local rival, RCD Español during the transition years. In late 1976, Juan Vilá Reyes, president of Español, proposed to change the club's name to RCD Cataluña, in an attempt to shake its anti-Catalanist image. Vilá Reyes justified his proposal arguing that Español needed to be more ingrained in Catalan society.<sup>42</sup> The implications here were that the name Español was a burden in a society that was rapidly 'Catalanising' and that the association with Catalonia would gain the club more popular backing.

However, few Español supporters found the rationale acceptable and some right-wing Spanish nationalist sectors of the club's fan base demanded Vilá apologise publicly from the centre of the pitch at Sarriá stadium for proposing the name change.<sup>43</sup> Notwithstanding the failure of Vilá's Catalanist turn, some Español supporters began to carry *senyeras* to Sarriá, showing they found no contradiction between Catalan symbols and the pro-Spanish image of the club. On occasions, this symbolic overlapping led to peculiar situations, such as the waving of Catalan flags to celebrate Real Madrid goals when announced on Sarriá's screens.<sup>44</sup>

The different national and regional identities displayed at Barça and Español were somehow a reflection of the national plurality in Catalonia in the transition years. Surveys confirmed this variety of identities at the time. In 1979, 35 per cent of Catalans identified themselves as Spanish only or more Spanish than Catalan; 25 per cent tended to characterise themselves as Catalan only or more Catalan than Spanish; while 33 per cent felt equally Spanish and Catalan.<sup>45</sup> Ballot boxes too substantiated the plurality of Catalans' identities in a complex and changing political arena. The *Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya* (PSC, the Catalan branch of the PSOE), was the most voted-for party in Catalonia in both the 1977 and 1979 elections to the Spanish Parliament. However, in the 1980 regional elections, the right-wing Catalanist coalition CiU pipped other parties to the post. The results of the 1980 Catalan elections led Jordi Pujol, the historic leader of the conservative Catalan nationalists, to replace Josep Tarradellas as president of the Generalitat and inaugurated over two decades of right-wing Catalanist hegemony in regional politics.

### The Pujol Era (1980–2003)

The formation and development of the Catalan Autonomous Community transformed and accelerated the process of nation-building in Catalonia. The CiU government utilised regional institutions at its disposal to transmit an alternative national identity to those of Spain. From the start of the 1980s, regional television channels, radio stations, schools and cultural institutions funded by the Generalitat were used to create an official imagined national community among Catalans.<sup>46</sup> Socially, this institutionalisation of Catalanism provided new employment opportunities for cultural elites and resulted in the emergence of a form of clientelism promoted by CiU.<sup>47</sup> Discursively, the Generalitat popularised the triad Pujol-CiU-Catalonia, which equated any criticism of the Catalan president, or his coalition, with an attack on Catalonia

itself. Additionally, the Generalitat developed a populist dimension when it claimed that Catalans were economically exploited by the Spanish government, an idea that resonated strongly with the wider public.<sup>48</sup> This concept of the 'financial plunder' of Catalonia became prevalent because it reaffirmed one of the main myths of the Catalan nationalist narrative, namely the idea that Catalonia was superior, more modern and richer than Madrid/Castile/Spain and, at the same time, the victim of that very backward, poor and tyrannical partner.

The Catalan Corporation of Radio and Television (CCRT, *Corporació Catalana de Ràdio i Televisió*) became a key device for the transmission of the official Catalanist narrative. Controlled by CiU since its inception in 1983, the corporation included an increasing number of TV channels and radio stations, seeking to create a Catalan media space capable of structuring the Catalan nation in the public's mind.<sup>49</sup> To this end, Catalan public television fostered not only the Catalan language as a distinctive national trait but also a number of myths, traditions and references considered intrinsically Catalan in all sorts of self-produced programmes, from children's shows to drama series.<sup>50</sup> Likewise, TV news played a crucial role in the construction of the Catalan nation as they focused on reporting conflicts between the Spanish government and the Generalitat over competencies and budgets.<sup>51</sup> These reports tended to present the confrontation as an unbalanced fight between the 'Spanish state', hence avoiding the characterisation of Spain as a nation, and the Catalan nation, represented by CiU. The news' emphasis on conflict also helped to maintain in the Catalan public's imagination the regional nationalist narrative that presented the central-regional governments' disputes over competencies in the 1980s and 1990s as just another episode in the perennial historical struggle between Catalonia and Madrid/Castile/Spain.

Football reporting was also an effective means of projecting the regional nationalist discourse onto Catalan society. It was no coincidence that the initial test programme broadcast live by the Generalitat-run TV3 (the first channel 100 per cent in Catalan) was an FC Barcelona game played on 11 September 1983, Catalonia's national day.<sup>52</sup> In 1989, the Federation of Spanish Regional Televisions bought the rights of First Division matches, which allowed TV3 to show a good number of Barça games over the following two decades. TV3 also broadcast the matches of the Catalan national team in the 1990s. Following the aforementioned 1976 game against the Soviet Union, the Catalan squad played no games until 1990, when a team made of Barça and Español footballers played against CE Sabadell, another Catalan team, to support

the victims of an ETA attack. From 1997 onwards, the Catalan national team began to play friendly matches against national squads on a yearly basis, as a way to claim official status for Catalonia in international competitions. The demand for Catalan national teams competing internationally came from the Generalitat, in what some scholars have interpreted as a populist strategy designed to divert attention from CiU's collaboration with the People's Party both in the Spanish and the Catalan parliaments.<sup>53</sup> After all, from 1995 CiU governed in Catalonia thanks to the support of the PP and from 1996 the PP governed in Spain thanks to the support of CiU.

For all its support from the regional government and widespread impact, the Catalanist narrative was not fully hegemonic in 1980s and 1990s Catalonia. Other Catalan and Spanish media reproduced alternative discourses to the official one in the Principality. State-wide TV channels and radio stations had, all together, more viewers and listeners than the regional-government-funded media in Catalonia. In the press, alternatives to the Catalanist narrative varied from the Madrid-based right-wing media, which tended to consider Spain a nation and Catalonia an autonomous community, to the liberal *El País* and the Barcelona-based *La Vanguardia* and *El Periódico de Catalunya* that were more ambiguous but expressed different levels of compatibility between Spanish and Catalan identities. As we saw in Chapter 4, these media referred to Barça as both a Catalan and Spanish club, endowing the club with a sort of dual identity.<sup>54</sup> This duality was also present in the Barcelona 92 Olympics, where Catalan and Spanish anthems, flags and discourses were combined throughout. The Madrid-based media highlighted the fact that the image of Barcelona, Catalonia and Spain improved all over the world, but the ultimate emphasis was on celebrating the organisational and sporting success of the Spanish nation.<sup>55</sup> An editorial of *El País* explained the synthesis of symbols, ensigns and anthems was the proof of Spaniards' effective acceptance of the plurality of identities in the country and 'particularly, of the Catalan cultural and linguistic reality'.<sup>56</sup> The acceptance of plurality was presented as the reflection of a sort of existential merger between the Spanish and the Catalan nation: 'It is not only that Catalonia is a part of Spain, but that Spain is also part of Catalonia'.<sup>57</sup> Somewhat less sophisticated but surely of a wider impact was the Spanish public television discourse stressing the idea that the Olympics were a 'total success' for Spain.<sup>58</sup> Again, hierarchies were clear; Barcelona and Catalonia were considered an important part of the success story, yet they appeared as subordinate to the Spanish nation.

The Catalan press followed a similar line regarding identities during the Olympics. *La Vanguardia*, *El Periódico de Catalunya*, *Sport*, and *El Mundo Deportivo* celebrated the 'international projection of Barcelona, Catalonia and Spain' and regularly referred to Spanish sportsmen and women as 'our athletes'.<sup>59</sup> Some commentators put the emphasis on Catalan identity and read the manifestation of dual patriotism as a sign that Spain was turning into a 'real multinational state', while also praising the 'intelligent' role of Juan Carlos who acted as 'the monarch of all the peoples of the Kingdom'.<sup>60</sup> The Olympic euphoria even reached the Catalanists of *Avui*, who applauded Juan Carlos I for showing a 'considerable sensibility before the Catalan language and culture' and described the monarch as an 'ally' of Catalanism.<sup>61</sup> *Avui* also acknowledged that the exceptional number of medals won by the home team was a reflection of the modernisation of 'Catalan and Spanish society' and the emergence of a new generation of Catalans and Spaniards 'bred in democracy, pluralism and respect' that was 'definitively leaving behind a black and intransigent Spain'.<sup>62</sup> This level of association between Spain and Catalonia had clear boundaries, nonetheless, as Catalanists did not approve of dual national identities. Thus the exhibition of Catalan and Spanish flags in the Olympic stadia and the footage of thousands of supporters chanting 'Spain, Spain, Spain' in the football final at the Camp Nou was compared to the pro-Franco demonstrations at the Plaza de Oriente in Madrid. According to *Avui* these displays of dual patriotism did not represent the identities of most Catalans and certainly did not 'cancel the national aspirations of Catalonia'.<sup>63</sup>

Unlike most of the Catalan media, the Catalanist press insisted on the exclusively Catalan national character of FC Barcelona and never labelled the team as Spanish.<sup>64</sup> Likewise, in the 1980s *Avui* called European football championships the 'European Cup of state teams' and often labelled the Spanish squad 'the state team', hence portraying the *selección* as an artificial conglomerate representing a state, as opposed to the alleged natural composition of the nation.<sup>65</sup> The newspaper reporters also referred to the Spanish national squad in the third person plural, separating the 'we Catalans' from the 'they Spanish' and hence detaching themselves and the readers from the *selección española*.<sup>66</sup> Unsurprisingly, *Avui* used the Spanish national team to underscore the continuity between Francoism and the new democratic regime. For instance, the journalist Àngel del Castillo wrote that Spanish supporters' criticism of the referee in the Euro 1984 final had turned a football match into a 'question of honour, fatherland and manhood', into a 'grotesque' situation similar to those espoused by the Franco

dictatorship.<sup>67</sup> Drawing these parallels between the military dictatorship and the parliamentary regime was a means to maintain the Catalan public's association of Spain with shallow, authoritarian, macho attitudes, regardless of the political changes in previous years. Additionally, the identification of *selección* supporters with members of the extreme right and the ironic characterisation of Spaniards as members of the Civil Guard (the loathed military police used by the Franco regime to repress political opponents) was not uncommon in the pages of *Avui*.<sup>68</sup> In the Catalanist representation of the national other, Spain, by and large, came out as an immobile entity unable to change due to its backward nature. It almost goes without saying that this representation of Spain reinforced by comparison the Catalanist idealisation of Catalonia as modern, dynamic and European.

FC Barcelona's rivalry with Real Madrid remained central in the articulation of the 1980s and 1990s Catalanist discourse. The team of the Spanish capital performed the role of the 'national other' of Barça and featured prominently in the Catalan nationalist press. Alongside an ill-defined 'Madrid press', Real Madrid were often equated with Spanish nationalism, accused of harbouring anti-Catalan sentiments and orchestrating conspiracies against FC Barcelona, and hence, the argument went, against Catalonia.<sup>69</sup> In fact, anthropological studies have shown that the games between Barça and Real Madrid acted as a metaphor of a 'cold war' that pitted Castile/Spain against Catalonia.<sup>70</sup> The Real Madrid vs. Barça matches were (and still are) performed as theatrical battles on the pitch and narrated with a martial rhetoric in the media.<sup>71</sup> Barça supporters experienced the rituals and symbolic universe associated with the team as a sort of 'civic religion' that reached its spiritual climax in the bellicose confrontations with their arch rivals.<sup>72</sup> In the 1980s and 1990s, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán's definition of Barça as the un-armed army of Catalonia still resonated strongly among Barça supporters. Notwithstanding the 'Catalanisation' of RCD Español in the 1990s – the club translated its anthem into Catalan, declared Catalan its main language, and changed its name to Espanyol in 1995 – it was FC Barcelona that remained associated with Catalanism.<sup>73</sup>

Barça's international victories also turned into manifestations of Catalanism. The 1982, 1989 and 1997 Cup Winners Cups and the 1992 European Cup title were celebrated in the streets of all Catalan provincial capitals, although the number of fans never reached those of the 1979 Cup Winners Cup revelries, a trophy won before Catalonia had a statute of autonomy.<sup>74</sup> The celebration at Barcelona usually followed a set pattern that included a bus parade from the airport to the Basilica of

la Mercè; then the pageant went to the Palace of the Generalitat at Plaça Sant Jaume, where the players, the mayor of Barcelona and Jordi Pujol, as president of Catalonia, displayed the trophy from a balcony to the fans. The show ended at the Camp Nou, where supporters congregated to see the cup displayed in the middle of the pitch. Alongside the institutional 'Catalanisation' of the celebration that had the Generalitat's Palace as a central stage, on some occasions Catalan Barça players added a regional nationalist twist to the party. The Barça midfielder Pep Guardiola was a case in point during the celebrations of the 1992 European Cup. With a *senyera* around his neck, he showed the trophy to the fans from the Generalitat Palace and shouted in Catalan: 'Citizens of Catalonia, you have the Cup here now.'<sup>75</sup> The cry was an unmistakable reference to the famous words of Josep Tarradellas on his return to Barcelona in 1977 following almost 40 years of exile when he declared to the masses: 'Citizens of Catalonia, I am here now.'

The link between Barça and Catalanism needs, nevertheless, to be qualified. Barça President Josep Lluís Núñez (1978–2000), always presented himself as an independent, non-political candidate and kept up a fairly bumpy relationship with CiU and the Catalan government of Jordi Pujol.<sup>76</sup> In 1988, for example, TV3 and *Avui*, both controlled by CiU, launched a campaign to oust Núñez and openly back Ricard Hugué, leader of the opposition forces at the Camp Nou.<sup>77</sup> Some analysts have pointed out that Núñez never acted against the Catalanist component of Barça through his mandate, but he avoided turning the club into the active agent of Catalanism that it had been in the past.<sup>78</sup> Núñez's successor and former vice-president, Joan Gaspar (2000–2003), made no secret of his political leanings for the People's Party. Perhaps more importantly, FC Barcelona kept on being a means of integration of first- and second-generation immigrants who had few sympathies for Catalanism but could still join the Catalan imagined community regardless of their ethnic origin by supporting Barça. Additionally, FC Barcelona had hundreds of *peñas* (supporters' clubs) outside Catalonia by the end of the 1990s.<sup>79</sup> These non-Catalan *barcelonistas* were in the main united by their anti-Real Madrid feelings.<sup>80</sup> To the eyes of some of these non-Catalan Barça supporters, Real Madrid could still represent Francoism and political centralism, yet for obvious reasons these *barcelonistas* were not Catalan nationalists. A survey conducted in 1999 perfectly illustrated the diverse perception of FC Barcelona in and outside Catalonia. When asked 'What do you primarily associate FC Barcelona with?', 53 per cent of Catalans answered 'Catalonia', 21 per cent 'a football club' and merely 17 per cent 'a city'.<sup>81</sup> By contrast, most non-Catalan

Spaniards firstly identified Barça with 'a football club' (35 per cent); while 29 per cent mainly associated the team with 'Catalonia' and 28 per cent with the city of Barcelona. At the turn of the twenty-first century, FC Barcelona was a broad church of identity/political sensibilities that went beyond the club's traditional association with Catalanism.

This plurality of identities was also evident in Catalan society, where one could find a wide range of national feelings, from exclusively Catalan, to more Catalan than Spanish, to equally Spanish and Catalan, to more Spanish than Catalan, to Spanish only. In the last two decades of the twentieth century, the programme of Catalanisation of society instigated by the Generalitat agencies, together with the decreasing role played by state institutions, had an impact that resulted in a rise of exclusively Catalan identities – especially among youth – and a drop in the number of those who exclusively identified with Spain. Still, the majority of Catalans (72 per cent) felt both Catalan and Spanish, as the growth of identification with the autonomous community did not imply a loss of identification with Spain in absolute terms.<sup>82</sup> At the turn of the twenty-first century, dual identities were the norm in Catalonia.

### The road to independence (2003–2012)?

The year 2003 inaugurated a new era for FC Barcelona and Catalonia. On 15 June 2003, the lawyer Joan Laporta won the elections to the presidency of FC Barcelona. The victory of Laporta, a figure well-known for his political past in a small secessionist party, meant the end of over two decades of the Núñez-Gaspar control of Barça and the arrival of a young team of directors at the Camp Nou. Five months later, regional elections resulted in the creation of a coalition government led by the Catalan Socialist Pasqual Maragall. Together with the Catalan Socialists (PSC), the pro-independence party *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya* (ERC) and the eco-socialists of *Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds* (ICV) entered the new three-party Catalan government, the *tripartit*. For the first time since the reestablishment of regional elections in 1980, CiU did not control the Generalitat.

Joan Laporta reached the presidency of Barça thanks to the support of ERC and some right-wing Catalanists, who preferred the young lawyer over the CiU's main choice, the so-called 'establishment candidate' Lluís Bassat.<sup>83</sup> Laporta did not disappoint his backers and developed a strong Catalanist discourse associated with Barça. He paralleled Barça with Catalonia and reproduced the two main pillars of the Catalanist narrative, namely the idea that the Catalan nation was the victim of a

long-term injustice perpetrated by Spain/Castile/Madrid and the self-representation of the Principality as a democratic and modern oasis in the desert of a backward state. Thus Laporta insisted on depicting Barça as a club that has always been democratic and Catalanist, a sweeping historical generalisation that has nevertheless been uncritically accepted by some scholars.<sup>84</sup> At times Laporta's idealisation of FC Barcelona resembled sentences taken from the script of the film *Braveheart*: 'Barça embodies the epic that guides the freedom of oppressed peoples,' he declared in an interview.<sup>85</sup> By contrast, the enemy remained familiar. Real Madrid and its alleged penchant for centralist policies, the attacks of the Madrid right-wing press and the sheer stupidity and greed of Spaniards, unflatteringly described by Barça's treasurer Xavier Sala i Martín as 'surlly' thieves of Catalan money, were some of the components in the demonisation of the 'other'.<sup>86</sup> The effects of the combined actions of this conglomerate 'other' were also recognisable as part of the Catalanist discourse. According to Laporta, Catalonia was suffocated by Spain and the Principality could not progress due to the unbearable and humiliating burden that the Spanish state imposed on it.<sup>87</sup> In the dramatic words of Barça's president at the end of 2009: 'Catalonia is dying. They are killing her and we have to react.'<sup>88</sup>

Alongside the strong Catalanist discourse adopted by the Barça directors, Laporta embarked upon a programme 'to re-Catalanise' FC Barcelona. This meant incorporating the Catalan flag on the back of the team's shirts; removing the Spanish flag from La Masia (the club's training academy); hosting the *Correllengua* (a meeting of different associations for the defence of the Catalan language); displaying a banner at the Camp Nou in support of the 2005 statute of autonomy; publicly backing the broadcasting of TV3 in the Autonomous Community of Valencia; acting as the speaker of a number of Catalanist associations; and proposing that new Barcelona signings should take Catalan classes.<sup>89</sup>

The re-Catalanisation of the club had mixed results and not only because Barça's Spanish and foreign players ignored the proposal to learn Catalan. The programme turned Laporta into the darling of the pro-independence movement in Catalonia for a while, but there were reservations among many *culers* (Barça fans). In 2003, Laporta addressed the annual general meeting of FC Barcelona supporters' clubs exclusively in Catalan, a controversial decision considering that half of the *peñas* came from outside Catalonia.<sup>90</sup> The adverse reaction by the non-Catalan Barça supporters led Laporta to use both Catalan and Spanish in subsequent general meetings of *peñas*.<sup>91</sup> Non-Catalan



Figure 5 Pro-independence banner at the Camp Nou, Barcelona (© Action Images 2013)

Barça fans also criticised the political use that Laporta made of the club.<sup>92</sup> This issue came to a head in 2009 when the President of the Autonomous Community of Extremadura, Guillermo Fernández Vara, a well-known *culé* and former president of the Barça *peña* at Olivenza (Badajoz), complained in a public letter to *Marca* about the 'exclusivist' character that Laporta was endowing the club with.<sup>93</sup> Tellingly, the president of Extremadura ended the letter with 'Up with Barça, Up with Catalonia and Up with Spain'.<sup>94</sup> Apparently the Barça president did not take the critique lightly. Laporta phoned Fernández Vara and called him 'imbecile' ten times.<sup>95</sup>

In October 2009, Joan Laporta boasted that his Barça was the most Catalan in history. He added that it was also the most globalised FC Barcelona of all time. The first comment led to a debate in the pages of *La Vanguardia*.<sup>96</sup> Some scholars of FC Barcelona argued that one could not possibly measure the level of Catalanism in relation to previous eras in the history of the club. Others commented that Barça *socios* (members or season-ticket holders) were politically very diverse and had reduced their expressions of *catalanidad* (Catalanness) associated with FC Barcelona because the democratic regime had provided them with alternative regional agencies to articulate their Catalan feelings. However, no-one could seriously question Laporta's second statement.

Like many other European teams, Barça sustained strong economic and symbolic ties to its national home, while gradually displaying more transnational characteristics in marketing, fan-base and labour recruitment from the late 1990s.<sup>97</sup> Like Real Madrid, Barça increased its media power and multimillion-euro revenues globally in the first decade of the twenty-first century.<sup>98</sup> Under Laporta, the club targeted further the Asian and American markets, incorporated sponsors on the FC Barcelona shirts (first UNICEF, later Qatar Foundation, recently Qatar Airlines) and increased the international exposure of the team and its merchandising. At the beginning of the second decade of the twenty-first century, Barça had 92 supporters' clubs outside Spain and the FC Barcelona Foundation worked in aid projects in Africa, America, Asia and Europe in co-operation with UNICEF, UNESCO, ACNUR and FAO, among others.<sup>99</sup>

In recent years, the fact that Barça has arguably become the best football club in the world and Lionel Messi the number one player on the planet have also contributed to turn FC Barcelona into a successful global brand. The global dimension of the club did not seem to contradict Barça's Catalanist identity under Laporta. After all, the club had a long internationalist tradition and stressing the universal nature of FC Barcelona was a way to tiptoe over the club's Spanish identity, as the triad Barça-Catalonia-World omitted Spain. However, the arrival of Sandro Rosell – a more moderate figure than Laporta – as president of Barça in July 2010 rang alarm bells in some Catalanist quarters. Jordi Badia, Laporta's former director of communications, warned that Barça was immersed under Rosell in a 'process of slow, if not irreversible, de-nationalisation', due to the internationalisation of the club that has transformed FC Barcelona into a sort of global franchise.<sup>100</sup> The implication was that only a constant Catalanisation of the club à la Laporta could counterbalance the effects of Barça's internationalisation.

Success and a very sophisticated brand of football under the management of Pep Guardiola were also behind the transformation of Barça into Spain's favourite team. In 2003, support for Barça in Spain was 20 points below Real Madrid. By 2007 the difference had dropped to 7 points.<sup>101</sup> In the autumn of 2011, opinion polls showed that Barça had the support of 44 per cent of football fans, while Real Madrid was the first choice for 37 per cent of the survey respondents. According to AS, the Madrid sport daily that commissioned the 2011 survey, Barça's international victories, the high number of *selección* footballers playing for the Catalan club, the arrogant behaviour of Real's Cristiano Ronaldo and José Mourinho, and the fact that Rosell had stopped the

'over-catalanization of the Laporta era' were the main factors which contributed to Barcelona's ousting of Real Madrid as the country's first choice.<sup>102</sup>

It is true that Rosell initially took a different approach to Laporta with regards to the 'Catalanisation' of the team and tried to integrate the different groups of *barcelonistas*.<sup>103</sup> He personally apologised to Guillermo Fernández Vara for the incident that the President of Extremadura had with Laporta and publicly declared to the Andalusian Congress of *Barça peñas* that he would never use the club for political purposes.<sup>104</sup> However, Rosell has recently revised his policy and taken a more Catalanist line, as he realised that support for an independent Catalonia was growing among Catalan *Barça* fans. On 10 September 2012, the day before Catalonia's national day, FC Barcelona announced that the colours of the football team's away kit were to be those of the *senyera* in the 2013–14 season.<sup>105</sup> Additionally, the stripe with the Catalan flag in the home kit was to be enlarged and extended to the front of the jersey.<sup>106</sup> The day after the announcement, the *Barça* president, who had originally declared that he was not attending the pro-independence demonstration on Catalonia's national day, joined the march 'on a personal basis'.<sup>107</sup> The following month Rosell defended a nation's right to self-determination at the FC Barcelona general assembly and, together with the president of RCD Espanyol, signed a document backing the international recognition of Catalan national teams.<sup>108</sup> In December 2012, he also came out in support of the Catalan linguistic model, when the PP Minister of Education José Ignacio Wert launched a reform seeking to 'Spanishise' (*españolizar*) Catalan pupils in schools.<sup>109</sup> Unlike Laporta, Rosell has not used *Barça* to promote the cause of independence, yet his reading of the current political and social changes in Catalonia has led him to take a 'Catalanist drive' that increasingly associates FC Barcelona with Catalan nationalism. Like Laporta, Rosell runs the risk of alienating non-Catalanist sectors of the *Barça* fan base in and outside Catalonia.

Catalan society has gradually but importantly changed in the last decade. The socialist governments of Pasqual Maragall (2003–2006) and José Montilla (2006–2010) implemented more progressive but similarly Catalanist policies to those of CiU. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, the leader of the PSC, Maragall, decided to Catalanise the party's political project even further, in an attempt to place himself in a position to defeat CiU at the polls. The socialists' choice was testimony to the profound 'Catalanisation' of society wrought under two decades of CiU governments.<sup>110</sup> When Maragall won the 2003 regional

elections, the PSC had a strong Catalanist agenda and so did the PSC governing coalition partners – the eco-socialists of ICV and the secessionist republicans of ERC. Soon, the tripartite government called for a reform of the 1979 Statute of Autonomy, a proposal that found support with CiU. In 2006, the Catalan Parliament, first, the Spanish Cortes, later, and the Catalan people, last, voted in favour of a new Statute of Autonomy that increased the level of self-government and declared Catalonia a nation in its own right.<sup>111</sup>

The tripartite governments also followed CiU in claiming ‘fiscal autonomy’ for Catalonia and a federal framework for Spain. The Maragall and Montilla governments also maintained the approach of the Catalanist right when it came to mass media. Under the socialists, the Generalitat controlled five TV channels, tens of radio stations, and a number of publishing houses and magazines. It also partially purchased the daily *Avui* and generously funded all relevant Catalan newspapers, including *La Vanguardia*, *El Periódico de Catalunya*, *El Punt*, *Regió 7*, *Diari de Girona* and *Segre*.<sup>112</sup> In a world in which national identity was increasingly transmitted through the mass media, the Catalan government devoted almost €270 million of its budget to TV and radio broadcasting in 2006.<sup>113</sup> In 2010, the figure reached €473 million.<sup>114</sup> Public money thus contributed to the perpetuation of the Catalano-centric framework of reference that presented the world from a Catalanist perspective in the twenty-first century. As in the 1980s and 1990s, this Catalano-centric frame shared the Catalan communicative space with a Spanish-centric framework of reference comprising state-run and private media.<sup>115</sup> Interestingly, despite the fact that regional media has had to compete with supra-state and state-level broadcasters, research has shown that territories like Catalonia and Scotland have sufficiently distinctive public spheres to challenge the communicative supremacy of the existing states.<sup>116</sup> In other words, regional media seemed to have been more effective in transmitting Catalan national identity than state media was in spreading Spanish identity in Catalonia.

The Socialist-led coalition also followed CiU in supporting Catalan sporting entities and demanding official status for the *selecció de futbol*. The Generalitat continued funding the *Plataforma ProSeleccions Esportives Catalanes*, an association campaigning for international recognition of Catalan national teams. In 1999 the Platform had collected half a million signatures to this end and the Catalan parliament passed the Bill of Catalan National Teams supporting the creation of national sporting entities.<sup>117</sup> By the time Pasqual Maragall reached the Generalitat the idea of Catalan national teams competing internationally was seen positively

by the majority of Catalans. A 2003 survey showed that 61 per cent of Catalans were in favour of Catalan national teams competing internationally, while 13 per cent were against and 19 per cent indifferent.<sup>118</sup>

The campaign for Catalan national teams soon entered high politics. In 2004, the PSOE and the PSC backed an ERC and CiU bill in the Spanish parliament promoting the participation of regional teams in international competitions.<sup>119</sup> The bill was, however, merely symbolic, as it did not contemplate the participation of the autonomous communities' teams in those sports where Spanish national squads were already registered. Three years later, an amendment of the Sport Law seeking to grant the right of Catalonia and the Basque Country to partake in international competitions was defeated in the Cortes by the votes of the PSOE and the PP. During the debate of the amendment, ERC MP Joan Puig and the PNV MP Aitor Esteban displayed Catalan and Basque national shirts at the tribune, while PP MP Francisco Antonio González reacted by sporting a *la Roja* kit.<sup>120</sup> Two months after the 'battle of the shirts' in Parliament, Josep-Lluís Carod Rovira, Vice Prime Minister of Catalonia, Miren Azkarate, Minister of Culture of the Basque government and Ánxela Bugallo, Minister of Culture of the Galician government, signed the so-called Declaration of San Mamés.<sup>121</sup> The petition again requested the right of the autonomic teams to take part in international contests and was presented at Athletic de Bilbao's stadium before a friendly between the Basque and Catalan national teams.

The combined efforts of regional governments notwithstanding, the international recognition of autonomic teams has made little progress in the past decade. The Catalan soccer *selecció* have continued playing at least one friendly per year and the Presidents of the Generalitat have regularly attended the games, endowing the squad with official backing. In 2010, the Catalan Football Federation announced its intention to organise a 'Nations' Trophy' with the participation of Wales and the Basque Country, but the competition is yet to materialise.<sup>122</sup> More importantly, attendance at the games played by the football *selecció* has steadily decreased in recent years, and this has become an issue of concern for the Catalan Football Federation.<sup>123</sup> Besides, at a judicial level, the situation seems to be at a stalemate. In May 2012, the Spanish Constitutional Court rejected the Spanish government's appeal against the 1999 Bill of Catalan National Teams and ruled that squads could compete internationally.<sup>124</sup> However, the court specified that Catalan national teams could not take part in those sports where there was a Spanish federation, hence limiting the possibility of competing

internationally to minority sports such as Futsal, Pitch and Putt, Australian football and darts.

The question of the Catalan national football team has been integral to the debate over Catalan and Spanish identities. The Catalanist press developed its traditional disjunctive narrative to argue in favour of the Catalan national team: Catalonia was a nation and it consequently deserved to have a national football team competing in World Cups and European Championships.<sup>125</sup> It was only the repressive and authoritarian nature of the Spanish state, the argument followed, that prevented the Catalan nation from playing on the international stage.<sup>126</sup> Other Catalan media, such as *La Vanguardia* and *El Periódico de Catalunya*, reported the games of Catalonia in a less passionate manner, showing a certain condescending understanding of the Catalanists' demands but not necessarily supporting them. Furthermore, *La Vanguardia* and *El Periódico de Catalunya* often reported how Catalan sportsmen were happy to play for Spanish national teams, hence breaking the Catalanist discursive dichotomy 'Spain versus Catalonia'.<sup>127</sup>

Pro-Spanish politicians and media, Catalan or otherwise, took a less subtle approach. The Catalan branch of the PP and Ciutadans denounced as 'xenophobic' a *Plataforma Pro Seleccions Esportives Catalanes* TV spot, in which a bullying child in a red shirt stopped another boy wearing the Catalan kit from joining in a game of football.<sup>128</sup> Besides, the conservative press described the games of the Catalan national team as an example of the narrow-minded, exclusivist nature of Catalan nationalism.<sup>129</sup> For the PP speaker Ángel Acebes, the 2006 Catalonia-Euskadi game was simply 'an act against Spain'.<sup>130</sup> Interestingly, Spanish nationalists presented Spain as the victim of Catalanist intransigence. Furthermore, the matches were seen as an attempt to politicise football and as a Generalitat-funded showcase of separatism.<sup>131</sup> The premise here was that football was a non-political game, yet Catalanists politicised the game and turned the matches of the Catalan *selecció* into acts of secessionist exaltation. This rationale somehow fitted well into a larger right-wing discourse that maintained that conservatives were not Spanish nationalists and only regional nationalists could be labelled as real 'nationalists'.

This self-denial of Spanish nationalism did not preclude the right from using the games of the Catalan national football team to attack the Spanish socialist Prime Minister José Luís Rodríguez Zapatero. According to the PP shadow sports minister, Francisco Antonio González, the games of the Catalan national team represented 'the highest expression of Zapatero's policies'.<sup>132</sup> For the far-right journalist

Federico Jiménez Losantos, the autonomic teams were part of a separatist offensive against Spain and its constitution that Zapatero did not want to confront because he had sold out to the regional nationalists who supported the PSOE in the Spanish parliament.<sup>133</sup> By presenting the socialists as traitors to the Spanish nation, the conservatives emerged as the bulwark of the patria and as the only political force capable of maintaining the unity of the country. Additionally, as noted in Chapter 5, the right-wing media contrasted the Spanish national team with the autonomic squads. Against the parochial, narrow-minded, destructive regional nationalists, the new triumphant narrative went, the *selección española* epitomised global success, modernity and the power of unity.<sup>134</sup>

Alongside the issue of the Catalan *selecció*, the Spanish national team has generated an important debate regarding football and national identities in Catalonia. In the first years of the 2000s, most of the best-selling newspapers of the Principality, including *La Vanguardia*, *El Periódico*, *El Mundo Deportivo* and, to a lesser extent, *Sport*, defended the compatibility of Catalan and Spanish identities and supported the *selección española*.<sup>135</sup> As in the 1980s and 1990s, these newspapers especially focused on the role of Barça players in the Spanish national side when reporting on *la Roja*, yet their celebrations of Spanish triumphs did not significantly differ from those of other non-Catalan media. Victory in the 2008 European Championship did not alter the narrative of compatible Spanish-Catalan identities. On the contrary these newspapers highlighted the key role that Catalans played in the *selección* of Luis Aragonés, which meant a sort of ‘Catalanisation’ of the Spanish national team.<sup>136</sup> Against those Catalanists who declared that they wanted anyone but Spain to win, the director of *La Vanguardia*, José Antich, rhetorically asked: ‘In Catalonia, is it possible not to wish the victory of a team with the Catalans Puyol, Xavi, Iniesta (sic), Cesc and Capdevila?’<sup>137</sup> The 2010 World Cup and Euro 2012 did nothing but increase the process of ‘Catalanisation’ of the Spanish national team, as Vicente del Bosque included a majority of Barça players in his first-choice squad and the *selección* shared the style and flow of Pep Guardiola’s team.

The Catalanist-leaning media were surprised by the popular displays of Spanish pride associated with the *selección* in Catalonia. Following Spain’s victory in Euro 2008, *Avui* reported that thousands of Catalans with Spanish flags revelled on the Ramblas and Canaletes – precisely the areas where Barça fans celebrate their triumphs. The Catalanist diary explained that popular support was due to the ‘solid base of Catalan footballers’ playing for *la Roja*.<sup>138</sup> Commentators at Catalunya Ràdio also underlined FC Barcelona’s contribution to Spain’s success.<sup>139</sup> They

occasionally complained because this contribution was not sufficiently acknowledged in Madrid, but recognised that, from 2008 onwards, the *selección* had left behind the *furia* to play a highly sophisticated and modern style of football, Barça's football.<sup>140</sup> Yet the sophistication and modernisation of Spain necessarily had its limits in the Catalanist narrative. When discussing the emergence of a new Spanish nationalism (*espanyolisme*) associated with sporting victories and a restored international reputation in the realms of culture and cuisine, *Avui* noted the phenomenon, but dismissed it stating that, for all her efforts, the image of Spain remained linked to paella, bullfighting and flamenco.<sup>141</sup> By emphasising the persistence of old clichés, the newspaper presented Spain's newly acquired sophistication and modernity as superficial traits that could not conceal the real, long-lasting nature of the country. In doing so, the Catalanist discourse denied the national 'other' the possibility of changing. Understandably, Catalan nationalists could not accept that Spain had become a fully fledged modern and sophisticated nation, for that would have seriously undermined their very representation of Catalonia as modern and progressive in relation to Spain.

On 1 July 2012, Spain defeated Italy 4–0 to become European Champion for the third time. Minutes after the final whistle, thousands of Catalans celebrated the Spanish victory in the streets. That night commentators on Catalunya Ràdio pointed out the peculiar historical situation of having Catalan players making a huge contribution to the *selección española*, at a moment when opinion polls showed the highest ever levels of popular support for an independent Catalonia.<sup>142</sup> The situation was even more paradoxical if we take into consideration TV ratings for the *selección española* matches. The Euro 2012 final reached an audience of 75 per cent in Catalonia, a share that demonstrates that the Spanish national team was hugely popular in the Principality.<sup>143</sup> Street parties, a profuse display of Spanish emblems, patriotic chants and balconies adorned with Spanish and Catalan flags made it clear that many Catalans strongly identified with the *selección*. How can we explain the simultaneous growing support for independence and the popularity of the *selección* in Catalonia?

The question does not have an easy answer. The percentage of Catalans who would vote in favour of an independent Catalonia in a referendum has rocketed from 13 per cent in 2006 to 51 per cent in 2012, a rise that research has associated with the economic crisis but also to the spread of a Catalanist identity that sees Spain as an oppressive entity.<sup>144</sup> The old tenet that Spain exploited Catalonia has found a wide audience at a time when the economy of the autonomous community is in

tatters. The fact that the CiU government of Artur Mas (2010–2012) was responsible for the implementation of the vast majority of the austerity measures that led to record unemployment and growing social inequality does not seem to carry much weight for those who think that Spain is ultimately to blame for the crisis in Catalonia. The 2010 ruling of the Constitutional Court striking out key parts of the 2006 statute and the Rajoy government's opposition to the creation of a Catalan inland revenue have also contributed to the emergence of a new generation of secessionists.<sup>145</sup>

The figures relating to independence is nevertheless ambiguous. The same June 2012 poll that showed that 51 per cent of Catalans would vote for independence showed that only 34 per cent wanted an independent Catalan state, whereas 29 per cent preferred Catalonia to be part of a federal Spain, 25 per cent opted for the current autonomic system and 6 per cent wanted a more centralised Spain.<sup>146</sup> Moreover, the rise of secessionists has not meant the end of dual identities in Catalonia. The June 2012 CEO survey revealed that the largest proportion of Catalans identified equally with Catalonia and Spain (37 per cent); a third of them felt they were more Catalan than Spanish (30 per cent); and 23 per cent identified exclusively with Catalonia. To complicate matters further, a survey published by the daily *ARA* in July 2012 showed that 57 per cent of those in favour of the independence of Catalonia were supporters of the Spanish national team.<sup>147</sup> When it comes to identities, voting patterns, football and surveys, figures do not always add up.

The popularity of *la Roja* has to be understood within this context of fluent, multiple identities in Catalonia. Some analysts have pointed out that the 'Catalanisation' of the *selección* was crucial for marketing the Spanish national team in Catalonia.<sup>148</sup> Although there is some truth in the observation that the high number of Catalans in the team and the *selección's* Barça-like style of play were important, the popular support showed in Catalonia for *la Roja* should not be read as the exclusive by-product of the 'Catalanisation' of the team. Clearly, the process of Catalanisation made the *selección* more acceptable to some Catalans with misgivings about what Spain still represented in Catalanist imagery. Yet the popularity of the squad in Catalonia has to be interpreted against the background of a symbolic universe and a national narrative that has promoted identification with Spain over the years.<sup>149</sup> The Spanish media, Spanish governments and the *selección española* all contributed to create a mental frame of national identification with Spain at different levels. Dual identities are possible because this Spanish frame of national identification is not perceived as incompatible with a

complementary frame of national/regional identification with Catalonia. Hence, long-held dual identities facilitated the unproblematic identification of many Catalans with the Spanish squad in 2008, 2010 and 2012. Support for the *selección* fitted well into the predetermined mental frame of Catalans who felt attached to Spain.

This is not to say that Spanish identity was necessarily inculcated in Catalonia as a sort of ‘banal nationalism’ à la Michael Billig.<sup>150</sup> In fact, banal nationalism, understood as the implicit transmission of national identity via the speeches of politicians, weather reports and football commentary, to name a few channels, does not always work in Catalonia, precisely because the national question and the territorial organisation of the state remain open and are discussed daily in the media. It would be more accurate to locate Catalans’ feelings of attachment to the Spanish nation at separate political and cultural levels. The assumption here is that Catalans were able to distinguish between emotional attachment to a political Spanish nation on the one hand, and a cultural Spanish nation on the other. Accordingly, Catalans could feel smaller levels of attachment to, let’s say, the Spanish state’s agencies, as representatives of a Spanish political nation, and simultaneously relate strongly to the cultural nation and its footballing representation in the shape of *la Roja*. The front page of *El Periódico de Catalunya* two days after the *selección* won Euro 2012 seems to confirm this double political/cultural comprehension of Spain. The Barcelona newspaper ran the headline ‘The Two Spains’ and included two large photos.<sup>151</sup> The picture on top showed the *selección* players celebrating the European title with thousands of fans in the streets of Madrid. The photo at the bottom of the front page showed Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy announcing new cuts in public services and demanding a ‘bigger effort’ from the autonomous communities. The subtext was clear. The Spanish football nation was to be celebrated, whereas the Spanish political nation was associated with the old stereotype of the central government mistreating Catalonia.

Artificial as the distinction between the political and the cultural nation is, it allows us to account for different levels of identification with Spain. The differentiation also helps to explain why the reclamation of Spanish national symbols detached from their traditional Francoist connotations that we saw in Chapter 5 also took place in Catalonia, although to a lesser extent than in the rest of the country.<sup>152</sup> Still, the revival of Spanish symbols in Catalonia should not be exaggerated. Barça and Athletic de Bilbao fans’ tremendous booing of the Spanish national anthem at the 2012 Copa del Rey final illustrates not

only the lack of consensus on Spanish national symbols, but also that many Catalans and Basques feel an open animosity towards them.<sup>153</sup> Six weeks after the whistling at the Copa del Rey final, Spain were crowned European champions, but the victory was taken as an offence by some Catalanists. The *Plataforma ProSelecciones Esportives Catalanes* published an article entitled 'The Spanish *selección* Is Also Robbing Us'.<sup>154</sup> The piece argued that the participation of five Catalans in the final of the tournament was nothing but proof of the footballing exploitation of Catalonia. The 'Catalanisation' of *la Roja* was not enough to make the team acceptable. On the contrary, it was evidence of the criminal nature of Spain, for Catalonia would have won the tournament on its own anyway and now Spaniards were taking credit for it. The article may have displayed an overoptimistic reading of the Catalan players' abilities, yet the idea of 'footballing plunder' added to the Catalanist master narrative that historically represented Spain as the oppressive thief and Catalonia as the victim.

It is difficult to measure to what extent this narrative is entrenched in Catalan society. Research has showed that there is a sharp contrast between the discourse of the Catalan establishment and the way Catalan citizens feel in the realm of identities. By and large, Catalans are more fluent in their multiple identities, more generous when asked about solidarity with other Spanish autonomous communities, and more willing to keep the current constitutional system than is indicated by the discourse of most Catalan political parties and media.<sup>155</sup> Nonetheless, it is also undeniable that, in recent times, support for an independent Catalan state has rapidly grown out of grassroots movements that have incorporated into their discourse the narrative of Catalanist political and media elites. Following a massive pro-independence demonstration on 11 September 2012, the President of the Generalitat, Artur Mas, decided to call for new regional elections that would in effect serve as a plebiscite on Catalonia's future in Spain. Mas's plan was to obtain an absolute majority in the regional parliament and lead the formation of an independent Catalan state. However, things did not work out as expected. CiU won the November 2012 elections but lost a dozen MPs in the Catalan Parliament. The results led Mas to seek support from ERC, the separatist Catalan Republicans. In December 2012, CiU and ERC signed an agreement that included the pledge for a referendum on independence by 2014 and the promotion of Catalan national teams in international sporting competitions.<sup>156</sup>

A hypothetical secession poses a number of difficult to answer questions. Would an independent Catalonia be part of the EU? Could Spain

veto the entry of Catalonia into the EU? And, in footballing terms, would FC Barcelona play in the Spanish league? Would Barça have to compete in a Catalan league? If so, would Espanyol follow-suit? Would Barça lose its Catalanist connotations should a Catalan national football *selecció* compete in international tournaments? Could Catalan players play for *la Roja* should they wish to? One can only speculate about an independent Catalan state and its sporting repercussions, but it seems more than likely that football will remain a conduit to elaborate, transmit and recreate Spanish and Catalan identities in Catalonia.

# 7

## Football and Identities in the Basque Country

‘Athletic de Bilbao is more than a football club, it is a feeling and as such its ways of operating often escape rational analysis.’<sup>1</sup>

(José María Arrate, President of Athletic de Bilbao)

When Inaxio Kortabarría addressed his fellow Real Sociedad players anxiety filled the dressing room. It was 5 December 1976 and Real Sociedad de San Sebastián were about to play a league match against Basque arch-rivals, Athletic de Bilbao. On this occasion, however, tension was not due to regional footballing rivalries but to a flag. The Real Sociedad captain told his colleagues that midfielder Josean de la Hoz Uranga had smuggled an *ikurriña* (Basque flag) hidden in his kit bag into the stadium. Kortabarría intended to propose to Athletic’s captain, José Ángel Iribar, that they walk out onto Atocha stadium holding the banned Basque flag. The gesture, Real Sociedad’s captain argued, would contribute to the legalisation of an emblem that had remained proscribed since the end of the Spanish Civil War. Following a brief discussion, the Real Sociedad players backed the action and Kortabarría informed Iribar of the decision. The Athletic goalkeeper then consulted his players, who in turn supported the action. Minutes later both captains walked onto the pitch with the *ikurriña*. The fans were astonished, some cried with joy, others clapped. The police did not act and allowed the players’ public display.<sup>2</sup> The next month, the Spanish government legalised the *ikurriña*.

Thirty-four years later, different flags were protagonists in the Basque Country. Following Spain’s victory in the 2010 World Cup, thousands took to the streets of Basque cities and towns to celebrate the triumph of *la Roja*. As in other Spanish cities, although in smaller numbers,

young Basques waved Spanish flags, wore *la Roja* shirts and chanted pro-Spanish songs. Despite some precedents in 2008 – when Spain won the European Championship – the 2010 celebrations took many commentators by surprise, because Spanish national symbols had been virtually eradicated from the Basque Country. Three decades of regional government at the hands of the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) and ETA's political violence had led to the disappearance of public displays of Spanish identity and granted Basque national symbols a hegemonic position. Having youngsters chanting 'it is cool that Bilbao is Spanish' and publicly celebrating the victories of Spain showed the plurality of national identities in a territory characterised by fragmentation and confrontation over the previous four decades.<sup>3</sup> This chapter analyses national narratives through football commentary in the Basque Country since the transition to democracy. The following pages explore the role of Basque football clubs as a source of collective identification, the recreation of the Euskadi national football team, the dialectical relationship between Spanish and Basque nationalisms and the persistence of dual identities in a society traumatised by political violence.

### **Transition to democracy (1975–1982)**

Of all Spanish territories, the Basque Country went through the most complex and cumbersome transition from dictatorship to democracy. Support for Basque nationalists grew considerably in the last years of Francoism, but nationalists failed to create a common front after the death of the dictator. In 1977, the conservative PNV and the so-called *izquierda abertzale* (patriotic left) could not reach an agreement. The radical nationalist movement rejected any joint action with Spanish parties, continued advocating full independence from Spain and exponentially increased the number of terrorist acts. The PNV, on the other hand, decided to participate in the transition process, abstained when it came to vote on the 1978 Spanish Constitution, but supported the 1979 Guernica Statute of Autonomy that created Euskadi, the Basque Autonomous Community.<sup>4</sup> Just as at the beginning of the twentieth century, the conservative nationalists created sport, cultural and youth associations and a well-funded party-based media to spread their influence across Basque society.<sup>5</sup> The strategy paid off. By 1980, the PNV was the main party in Euskadi and controlled the Basque government.

Socialists and communists also backed devolution and incorporated many of the dominant assumptions of Basque nationalism, including the right of self-determination for all Spanish regions in the years

immediately after the death of Franco.<sup>6</sup> This 'regional nationalist turn' of the PSOE and PCE paved the way for the adoption of joint programmes seeking democracy, amnesty for political prisoners and devolution, not only in the Basque Country but all over Spain. The anti-dictatorship mobilisation was crucial in propagating Basque nationalist discourses, symbols and rituals, while creating new Basque nationalist identities across the ideological board in the transition years. The spread of Basque nationalist identities coincided with what scholars have branded a 'crisis of legitimation' of Spanish identities in the Basque Country. This crisis was visible not only to the PSOE and PCE but also to the main party of the right, Unión de Centro Democrático (UCD). The party, led by Prime Minister Adolfo Suárez, had to undertake a democratisation of its political and national profile, a difficult task given the Francoist background of most of its members. As a result of this 'crisis of legitimation', symbols of the Spanish nation gradually disappeared from public spaces in the Basque Country, while the symbolic repertoire of Basque nationalism, endowed with an anti-fascist and ethno-romantic flavour, conquered the streets and the people of Euskadi.<sup>7</sup>

It is against this background of crisis and political mobilisation that we have to understand the 'national' gestures of Basque footballers. Kortabarria and Iribar's display of the *ikurriña* at Atocha was to be followed by a number of further actions. As we saw in Chapter 6, on 20 February 1977, barely a month after the Basque flag was legalised, hundreds of Barça and Athletic supporters paraded onto the Camp Nou pitch with *senyeras* and *ikurriñas* before a league match between FC Barcelona and Athletic de Bilbao. The game was labelled a 'fraternity match' and, according to *La Vanguardia*, represented 'the public gathering of two peoples fully identified with each other'.<sup>8</sup> When Real Sociedad and Bilbao played again in the league, on 24 April 1977, the players carried an *ikurriña* into the Athletic stadium, San Mamés, while José Ángel Iribar of Bilbao and Francisco Gorriti of Real Sociedad displayed a banner demanding amnesty for political prisoners. Thousands in the crowd reacted by chanting '*presoak kalera*' (prisoners to the streets).<sup>9</sup> In May 1977, Athletic played the final of the UEFA Cup against Juventus. The official pennant created by Athletic for the occasion included an Italian flag to represent the Turin team and an *ikurriña* for Athletic. The Spanish flag was nowhere to be seen. By the end of that month *El País* wrote that the Real Sociedad and Athletic players 'have done as much as political parties have towards the recovery of the *ikurriña*'.<sup>10</sup> On 8 August 1977, the president of Athletic, Jesús Duñabetia, raised the Basque flag at San Mamés, as musicians played regional tunes and dancers



Figure 6 Inaxio Kortabarria and José Ángel Iribar walking onto the Atocha pitch with the Basque flag (© Juan Aygües 2013).

in traditional costume welcomed the footballers.<sup>11</sup> Duñabetia justified the official raising of the *ikurriña* with reference to popular demand. After all, the president argued, San Mamés was one of the few places lacking the *ikurriña* and most town councils in Euskadi had the flag displayed on their façades.<sup>12</sup> Less than seven months after the emblem was officially legalised, the *ikurriña* was well on its way to becoming the hegemonic national symbol in the Basque Country.

The hoisting of the *ikurriña* in August 1977 had more prosaic motives: Jesús Duñabetia was a member of the PNV. In the 24 May 1977 elections to the presidency of Athletic, Duñabetia had defeated the conservative candidate Ignacio de la Sota by promising a number of reforms including the extension of the franchise to elect the club's presidents to all season-ticket holders. The measure was so popular that when he called for elections again in November 1977, Duñabetia ran for the presidency of Athletic unopposed.<sup>13</sup> With Duñabetia the PNV thus returned to Athletic's driving seat after four decades of Francoism. Some players, however, had more radical views. José Ágel Iribar, for instance, was among the founding members of *Herri Batasuna* (HB), the ETA-leaning

coalition of left-wing Basque nationalists, in October 1978. Inaxio Kortabarria also backed the pro-independence Basque movement. A friend of the ETA leader Domingo Iturbe Abasolo (aka Txomin), the Real Sociedad captain renounced playing again for the Spanish national team in the spring of 1977.<sup>14</sup> To date, he remains the only Basque who has refused to play for the *selección española* for ideological reasons. Footballers' connections with radical nationalists were reiterated when Athletic players organised a public tribute to José Miguel Beñarán (aka Argala). An ETA member, Argala was killed by the *Batallón Vasco Español* – a paramilitary terrorist organisation created by the Spanish police – on 21 December 1978. Before the match between Athletic and Atlético de Madrid on 30 December 1978, players and the public at San Mamés observed a minute's silence to honour Argala. With the acquiescence of Duñabieta and the Athletic board of directors, the homage was then completed when some fans on the terraces sang the Basque nationalist hymn, *Eusko Gudariak* ('Basque soldiers'), a PNV song written in the 1930s that was, nevertheless, rapidly becoming the unofficial anthem of the radical *abertzales* during the transition.<sup>15</sup>

Athletic and Real Sociedad were also behind the promotion of Euskera, the Basque language. On 16 August 1979, a crowded San Mamés hosted an event for the campaign called '*Bai Euskarari*' ('Yes to Euskera'), which included a football game between the Basque national team and, significantly, Ireland.<sup>16</sup> The match meant the return of a Euskadi football team after the Spanish Civil War and some of the survivors of the 1930s squad made guest appearances. Before the game, bands interpreted folk music, dancers performed traditional pirouettes, fans chanted old Basque songs and players hoisted the *ikurriña*. The nationalist fiesta was only spoiled when the provincial governor banned the performance of '*Gernikako Arbola*', a religious song praising Basque medieval rights that the campaigners had chosen as the home team's anthem. Wisely, the organisers decided not to play either the Irish or the Spanish anthem, as the chances of having the latter booed were very high.<sup>17</sup> On 23 December 1979, Real Sociedad organised the second game by the Euskadi team at Atocha. This time the rival was Bulgaria, yet the objectives were similar to those at San Mamés. The game sought to raise money for the fostering of Euskera and Basque players donated their fees to the cause. Nationalist rituals were also repeated. Bands played folk music, dancers in traditional costumes performed and some 22,000 fans chanted songs in Euskera.<sup>18</sup> A similar event took place on 31 May 1980, when Athletic and Real Sociedad played a testimonial to honour the retiring José Ángel Iribar. Funds were then raised to edit a

dictionary of sporting terms in Euskera and dancers and musicians paid ritualised tributes to footballers.<sup>19</sup> Two months later, the Euskadi national team played a friendly against Hungary at Mendizorroza stadium in Vitoria. Again, the symbolic repertoire of songs, dances and flags were in place.<sup>20</sup> This time, however, barely 9,000 people attended the game and the four million pesetas raised could not cover the ten-million-peseta cost of the match's organisation.<sup>21</sup>

The low attendance at Vitoria, in contrast to those matches played in Bilbao and San Sebastian, is indicative of important political and identity differences among Basque territories.<sup>22</sup> During the years of the transition, Alava, whose capital is Vitoria, was the province where Basque nationalists had the least impact and Spanish identities remained strongest. Additionally, Euskera was virtually unspoken in the province. The most populated province in Euskadi, Biscay, witnessed a rapid growth of the PNV, although the Bilbao industrial area remained a stronghold of the PSOE. Guipúzcoa, the province with the highest percentage of Basque speakers, was also dominated by the PNV in the late 1970s and early 1980s, but the more radical option of HB gained very solid popular support, becoming the second political force. Navarre was, and still is, considered part of the Basque Country by Basque nationalists. However, Basque nationalists were a minority in the territory and Navarre became itself an independent autonomous community during the transition. It is telling that Osasuna, the main team from Pamplona, refused to lend its players to the Euskadi national team in 1979. In a politically charged and somewhat contradictory statement, Osasuna's board of directors argued that they wished to keep 'the strictest political neutrality' and that their refusal was in line with the decisions taken by the Navarrese Parliament regarding the issue of Euskadi – that is, keeping Navarre as an independent territory from the Basque Country.<sup>23</sup> The PNV accused Osasuna of defending 'centralist positions'.<sup>24</sup>

This fragmentation of Basque identities is often ignored when depicting Athletic de Bilbao as the Basque nationalist club *par excellence*. Some scholars have argued that the club's support for the campaigns for Basque autonomy and the promotion of Euskera, together with the so-called '*cantera* policy' (hiring only Basque players) show that Athletic represents the ideal of Basque nationalism.<sup>25</sup> However, this view needs qualifying. Athletic was neither the only club with connections to Basque nationalism, nor were all Athletic supporters Basque nationalists. As noted, Real Sociedad players also took an active role in the resurrection of the *ikurriña* and the development of the Euskadi national

football team. Like Athletic, Real Sociedad followed a *política de cantera* (literally 'quarry policy') in the transition years, hiring exclusively local talent, and organising friendlies to promote the Basque language.<sup>26</sup> Real Sociedad supporters were also fond of displaying *ikurriñas*, as the TV footage and the press of the transition era repeatedly showed.<sup>27</sup> Additionally, and despite the good relationship between Real Sociedad and Athletic, long-standing provincial rivalries continued to be channelled through the main football teams of Bilbao and San Sebastián in the 1970s.<sup>28</sup> Hence, the idea that Athletic somehow represented Basque nationalists from Guipúzcoa, let alone the people of Guipúzcoa, seems unfounded.<sup>29</sup>

On the other hand, Athletic built, first and foremost, very strong links with the city of Bilbao. After Francoism, the club continued to be the symbol of the city and attracted all sorts of Bilbainos, Basque nationalists and non-nationalists alike.<sup>30</sup> This political plurality among Athletic fans was made clear on 24 January 1977, when the club decided that José Ángel Iribar should not wear an *ikurriña* in his captain's armband because not all Athletic supporters agreed with such a gesture.<sup>31</sup> Likewise, many Athletic fans did not attend the testimonial to honour Iribar when the goalkeeper retired in May 1980, precisely because they did not share the nationalist views of the Bilbao captain.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, Athletic remained the sole point of shared identity for Biscayans of all political hues.<sup>33</sup> In the province of Biscay, the *cantera* policy was supported across the political spectrum and both Basque nationalists and non-nationalists identified with Athletic. During the transition to democracy, in an increasingly fragmented and violent society, Athletic became a point of unity for Biscayans.<sup>34</sup>

Like other Spanish regions, the Basque Country witnessed a tremendous rise in popular sporting activities in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Decentralisation and the creation of democratic municipal councils hastened the expansion of a network of sports clubs all over Euskadi. The associations continued to be spaces where Basque nationalist ideologies were transmitted and 'experienced', as was the case in the 1960s and early 1970s. During the transition, however, many sporting events gained an openly political charge in the Basque Country. The *korrikas*, popular street relay races with thousands of runners, were organised all over Euskadi.<sup>35</sup> These races had often unmistakable political connotations, as they sought to collect funds for imprisoned ETA members, demanded amnesties for those convicted of terrorist acts and/or raised money for the promotion of Euskera.<sup>36</sup> On occasions, footballers took part in the events, as the Real Sociedad players Pedro Otxotorena, Iñaki Anza, Inaxio Kortabarria and José Agustín Gajate did in May 1982, in

support of the promotion of the Basque language and the liberation of ETA prisoners.<sup>37</sup> The so-called *herri kilorak*, Basque rural sports, also underwent an important revival during the transition to democracy. Practised in the Spanish and French Basque Country and well-covered in the local press, these sports transmitted a sense of Basque uniqueness. *Herri kirolak* also allowed a line to be drawn between a modern, industrialised mass society and alleged ancient customs via the promotion of traditional sports, despite the fact that some of them were recent inventions, as anthropologist Jeremy MacClancy discovered in the 1990s.<sup>38</sup>

In the murky years that followed the death of the dictator, Basque society developed a hyper-sensitivity to national symbols. As I mentioned above, Spanish national symbols gradually disappeared from the public arena, while Basque national emblems rapidly became hegemonic. The radical nationalists' discourse that equated Spain with fascism and dictatorship on the one hand, and Euskadi to ancestral freedoms on the other, permeated important sectors of Basque society. ETA's violence was crucial in this process because it targeted not only the human symbols of Spanish 'occupation' (policemen and military officers), but also those considered police 'informers', a mixed-bag category that included virtually everyone challenging the terrorist organisation in public, including conservatives, socialists and communists. In a sense, ETA's violence became 'pedagogic' in relation to national symbols. Any display of Spanish national identities was considered fascist by ETA and, consequently, a potential and legitimate target for those who had imposed upon themselves the heavy task of 'liberating' the Basque people. As a result, many Basques became unwilling to express any sort of link with Spain and either adopted Basque nationalist symbols or did not voice their national allegiances in public. For instance, when the socialist worker Germán González was murdered in Villarreal de Urrechu (Guipúzcoa) on 27 October 1979, his fellow PSOE militants employed a combined class and Basque nationalist symbolic repertoire at his burial. The coffin was covered with a red flag and attendants displayed *ikurriñas*. The display concluded with the chanting of the *Internationale* and *Eusko Gudariak*. Germán González was an immigrant from Old Castile, but symbols of Spanish identity were nowhere to be seen.<sup>39</sup>

Football was not immune to sensitivity over national symbols, as the 1982 World Cup was to show. On 9 July 1982, the front page of *Diario 16* announced that Luís Miguel Arconada, goalkeeper of Real Sociedad and Spain, was to be investigated by the Spanish Football Association for not wearing official socks during the 1982 World Cup. The Spanish FA reported that the investigation was triggered by a question from socialist

MPs enquiring why Arconada had played all World Cup games in white socks, instead of the official black, red and yellow ones. *Diario 16* suggested that there were no political implications behind Arconada's choice of socks; after all, the goalkeeper wore the Spanish badge and red and yellow stripes on his jersey, plus Spain's colours in his captain's armband, and these were never considered a problem. For Arconada it seems this was rather a matter of superstition, as the Spanish captain also played with unofficial all-white socks at Real Sociedad.<sup>40</sup> Fully aware of the dangers of being associated with the defence of Spanish symbols in Euskadi, the leader of the Basque socialists, Txiki Benegas, denied PSOE MPs were behind the enquiry about Arconada's socks. He accused the Spanish FA of orchestrating a campaign against the *selección's* Basque players, in an attempt to cover up poor on-field results and problems with the organisation of the World Cup. By blaming Basque players, Benegas contended, the Spanish FA showed a 'clumsy, old Spanish nationalism'.<sup>41</sup> On 11 July 1982, the Spanish FA issued a communiqué stating that Arconada had been granted permission to wear all-white socks, as he usually did with Real Sociedad.<sup>42</sup> No investigation was ever carried out.

The 'Arconada affair' was just the tip of the iceberg. At Spain 82, the *selección española* included six Real Sociedad players. The San Sebastian team had been the champion of the Spanish league in 1980–81 and 1981–82, so it seemed only natural that the bulk of the *selección* comprised Real Sociedad footballers. Yet things did not go according to plan. As we saw in Chapter 3, Spain played horribly, had very poor results and failed to progress to the semi-finals. Like the Basque socialists, the Basque press, *abertzale* and non-*abertzale* alike, interpreted the criticism of Real Sociedad players during the competition as a conspiracy by the Madrid-based media to force the coach José Emilio Santamaría to include Real Madrid players in Spain's line-up.<sup>43</sup> Once the World Cup was over for Spain, the Basque media, especially the Guipuzcoan press, accused their colleagues in Madrid of using the Real Sociedad footballers as scapegoats for a failure that was not their responsibility.<sup>44</sup> Real Sociedad players were thus presented as the victims of a 'xenophobic' witch-hunt orchestrated from 'Madrid'.<sup>45</sup> Much in line with the Basque nationalist narrative, the idea behind the denunciation of the alleged campaign was that 'Madrid', shorthand for Spain, disliked Basques and conspired to oppress them in various ways. The subtext was intrinsically conservative: it was in Madrid's nature to aim to control Basques and that tendency endured over the years, whether in football or politics.

Football and national symbolism also interplayed on the roads of Euskadi. In the run-up to the 1982 World Cup, the Basque government installed tens of road signs to commemorate the event all over Euskadi. The road signs were written both in Euskera and Spanish and informed motorists of their distance from Bilbao, one of the Spain 82 venues. Significantly, on the road signs the Basque government replaced the official logo of the World Cup, which included the colours of the Spanish flag, with a new one sporting an *ikurriña*.<sup>46</sup> Some Basques disliked the road signs and crossed out the *ikurriña* and 'Bilbo' (Bilbao in Euskera) adding the initials FN, for the extreme-right group *Fuerza Nueva*. Others crossed out 'Bilbao', leaving Bilbo and the *ikurriña* untouched. The Spanish government did not appreciate the symbolic implications of the traffic signs and demanded their removal, arguing that the Basque autonomous government had no responsibility for transport matters. The Basque government, however, refused and accused the representative of the Spanish government in the Basque Country, Marcelino Oreja, of being behind the crossing out of the *ikurriñas*, in an attempt, it asserted, 'to humiliate the Basque people'.<sup>47</sup> The accusation was a classic of Basque nationalist master narrative, as it linked the UCD central government with the extreme right and presented the PNV regional government as the real protector of the Basque people when it was 'attacked' from Madrid. It also portrayed non-Basque nationalist Basques, such as Marcelino Oreja, as enemies of the Basque people. Just a few hours after the Basque government had accused Oreja of trying to humiliate the Basque people, the representative of the Spanish government issued a communiqué reiterating his highest respect for and full identification with 'the symbols and institutions of the Autonomous Community'.<sup>48</sup> The document ended as follows: 'I am as Basque as any other and Spanish to the bone; and I find inadmissible that [the Basque government] aims to grant Basque identity patents with offensive exclusivism.'<sup>49</sup>

The comments by Oreja were a rare public demonstration of dual identification (Basque and Spanish) in Euskadi. From the approval of the Basque Statute of Autonomy in 1979 to the arrival of Felipe González to the national premiership in 1982, opinion polls showed that the majority of the population in Euskadi had dual identities, Basque and Spanish.<sup>50</sup> However, the public display of Spanish identities was usually reduced to a minimum in Euskadi due to the crisis of legitimation of Spanish identities and ETA's violence. Those citizens who dared to exhibit Spanish national symbols ran a very high risk of suffering an ETA attack. This was, for instance, the case of Alberto López Jaureguizar, an office worker, who used to hang a Spanish flag with a black ribbon

from his home balcony every time a policeman was killed in the Basque Country. On 16 July 1982, López Jaureguizar was shot dead in front of his home by three gunmen.<sup>51</sup> He had joined the conservative *Alianza Popular* two weeks earlier but had never been threatened by ETA before. His widow had no doubts that he was murdered for exhibiting the Spanish flag.<sup>52</sup> Another case concerned an *Alianza Popular* militant, Vicente Zorita, who was kidnapped, tortured and shot seven times in the head in November 1980. ETA dropped his dead body in front of his home, having gagged his mouth with a Spanish flag.<sup>53</sup> In this climate of 'pedagogic' violence, the displays of Spanish national identities tended to be reduced to the private sphere, that is, to home conversations with family members and close friends.

Notwithstanding the marginalisation of Spanish identities to the private sphere, some association with Spanishness could still be found in the Basque media and amongst football players. Newspapers, such as *El Correo Español* and *El Diario Vasco*, incorporated the Mundial 82 logo with the Spanish flag and referred to the *selección* as 'our players' and the 'national team'.<sup>54</sup> Real Sociedad footballers also declared the pride they felt playing for Spain on various occasions during the 1982 World Cup.<sup>55</sup> In addition, the Real Sociedad internationals sent a number of *selección española* gifts to Alberto Muñagorri, a ten-year-old child injured by an ETA bomb. On 26 June 1982, Muñagorri, a Real Sociedad and *selección española* fan, kicked an abandoned rucksack in the streets of Rentería (Guipúzcoa). The backpack contained an ETA bomb aimed at the electricity company Iberduero and the explosion maimed the child, who lost his left leg and an eye.<sup>56</sup> When in hospital, Muñagorri received a football signed by all members of the Spanish national team, a pair of Arconada's gloves, a Spain number-10 jersey of his idol Jesús Mari Zamora, and autographed pictures of the Real Sociedad internationals.<sup>57</sup> Beyond their humanitarian flavour, the gifts also symbolically connected Real Sociedad and the *selección española* with a victim of ETA. With these presents relating to the Spanish national team, the Real Sociedad players of the *selección* placed a strong emphasis on compatibility between Spanish and Basque identities.

### **PNV hegemony and the perpetuation of violence in the 1980s and 1990s**

From the first regional elections in 1980, the PNV controlled the Basque autonomous government (*Lehendakaritza*), with different coalition partners. The process of devolution meant that the Basque government

enjoyed an unprecedented range of powers over public order, tax collection, local councils, education, labour relations and the health system. It also provided an unrivalled chance to promote nation-building from above. To this aim, the Basque government went to great lengths to create its own mass media and education system. In the 1980s, it set up two television channels (one broadcasting in Euskera and the other in Spanish) and various regional and local radio stations. The regional government also funded a broad network of public and private associations to promote Basque culture, sports and language. As in all other autonomous communities in Spain, the consolidation of the regional institutions led to the establishment of a new political class and a large number of public regional officers whose jobs depended on expanding, or at least maintaining, the recently created agencies.<sup>58</sup>

The use of the media and other institutions of nationalisation officialised a PNV national narrative that reached many sectors of Basque society. The narrative emphasised the peculiarities of the Basques, portrayed as the original inhabitants of Europe, and their own consciousness of being a different people throughout the centuries. This discourse was based on a mythological reading of the past that minimised the influences of various conquerors of the Basque region (such as Celts, Iberians, Romans, Visigoths and Muslims) and underscored a notion of Basque cultural and racial continuity. As a self-confirmed prophecy, this supposed ethnic permanence was used to explain why Euskera, a language whose origin is unknown, had remained alive.<sup>59</sup> Crucially, the PNV 'discourse of differentiation' became the national master narrative that sought to justify political demands for increasing autonomy or independence. It represented Spaniards as the national 'other' and the Spanish state as an oppressive machine which curtailed the liberties of the Basques. From this perspective, the PNV condemned ETA's attacks but, nevertheless, considered this violence a by-product of an 'unresolved conflict' between Euskadi and the Spanish state.<sup>60</sup>

Together with the party's newspaper, *Deia*, the PNV master narrative was reproduced by the Basque autonomous government's institutions, schools and media. Controlled by the regional government since its inception in 1983, Basque television (ETB) helped to perpetuate the language and discourse of right-wing *abertzales*.<sup>61</sup> As in the case of Catalan television, ETB news referred to Spain much less often than did state-wide channels. Academic research on TV news programmes in the late 1990s showed that Spanish identities were somehow present in 23 per cent of TVE news and 33.6 per cent of the private channel Telecinco's news, whereas this figure went down to merely 15.02 per cent in the

case of ETB news.<sup>62</sup> Additionally, ETB news drew neat lines separating Euskadi and Spain, referring to the latter as 'the Spanish government' or simply 'the state', and constantly reported on conflicts about responsibilities between the Basque and the central administration.<sup>63</sup> Discourse and language here established an opposition between sentimental and administrative entities, between Euskadi, the 'warm' community, and Spain, the 'cold' state.

Like other regional television created in the 1980s, ETB programmed many hours of sports as a means to gain viewers.<sup>64</sup> ETB regularly broadcast live matches of First Division Basque teams and closely covered the news of other teams of Euskadi in the Second and the Second B divisions.<sup>65</sup> Tellingly, the Basque government decided to broadcast Athletic and Real Sociedad games in Euskera. In the first half of the 1980s, roughly 25 per cent of the population in the Basque Autonomous Community were *euskaldunes* (Basque speakers) and broadcasting Athletic and Real Sociedad games in Euskera was an attempt to promote the language via football.<sup>65</sup> By the end of the 1990s, the Basque government was pleased with the role of ETB in fostering Euskera through football. According to a report produced by the *Lehendakaritza* in 1999, most of Euskera-only ETB1's programmes were devoted to sports or children. The downside of this, the Basque government asserted, was that there were too few programmes on Basque culture, history and arts on ETB1. The report also lamented the limited presence of Euskera in the Basque sports media and warned of the dangers that new cable and satellite TV channels in Spanish would pose for the Basque language.<sup>66</sup>

Alongside the Basque government, the PNV controlled most of the Athletic de Bilbao board of directors through the 1980s and 1990s.<sup>67</sup> In 1983, the recently elected Athletic president, Pedro Aurtenetxe, gave the go-ahead to a new anthem for the club. Previously, both the unofficial *Alirón* (1913) and the official *Himno al Atlético de Bilbao* (1950) were written in Spanish and made specific references to Athletic as a Spanish club. The new anthem was in Euskera and allusions to Spain were removed. It also had poetic mentions of the red, white and green colours of the *ikurriña*, referred to as the Tree of Guernica (symbols of Basque medieval freedoms) and hailed Bilbao and Biscayan youth and the honesty of the Basque people.<sup>68</sup> This process of Basque 'nationalisation' of Athletic de Bilbao's symbols did not alter the fact that the team continued to be an institution capable of integrating fans with very different political views. Athletic's league titles of 1983 and 1984, together with the 1984 *Copa del Rey* victory, were celebrated all over the province of Biscay by people covering the whole political spectrum. In a divided

and conflict-ridden society, football became a sort of temporary 'truce' where diverse Biscayans could converge. In the late 1990s, against a similar socio-political backdrop of violence and confrontation, the celebrations of Athletic's centenary turned the club into a strong unifying symbol for Biscayans of all ideologies.<sup>69</sup>

Basque nationalist and non-nationalist Biscayans maintained their backing for the club's *cantera* policy in the last two decades of the twentieth century.<sup>70</sup> Agreement on the *cantera* policy was relatively easy in the 1980s when Athletic became one of the best teams in Spain, under the young coach Javier Clemente. However, the debate about whether Athletic should buy non-Basque players re-emerged in the early 1990s and intensified later, as the team flirted with relegation in the 1995–96 season and the Bosman ruling accelerated football globalisation. Some season-ticket holders (*socios*) argued that it was about time to change Athletic's philosophy of restricting hiring to local talent, as this was the only way to avoid relegation in the future. Yet advocates for change seemed to be a minority over the 1990s. In February 1992, a survey carried out by the daily *El Mundo* showed that 76 per cent of Athletic *socios* would not change the *cantera* policy, even if this meant having the team relegated to the Second Division.<sup>71</sup> A subsequent survey published in *Egin* seven months later raised the percentage of *socios* opposed to the club buying players from abroad to 83 per cent.<sup>72</sup> In 1996, José María Arrate, president of Athletic, insisted on the *cantera* policy as the definer of the club's identity, regardless of its economic and sporting rationale:

Athletic Bilbao is more than a football club, it is a feeling and as such its ways of operating often escape rational analysis. We see ourselves as unique in world football and this defines our identity. We do not say that we are either better or worse than others, merely different. We only wish for the sons of our soil to represent our club, and in so wishing we stand out as a sporting entity, not a business concept.<sup>73</sup>

Interestingly, the *cantera* policy was also defended by the Spanish right-wing press. On 5 January 1997, *ABC* published a front page with the picture of Athletic captain and *selección española* midfielder, Julen Guerrero, and the following headline: 'Today Real Madrid play against Athletic de Bilbao, the only Spanish team that fields eleven Spanish players.' *ABC* completed the cover with a small piece that praised 'the defence of all Spanish practice by the Basque team' and criticised Real Madrid, Barcelona and Deportivo de la Coruña for playing with too many foreigners. 'Far from xenophobia and chauvinism,' the *ABC* editorial clarified,

'the *cantera* policy was surprising and pleasant' in the globalised world of football.<sup>74</sup> As Juan Carlos Castillo has observed, what was really surprising was that the conservative *ABC*, a newspaper that articulated much of the discourse of the Spanish nationalist right, publicly supported 'Athletic's philosophy, which after all [was] discriminatory against most' Spaniards.<sup>75</sup> Surely, the monarchist daily's intention was to claim Basque footballers as Spanish players. By turning the Basque-only policy into a Spanish-only philosophy, *ABC* effectively implemented a discursive process of national identity assimilation.<sup>76</sup> This emphasis on the Spanish identity of the Athletic players that spread among the conservative press in the late 1990s and early 2000s was somehow reminiscent of the Francoist attempt (that we saw in Chapter 2) to portray the Basque people as the essence of the Spanish nation.

Conservative newspapers in Euskadi tended to portray Athletic and Real Sociedad players as Spanish. The most-read dailies, *El Diario Vasco* in Guipúzcoa and *El Correo* in Biscay, regularly referred to Basque footballers as both Basque and Spanish when playing international competitions.<sup>77</sup> They also presented Basque players as rough, physically strong and tough, while mentioning the *furria bilbaína* as one of the main features of Athletic, hence reminding readers that Basque football provided the basis of Spanish football.<sup>78</sup> This double identification contributed to the construction of a narrative of dual identities in the PNV-hegemonic Basque Country of the 1980s and 1990s. In a society in which the words 'Spain' and 'Spanish' had been turned into derogatory terms, the sports sections of these newspapers became spaces where Spanish and Basque identities were not presented as antagonistic. Alongside national/regional compatibilities, *El Diario Vasco* and *El Correo Español* emphasised provincial identities via football. The focus was constantly on Real Sociedad and Athletic players as representatives of Guipúzcoa and Biscay respectively. At times, provincial similarities, such as the good results achieved by the Athletic and Real Sociedad *cantera* policies of the 1980s, were celebrated.<sup>79</sup> On other occasions, sporting and provincial rivalries were highlighted. For instance, in the late 1980s Luis de Andía, football editor of *El Diario Vasco*, published a series of incendiary articles criticising Athletic that soon provoked a response from Bilbao.<sup>80</sup>

By contrast, no room for dual identities whatsoever was to be found in *Egin*, the mouthpiece of HB. Radical nationalists continued to claim the independence of Euskal Herria, the greater Basque Country, which includes Biscay, Guipúzcoa, Alava, Navarre and the French Basque Country, and accused Spain of being an invading dictatorial force that

oppressed the Basque people. HB notions of continuity between the Franco regime and the new democracy were heavily reinforced by state terrorism in the 1980s. The GAL, police squads organised by the PSOE government to kill ETA members and collaborators, not only produced a new generation of ETA recruits but also encouraged many Basques to think that the new democracy had not been fully implemented in Euskadi.<sup>81</sup> The mythological HB narrative of 'Spanish occupation' was accompanied by rituals honouring dead ETA members as warriors fallen for the fatherland, an elaborate cult of violence and a profuse symbolic representation of Euskal Herria in the shape of flags, anthems and maps.<sup>82</sup> Radical nationalist discourse and rituals were propagated through a network of bars, sports clubs, a trade union, cultural organisations and constant political mobilisation, resulting in the creation of a 'political religion' in which the Basque nation was sacralised as an object of dogma and devotion for which patriots were willing to sacrifice their lives.<sup>83</sup>

Radical Basque nationalists understood football as a continuation of the Euskadi versus Spain conflict by other means. According to HB, Athletic's 1983 league title was 'a rejection of Madrid's centralism and the reaffirmation of the national identity of Euskal-herria (sic)'.<sup>84</sup> Other *abertzales* commented that Athletic's victory was proof of Basque racial superiority and of the defeat of Spanish nationalism (*españolismo*).<sup>85</sup> As in the case of radical Catalan nationalism, crucial to the HB narrative was the idea that the national 'other' (Spain) had a static, authoritarian nature that could not be changed, regardless of the country's political system. In 1984, *Egin* blamed the problems in the negotiations between Real Sociedad and TVE regarding football broadcasting rights on the shortcomings of the transition to democracy and centralising legislation passed by the Spanish government.<sup>86</sup> Continuity with the past was also highlighted by celebrating the historic events of Basque football. In May 1987, *Egin* published a special supplement on the 50th anniversary of the Euskadi national team. As we saw in Chapter 2, the team was created by the Basque government during the Spanish Civil War and sent on a propaganda tour to France, Poland, Czechoslovakia, the USSR, Norway, Denmark, Mexico and Cuba. For *Egin*, the players of Euskadi embarked on the tour to defend 'the Basque people from the lies of fascism' and to tell the world 'about the massacre of our people'.<sup>87</sup> *Egin* concealed the fact that the Euskadi team was mainly formed by Biscayans, as Alava and Navarre had supported the military rebels and Guipúzcoa soon fell under Francoist control, but it nevertheless presented the players as the 'representatives of an attacked and harassed people', and sought to draw parallels with 1980s Euskadi.<sup>88</sup>

In conjunction with the discursive and symbolic uses of football, radical Basque nationalists saw soccer as a funding opportunity. On 30 December 1985, three gunmen kidnapped Juan Pedro Guzmán Uribe, a member of Athletic's board of directors, at Lezama, Bilbao's training ground. Guzmán belonged to a family of Biscayan industrialists and was a PNV sympathiser. In the 1980s, blackmail of Basque entrepreneurs was the main source of ETA's income and the terrorist organisation regularly returned to kidnapping when in need of extra cash. Despite the regularity of these kidnappings, the capture of Guzmán sent shockwaves through the ranks of Basque footballers and directors, for it was the first time that ETA had targeted someone professionally linked to soccer. On 31 December 1985, the president of Athletic, the Basque nationalist Pedro Aurtenetxe, publicly condemned the abduction as a dogmatic and intolerant attack 'on what Athletic and its sporting milieu mean in the life of Biscay'.<sup>89</sup> The following day, Athletic players demanded the 'immediate release of Juan Pedro Guzmán' through their captain Dani.<sup>90</sup> With snowballing effect, demands for the liberation of Athletic's director spread through small clubs all over Biscay and reached Real Sociedad players, who expressed their solidarity with the communiqué issued by their Bilbao colleagues and paid a visit to Guzmán's wife to show their support.<sup>91</sup> On 7 January 1986, Javier Clemente, the first-team coach of Bilbao, José Ángel Iribar, formerly linked to HB and assistant coach of Athletic, and Piru Gianza, a legendary Athletic player and sympathiser with HB, gave a press conference describing ETA as a bunch of fanatics seeking to destroy Athletic as a place of coexistence.<sup>92</sup> The kidnap of Guzmán united Basque footballers against ETA, regardless of their political views.

On 10 January 1986, the Spanish National Police liberated Guzmán and arrested his three captors in Bilbao. Basque players, football directors, trade unions and political parties welcomed the release. As ever, HB was the exception. The Basque separatists declared that expressing satisfaction with Guzmán's liberation would place them on the same level as Manuel Fraga (a former Franco minister and then leader of the conservative *Alianza Popular*) and the Spanish police. Apparently, for HB, this was a moral issue. The speaker of the pro-independence party remarked that they could not join the celebration of the freeing out of 'strict political ethics'.<sup>93</sup> ETA went a step further. In a communiqué published in *Egin*, the armed group accused Athletic players, coaches and the board of directors of 'manipulating and intoxicating' public opinion.<sup>94</sup> According to ETA, by publicly criticising the 'arrest' of Guzmán, Athletic players were giving in to the plans of the Spanish Ministry of

the Interior. As for Guzmán himself, he was guilty of 'belonging to a family with a strong oligarchic component'.<sup>95</sup> ETA's communiqué was a classic example of what political scientists have labelled 'transference of responsibility', a discursive device by which the victims of terrorist actions are blamed for the violence they suffer and the perpetrators are exonerated of all culpability.<sup>96</sup>

In the 1990s, ETA began to blackmail Basque footballers. In 1993, the *etarras* (ETA members) responsible for the extortion apparatus of the armed group received instructions to blackmail the most famous and richest sportsmen in Euskal Herria. According to the former Spanish Minister of the Interior, Juan Alberto Belloch, some football players paid the so-called 'revolutionary tax' in the period 1993–1996, although he never gave the names of those blackmailed.<sup>97</sup> The extortions did not come into the public domain until the year 2000, when Bixente Lizarazu, a French Basque footballer, denounced ETA for sending him a letter demanding a financial contribution and a 'practical attitude in favour of Euskal Herria'. For ETA, Lizarazu, a French international, played for a state 'responsible for the oppression of Euskal Herria'.<sup>98</sup> As a French international, the armed group wrote, he had been rewarded 'with a considerable amount of money [...] robbed from Euskal Herria and Basque citizens'; therefore he should return all the wealth he had earned playing for France.<sup>99</sup> Lizarazu, a former Athletic de Bilbao footballer and a Bayern Munich player at the time of the extortion, did not give in to ETA demands and was assigned two French policemen for his protection.<sup>100</sup> According to his memoirs, Lizarazu never psychologically recovered from the strains of being an ETA target.<sup>101</sup>

Athletic and Real Sociedad had a peculiar relationship with radical nationalists. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, both clubs tolerated groups of radical *abertzale* supporters, such as Herri Norte at San Mamés and Peña Mujika at Atocha and later Anoeta, who regularly displayed pro-ETA-prisoners banners and occasionally paid tribute to *etarras* in their stadiums. In March 1999, for example, members of the Peña Mujika covered the scoreboard at Anoeta Stadium with a huge *ikurriña* and a black ribbon in homage to José Luís Geresta, a member of ETA found dead in strange circumstances. According to HB, Geresta had been killed by the Spanish security forces.<sup>102</sup> In some other cases, players took part in the tributes. On November 1984, Athletic and Real Sociedad players entered San Mamés carrying an *ikurriña* with a black ribbon to honour Santiago Brouard, a HB leader killed the previous day by the GAL.<sup>103</sup>

By contrast, victims of ETA were not treated in the same manner. When in 1998 the Spanish Football Federation proposed to hold a minute's

silence in all First Division stadiums following the murder of the PP city councillor Alberto Jiménez-Becerril and his wife in Seville, Athletic president, the PNV member Pedro Aurttenetxe, refused to do it at San Mamés, arguing that football and politics should not be mixed.<sup>104</sup> Nonetheless, a year later, Aurttenetxe organised a ceremony before a derby in which Athletic and Real Sociedad players entered San Mamés with an *ikurriña* to celebrate the Day of the Basque Fatherland (*Aberri Eguna*), a festivity commemorated by radical and moderate nationalists alike.<sup>105</sup> Real Sociedad directors also adopted an inconsistent approach to political violence. In 1993, they criticised the kidnap of the engineer and season-ticket holder Julio Iglesias Zamora and publicly demanded his release.<sup>106</sup> However, when a Real Sociedad season-ticket holder, Ernest Lluch, a former socialist minister of Health and Professor of Economics at the University of Barcelona, was shot in the head by an *etarra* in 2000 the Guipuzcoan club's board of directors did not condemn his murder.<sup>107</sup> As in many previous instances in the Basque Country, silence was preferred to a public disapproval of ETA terrorist attacks.

Athletic and Real Sociedad combined good relations with rocky moments in the 1980s and 1990s. Problems were mainly due to Athletic's penchant to play top dog in Euskadi and buy players from the Real Sociedad *cantera*. Yet both clubs contributed to the promotion of the Euskadi national football team and ceded their players and stadiums for the games of the *Euskal Selektzioa*. This was a project that united all sorts of Basque nationalists and was backed by the *Lehendakaritza*, Basque banks and building societies. After the matches during the transition to democracy, Euskadi did not play again until 1988, when they faced Tottenham Hotspur at San Mamés. From 1993, the team played one friendly each year. The games provided a good opportunity to perform Basque nationalist rituals, like the carrying of the *ikurriña* by the players and the singing of the *abertzale* anthems.<sup>108</sup> Matches were also used by radical nationalists to demand the release of ETA prisoners, independence for the Basque Country and official status for the Euskadi national team. At times, the games of the Euskadi national team were able to unite the various currents of Basque nationalism. On 22 December 1998, for instance, PNV and HB leaders shared the VIP box during the *Euskal Selektzioa* match against Uruguay in Anoeta.<sup>109</sup>

By the end of the 1990s the gap between Basque nationalist and the so-called constitutionalist parties (PSOE and PP) widened. On 11 June 1998, the Basque Parliament passed a sports bill establishing that Basque sporting federations were the only representatives of sportsmen in Euskadi. As such, Basque federations should foster the participation

of Basque national teams in international competitions. The bill was supported by all Basque nationalist parties and the post-communists of Izquierda Unida. PSOE and PP, together with the provincialist Unión Alavesa, opposed the new legislation. Moreover, the Spanish government referred the bill to the Constitutional Court, arguing that, by equating Basque to Spanish sports, the new legislation contravened the state's territorial organisation.<sup>110</sup> The sports bill also demonstrated to the PSOE that their coalition government with the PNV was unsustainable. On 30 June 1998, the Basque socialists announced the end of the PNV–PSOE government. Three months later all Basque nationalist forces, together with Izquierda Unida, signed the so-called Estella Pact, which declared the people of Euskal Herria a sovereign political community.

Sports and political divides of the 1980s and 1990s in many ways reflected the profound identity rifts between Basque nationalists and Basque constitutionalists. This identity divide was clearer in the public sphere, where the discursive and symbolic hegemony of Basque nationalism was unquestioned, than in private realms, where dual identities (Spanish and Basque) remained the majority choice among Basques. In 1982, 58 per cent of the inhabitants of the Basque Autonomous Community showed varying levels of identification with Spain, while 42 per cent considered themselves Basque only. By the end of the 1990s the percentage of those identifying exclusively with the Basque Country had dropped to 26 per cent and those showing varying levels of identification with Spain (from Spanish only, to equally Spanish and Basque, to more Basque than Spanish) rose to 63 per cent.<sup>111</sup> The steady growth of dual identities in the 1980s and 1990s showed that, despite political violence and conflicting processes of nationalisation, the main trend among Basques was towards identification with both the Spanish and the Basque political and cultural communities.

### **Football in twenty-first century Euskadi**

The PNV remained in power for most of the first decade of the twenty-first century. In 1999 Juan José Ibarretxe replaced Juan Antonio Ardanza as head of the Basque government, a post he was to retain for eleven years. In 2009, the socialist Patxi López reached an agreement with the PP to become the first non-PNV *Lehendakari* in the history of Euskadi.<sup>112</sup> In October 2012, the leader of the PNV, Iñigo Urkullu, won the regional elections, marking the return of conservative Basque nationalists to power. The decade of the 2000s was also characterised by ETA terrorist attacks. Violence was a topic that dominated Basque and Spanish politics, tore

Euskadi's social fabric and led to the ban of HB from running in elections by Spain's constitutional court for its association with the armed separatist group.<sup>113</sup> However, things changed significantly in October 2011, when ETA announced the end of its armed struggle. Understandably, ETA's decision to stop killing created big expectations in a territory that had suffered more than 40 years of relentless violence.

As in the 1980s and 1990s, in the twenty-first century Athletic de Bilbao's board remained a PNV-leaning group of directors.<sup>114</sup> Athletic continued its close relationship with the Biscay Provincial Government and the Basque Autonomous Government. Both institutions regularly funded Athletic de Bilbao and contributed to the construction of the club's education centre, a new training school and the new San Mamés stadium.<sup>115</sup> In fact, the Basque Government was the first agency to pay Athletic for shirt sponsorship. In the 2004–05 season, Athletic displayed the word 'Euskadi' on their kits when playing the UEFA Cup, as the result of an economic agreement between the club and the *Lehendakaritza* to promote the Basque Country in Europe. Once the team was knocked out of the competition in March 2005, the shirt went back to its original form. However, Athletic could not resist the monetary temptation for long and in 2008 the club reached a three-year, €6 million agreement to display the name of the petrol company Petronor on their shirts.<sup>116</sup>

Other changes came to Athletic with the new century. In 2001, the board of directors put the club's *cantera* philosophy on paper for the first time, as President Javier Uría published the so-called DENA Plan defining Bilbao policies and future strategies. The Plan highlighted that the priority was to sign from the *cantera* or from teams Athletic had an agreement with and, secondarily, to hire 'Basque players that come from other structures or clubs that have no agreements with Athletic'.<sup>117</sup> In this manner, the DENA Plan did not alter the traditional philosophy of Athletic: it defined those Basque by birth, but still allowed non-Basque players raised in other teams (or in Athletic's youth squads) to play for the club. Nowadays, Athletic defines its hiring policy as follows: 'Our sporting philosophy establishes that players allowed to play for Athletic are those raised in our *cantera* and those raised in clubs of Euskal Herria [...] together with male and female players born in any of its provinces.'<sup>118</sup> While the current text incorporated the term 'Euskal Herria', it does not modify the spirit of the policy. Again, Basques are defined in terms of birth and territory, but non-Basques can also play for Athletic, as long as they come from its own *cantera* or from other Basque clubs' youth teams.

The debate on whether Athletic de Bilbao should modify its hiring policy has been rekindled on a regular basis, especially when the club has flirted with relegation or paid exorbitant amounts of money for Basque players not raised in the *cantera*.<sup>119</sup> Unlike Real Sociedad, who resumed the signing of foreigners in 1989 and converted into a public limited company in the season 1991–92, Athletic has kept its hiring policy and remains a club owned by its members. In the new age of football, characterised by commodification and globalisation, Athletic has tended to reinvest the money it earns in the development of youth teams and retains the idea that local heroes, as representatives of the community, should make up the local team. In this sense, Athletic is a unique case in the world of post-modern football, a pocket of resistance in the new global order.<sup>120</sup> Other peculiarities of Athletic, such as having their own brand of sports gear and not displaying sponsor publicity on their shirts, have proven financially unsustainable and thus have been abandoned in recent years. Still, Athletic has remained the only institution capable of integrating all sorts of political views in Biscay, and its particular philosophy has gained the club supporters all over the world.<sup>121</sup> In 2012 there were 406 Athletic *peñas* registered, 252 of them (63 per cent) from outside the Basque Country, including in Madrid, Barcelona and Mexico City.<sup>122</sup>

The effects of globalisation have proven devastating for other Basque teams. Deportivo Alavés is a case in point. Following a very successful run that led the Vitoria team to play the final of the UEFA Cup in 2001, the club was relegated to the Second Division in 2003 and bought by Dmitri Piterman the next year. A US tycoon based in Spain, Piterman used Alavés for his own commercial benefit, multiplied the team's debts threefold, imposed himself as a 'shadow' manager and employed the club's museum to display his personal collection of Dalí reproductions. On top of this, Piterman broke off relations with the city government of Vitoria, the fans, who organised a local movement to have the American entrepreneur ousted, and the players – whom he did not pay on a regular basis.<sup>123</sup> In 2007, Piterman left Alavés and the club was put in administration.<sup>124</sup> His presidency of Alavés is illustrative of the conflicting relationships between external capital and local identity in post-modern football.

In the new millennium, ETA continued blackmailing Basque sportsmen. It targeted elite footballers and former sportsmen who had played for Spanish national teams.<sup>125</sup> The most notorious victims were Txiki Beguiristain and José Mari Bakero, both former Real Sociedad, Barcelona and *selección española* players. The case of Beguiristain reached surreal

heights when ETA's letter 'inviting' the former winger to pay them €6,000 per year resulted in a furious complaint by Lierni Armendaritz, an imprisoned ETA member and sister-in-law of Beguiristain. From jail in Soto de Real, Armendaritz wrote to her colleagues in the armed organisation that she found it outrageous that her brother-in-law was being blackmailed. She demanded ETA 'leave her family alone' and 'officially apologise to my mother and tell her that we are not heartless people'.<sup>126</sup> The extortion apparatus of the terrorist group was not impressed with her complaint and in May 2003, six months after the first petition, ETA sent another letter to Beguiristain in a more threatening tone. Yet again Lierni Armendaritz wrote to her colleagues explaining that the continuation of the blackmail had caused immense suffering to her mother. The terrorist angrily remarked that her family was not the enemy and Txiki Beguiristain should not be blackmailed.<sup>127</sup> Still, family was one thing and friends something completely different for the ETA member. After all, Lierni Armendaritz was in jail for taking part in the killing of Ernest Lluch in November 2000.<sup>128</sup> The professor of economics was a close associate of Txiki Beguiristain and had campaigned together with the Basque player to support Lluís Bassat's candidature for the presidency of Barça just a few months before he was murdered. It is highly unlikely that Armendaritz did not know that Beguiristain and Lluch were friends.

Victims of ETA gained more social prominence in the 2000s but Basque football clubs remained reluctant to 'mix' soccer and politics. In 2008, Athletic's board of directors, presided over by Fernando García Macua, tried to break the taboo of publicly criticising ETA's crimes and called on fans to observe one minute's silence at San Mamés. The gesture was organised to honour Isaías Carrasco, a former socialist town councillor shot in the head by an ETA gunman on 7 March 2008 in his home town of Mondragón. Players and most of the public observed the minute in silence, but a section of radical *abertzales* began to chant and whistle 16 seconds into the homage.<sup>129</sup> The episode typified Basque society, with a majority of citizens, moderate Basque nationalists or otherwise, opposed to political violence, and a significant minority who hailed ETA as 'soldiers' of the fatherland.

By contrast, moderate and radical nationalists joined forces in the fostering of the Basque national football team. The squad of Euskadi received funds from the Ibarretxe government and support from ESAIT (*Euskal Selektzioaren Aldeko Iritzi Taldea*), a platform for the official participation of Euskal Herria teams in international competitions, which was ideologically linked to HB. As we saw in Chapter 6, on 29 December

2007 the ministers of culture of Euskadi and Galicia, together with the Vice President of Catalonia, signed the so-called Declaration of San Mamés, upholding the right of the autonomic teams to take part in international contests.<sup>130</sup> Symbolically, the petition was presented prior to a Euskal Herria–Catalonia friendly match. The idea of Basque national teams taking part in international competitions garnered strong support in Euskadi. A Basque government survey in 2008 showed that up to 74 per cent of Basques backed the right of Euskadi national teams to participate in international competitions.<sup>131</sup> But soon, divisions among Basque nationalists hampered the development of the *Euskal Selektzioa*. Always sensitive to the symbolic aspects of nationalist claims, in 2008 the PNV demanded that the team drop its recently acquired name, 'Euskal Herria', and return to its original denomination 'Euskadi'. ESAIT insisted on the Basque national team being called Euskal Herria. This reflected a power struggle to take control of the squad, symbolised by the name chosen. Euskadi was the traditional name that the PNV used to refer to the Greater Basque Country, that is, the Basque Autonomous Community, Navarre and the three French Basque provinces, that is, all the Basque lands.<sup>132</sup> For the radical nationalists, on the other hand, Euskadi merely referred to the Basque Autonomous Community (Biscay, Guipúzcoa and Alava).<sup>133</sup>

Under pressure from the PNV, the Basque Football Federation decided to rename the squad Euskadi in November 2008. HB reacted by forming a new association, *Euskal Herriko Futbolariak* (Euskal Herria Footballers), which threatened to boycott the next game of the Basque national team should the name of the squad be Euskadi.<sup>134</sup> The Basque Football Federation refused to give in and the game against Iran, scheduled for December 2008, was never played.<sup>135</sup> In 2009, the rift continued, and the annual Christmas friendly was cancelled. In 2010, ESAIT declared that Basques were the victims of a pro-Spanish plot led by the PSOE-controlled Basque government, the PP and the Basque Football Federation.<sup>136</sup> According to them, there were Spaniards who 'hated everything Basque' who acted against the Basque national team.<sup>137</sup> Although the issue was mainly a HB versus PNV conflict, the spectre of the Basque national 'other' (here in the shape of the non-Basque nationalist Basque, therefore traitor to his people, and hence a 'Spaniard') became useful. Nevertheless, *Euskal Herriko Futbolariak* reached an agreement with the Basque Football Federation to name the squad *Euskal Selektzioa* (Basque *selección*) and the annual games resumed in 2010.<sup>138</sup> Ever since, the *Euskal Selektzioa* have played friendlies where Basque players show banners demanding official status for the squad.<sup>139</sup>

However, as in the case of Catalan national teams, both the PSOE and the PP have voted in the Spanish parliament against proposals to grant official status to the *Euskal Selekzioa*.<sup>140</sup> Again like the Catalan case, at a judicial level the situation seems to be at a stalemate. In April 2012, the Spanish Constitutional Court rejected the Spanish government's appeal against the 1998 Bill of Basque Sports and ruled that Euskadi squads could compete internationally.<sup>141</sup> However, the Court also specified that Basque national teams could not compete in those sports where there was a Spanish federation, in effect preventing the participation of the *Euskal Selekzioa* in international competitions.

During the presidency of Patxi López (2009–2012), the socialists sought the international representation of Euskadi national teams but, in the words of the Basque minister for sports to ETB, 'always within the legal framework'.<sup>142</sup> In practice, this meant that the Basque government kept on funding national teams but did little to help them compete internationally. In November 2009, the PSOE invited the Spanish national football team to play in Euskadi.<sup>143</sup> The *selección* had not played in the Basque Country since 1967, and PSOE, PP and the anti-regional nationalist party *Unión Progreso y Democracia* (UPyD), considered that having *la Roja* playing in Euskadi would constitute a step towards the 'political normalisation' of the territory.<sup>144</sup> The same day, the Basque parliament invited the Tour of Spain to pass through Euskadi after a 31-year absence, which did take place in September 2011.<sup>145</sup> Along the same lines, the Basque government helped with the organisation of the *Copa del Rey* basketball finals in Bilbao in February 2010 and, six months later, hosted a friendly with the basketball *selección española* in Vitoria.<sup>146</sup> Besides all this, the socialist *Lehendakaritza* included the word 'Spain' on the shorts of the professional cycling team *Euskaltel Euskadi*, a team sponsored by the Basque government.<sup>147</sup>

The process of 'normalisation' of Euskadi was criticised by Basque nationalists of all hues. The day the basketball *selección española* played in Vitoria, ESAIT organised a demonstration, drawing 2,000 people, to protest against the 'imposition' of Spanish teams upon Euskal Herria.<sup>148</sup> Martxel Toledo, the leader of ESAIT, remarked that the 'normality' that the Patxi López government sought to promote by inviting Spanish national teams 'did not exist' in the Basque Country.<sup>149</sup> *Gara*, the media outlet of HB, depicted the policies of the Basque government as merely an attempt to 'Spanishise' (*españolizar*) Euskal Herria.<sup>150</sup> Likewise, the nationalists of Eusko Alkartasuna accused the Basque parliament of using sport as 'a tool of political indoctrination' and declared that PSOE and PP were 'wasting their time trying to prove that Euskadi is Spain'.<sup>151</sup>

Not all manifestations of Spanish identity were related to from-above measures taken by the Patxi López government. In 2008, 2010 and 2012, popular celebrations of *la Roja's* titles in Basque cities and towns were an unambiguous expression of Spanish identity from below.<sup>152</sup> Thousands of revellers chanting 'I am Spanish, Spanish, Spanish' and waving red and yellow flags were truly unusual scenes in the streets of the Basque Country, where political violence and anti-state social attitudes had turned public expressions of Spanishness into a 'no-go zone'. In a territory where Basque nationalist symbols had a total supremacy (with the exception of some public buildings where the Spanish flag accompanied the *ikurriña* and the European emblem), Spanish identities became 'forbidden identities' in Euskadi. For years, expressions of Spanishness were relegated to the private sphere, the secure space of one's home or the close circle of friends and relatives. Repressing one's identification with the Spanish national football team in the public sphere (such as in bars, in the streets and at work) became the norm in Euskadi. The phenomenon was so widespread that it was reflected in popular culture. For instance, in 2008, the well-loved ETB comedy programme '*Vaya semanita*' produced a sketch entitled 'I turned into a Spaniard' that showed a young Basque telling his parents that he loved *la Roja*, the Spanish basketball team and Rafael Nadal. Pain and disbelief at having his son come out of the 'national identity closet' gave the youngster's father a heart attack.<sup>153</sup> The punk band *Lendakaris Muertos*, in their hit 'Gora España', also joked about the anguish of feeling Basque and still supporting the Spanish *selección*. Following Spain's victory in the 2010 World Cup, the journalist Javier González Mellado equated suppressing public identification with *la Roja* to suffering from haemorrhoids: it was a torment that people endured in silence.<sup>154</sup>

The street celebrations of *la Roja's* titles took many by surprise in the Basque Country. Yet in the new millennium, dual identities, Basque and Spanish, have remained the majority option in Euskadi, according to opinion polls.<sup>155</sup> Besides, TV ratings have shown that the *selección española* were widely followed in the Basque Country even before the successful period of 2008–2012.<sup>156</sup> The 2010 World Cup final was followed by over 70 per cent of the Basque audience and the Spain vs. Portugal Euro 2012 semi-final reached 72 per cent.<sup>157</sup> These figures achieve full relevance when compared to the 52 per cent of the Basque audience reached by the 2012 Athletic de Bilbao vs. Barcelona *Copa del Rey* final and the 63 per cent reached by the 2012 Athletic de Bilbao vs. Atlético de Madrid Europa League final.<sup>158</sup> The pro-Spanish revelling in the streets of Bilbao, San Sebastian and Vitoria can be interpreted

as an expression of co-existing loyalties (Spanish and Basque) which are not necessarily contradictory. In a similar to Basque nationalists under Franco, these Spanish patriots forged their identities in a clandestine manner. Prior to the football celebrations for *la Roja*, the private sphere was the only space where counter-hegemonic national symbols could be safely exhibited in the Basque Country. Before the 2008 and 2012 Euros and the 2010 World Cup began, would-be revellers bought Spanish flags, *selección española* kits and scarves, probably when on holidays outside the Basque Country or in small Chinese shops when in Euskadi, and furtively took them home.<sup>159</sup> It was only at the very end of the competitions, mainly after the finals were won, that this symbolic repertoire was taken to the public sphere. Interestingly, those celebrating in the streets of Euskadi were, in the main, youngsters and teenagers born after the death of Franco and educated in the PNV-controlled Basque Autonomous Community. Their expressions of a Spanish national identity not only confronted the fear created by political violence in Euskadi, but also questioned the impact of the nationalisation process implemented by the Basque government over the previous 30 years.<sup>160</sup>

Basque nationalists disliked these displays of Spanish national identities relating to football. Radical *abertzales* physically attacked and verbally abused supporters of Spain who revelled in the streets of San Sebastian, Bilbao, Getxo, Barakaldo, Zarautz, Beasain and Pamplona in the 2010 and 2012 celebrations.<sup>161</sup> A notable PNV figure, Iñaki Anasagasti, minimised the number of Basques celebrating the *selección* triumphs and played down the significance of the pro-Spanish displays.<sup>162</sup> More sophisticated analyses understood that displays of Spanish national identity in the streets and in the Spanish media were related to a wider revival of Spanish pride that implied a critique of Basque nationalism. An editorial of *Deia* complained that 'the furious exaltation' of 'rancid Spanish nationalism' had gone 'beyond the limits of reason' during the 2010 World Cup.<sup>163</sup> Contrary to the discourse of the majority of the Spanish media analysed in Chapter 5, the Bilbao daily denied that *la Roja* could be a mechanism of integration of Basques and Catalans into a common Spanish identity, precisely because many in Euskadi and Catalonia saw Spain as an oppressive state that denied them the right to play in international competitions.<sup>164</sup> For Juanjo Alvarez, Professor of Law at the University of the Basque Country, Spanish patriotism presented itself as 'modern', while accusing 'Basque nationalism of being exclusive, reactionary, out-of-time and ultraconservative'. However, under the 'lure of modernity', Alvarez warned, lay the old 'centralist

and statist' Spanish nationalism that imposes its will over those who think differently.<sup>165</sup>

For all the undeniable importance of the popular celebrations of *la Roja's* victories in Euskadi, their relevance should not be overstated. The numbers of participants in the streets of the Basque Country were lower than in other Spanish territories, and TV ratings for the *selección española* in Euskadi, high as they were, were the lowest of all autonomous communities.<sup>166</sup> These figures were partially due to the fact that identification with Spain in Euskadi usually ranks the lowest in the country and approximately 33 per cent of Basques consider their national identity as a mono-identity incompatible with Spain.<sup>167</sup> Besides, as we saw in Chapter 6, Barça and Athletic de Bilbao fans' tremendous booing of the royals and the Spanish national anthem at the 2009 and 2012 *Copa del Rey* football finals, together with the jeering of King Juan Carlos I at the 2010 and 2013 *Copa del Rey* basketball finals played in Bilbao and Vitoria respectively, illustrates that many Basques feel an open animosity towards formal Spanish national symbols, such as the crown and the anthem.<sup>168</sup> The Basque Country remains a highly politicised, hyper-sensitive territory when it comes to national symbolism. Choices of clothes, friends, newspapers, bars and restaurants are construed as a marker of political ideology and national identity.<sup>169</sup> In this identity-saturated context, it almost goes without saying that banal nationalism à la Michael Billig cannot be effective in inculcating Spanish national identities in the Basque Country.

Things have nonetheless changed in recent times. In October 2011, ETA renounced the armed struggle, bringing more than four decades of political violence to an end. ETA's farewell to arms turned the October 2012 regional elections into an exceptional event, as many Basques could, for the first time since the return of democracy to Spain in the late 1970s, vote without the threat of ETA terrorism hanging over them. The polls brought the PNV back to power, following three years of PSOE government in the Basque Autonomous Community. The separatist coalition EH Bildu, bringing together members of ETA's political wing and peaceful pro-independence parties, came second with an unprecedented 25 per cent of the vote, reaping a peace dividend – a situation similar to Sinn Féin's rise following the IRA's permanent ceasefire in Northern Ireland. Iñigo Urkullu, the new *Lehendakari*, has made clear that he does not list an independent Basque Country among his priorities. Still, the eventual scenario of a deeper economic crisis in Euskadi could lead Urkullu to opt for an independent Basque Country, much in the same manner as right-wing Catalan nationalists did in 2012.

In the past three decades football has been an important device for the transmission of national identities in Euskadi. Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad recreated Basque and provincial identities and contributed to the hegemonic status of Basque nationalist symbolism in Euskadi. Besides, the *Euskal Selekzioa* has been an important medium of Basque nationalist expression, although disputes over the name of the team have also laid bare divisions between radical and moderate *abertzales*. In this context, Spanish identities were driven 'underground', into the private sphere. The 2008, 2010 and 2012 celebrations by young Basques of the *selección española* victories were exceptional precisely because they took place in a society dominated by *abertzales'* narratives and symbolism. The end of ETA's violence could eventually help to 'normalise' these public expressions of Spanish patriotism in Euskadi. After all, 64 per cent of Basques declare an identification with Spain.<sup>170</sup> However, low-intensity violence, physical attacks and verbal threats to those expressing Spanish identities in public have continued after ETA declared the end of its armed struggle, and Basque nationalist symbolism is likely to remain hegemonic in coming years. Nevertheless, transmission of Spanish national identities in Euskadi is expected to continue via state-wide TV channels, radio stations, press and some Basque newspapers and webpages. With an increasingly 'sportified' media and a highly politicised society, football clubs and Basque and Spanish national teams will most likely remain key weapons in the long battle between national identities in Euskadi.

# Conclusion

## Don Quixote Scavenges for Food

‘The Spain Brand is the father of a family scavenging in dustbins’

(Riot Propaganda)<sup>1</sup>

On 24 September 2012, the *New York Times* published a report entitled ‘Spain Recoils as Its Hungry Forage Trash Bins for a Next Meal’. The piece was accompanied by a front-page picture of a man, incidentally in a Barça T-shirt, searching a dumpster. ‘So pervasive is the problem of scavenging that one Spanish city has resorted to installing locks on supermarket trash bins as a public health precaution,’ reported Suzanne Daily.<sup>2</sup> The article painted a grim, although accurate, picture of Spain, a country with a 25 per cent unemployment rate, 22 per cent households living in poverty and over a million hungry people forced to use soup kitchens and forage the day’s refuse for food. The *New York Times* linked Spain’s dire straits to the austerity measures imposed to meet budget targets that had resulted in ‘cutting jobs, salaries, pensions and benefits, even as the economy continues to shrink’. Making life much harder for those on the edge, the central government had raised value-added tax by three percentage points, while the regional governments were ‘chipping away at a range of previously free services, including school lunches for low-income families’.<sup>3</sup> The timing of the publication was also telling, as on the same day that Suzanne Daily’s report came out, King Juan Carlos I paid a visit to the *New York Times* headquarters. Somewhat ironically, the goal of the royal visit was to promote the Spain Brand (*Marca España*) and to explain to American journalists the real situation in the Iberian country.

Some Spanish media reacted angrily to the *New York Times* piece. The afternoon news on the TV channel *Cuatro* labelled it ‘biased and

manipulative'.<sup>4</sup> The *TVE* nine o'clock news reported that Juan Carlos considered that the *New York Times* gave an 'inaccurate' and 'too pessimistic image of Spain'.<sup>5</sup> The conservative *ABC* tried to hit back by publishing an article entitled 'USA recoils as its hungry forage trash bins for a next meal?', which denounced the 'progressive' *New York Times* for concealing that 15 per cent of American people lived in poverty.<sup>6</sup> According to *ABC* this and other articles published on Spain's economic crisis by the BBC and the British press were just part of a malicious campaign driven by the Anglo-Saxon media.<sup>7</sup> Britons and Americans knew little about Spain and had constructed a false image of Spain based on stereotypes of laziness and low productivity. On these bogus premises, it was argued that the British and US media blamed Southern European countries, and especially Spain, for the economic crisis in the European Union. For *ABC*, what lay behind these attacks on Spain was, in fact, an attempt by Anglo-Saxon markets to destabilise the Eurozone. The definitive proof of this was that financial webpages, blogs and newspapers had intensively reported on the bailout of the Spanish banking system and the bankruptcy of autonomous communities but ignored 'good news such as Spain's victory in Euro 2012'.<sup>8</sup>

The response of the Spanish conservative press was a textbook case of nationalistic reaction to foreign criticism. It accused the national 'other' of being ignorant for using stereotypes and identified ulterior foreign motives aimed at undermining the nation's reputation. The response was so virulent because the picture that emerged from the national other's gaze, in this case from the British and US media, profoundly challenged the image that many Spaniards had of themselves. The self-depiction of Spain as modern, relatively rich and similar to the most advanced European countries clashed with a hetero-representation of a nation of hungry, lazy and unproductive people. Alongside the views from abroad, some Spanish authors and the mass media recently questioned the 'narrative of success' associated with the Spanish nation that had dominated the country since the early 2000s.<sup>9</sup> Against the backdrop of a brutal economic crisis and widespread political corruption, these new analyses have depicted Spain as a morally bankrupt country controlled by financial and political elites who relentlessly plunder public wealth and keep the masses entertained with football and patriotic discourses. The words of Juan Torres López, Professor of Economics at the University of Seville, epitomise this opinion: 'Poor Spanish people, so silent and obedient. They quiver with patriotism when *la Roja* wins but fall silent when robbed by a foreign power or betrayed and lied to by their own government.'<sup>10</sup>

As this book has shown, football reporting has played a crucial role in the formation and propagation of national narratives about Spain, both at home and abroad. The 'narrative of success' that is being currently and comprehensively challenged was itself a 1990s creation that eventually replaced the long-lasting 'fury and failure narrative'. Emerging at the beginning of the twentieth century out of a dialogue between foreign and Spanish representations of Spain, the 'fury and failure narrative' portrayed Spanish footballers, and by extension all Spaniards, as passionate, brave, courageous, noble, quixotic figures who, nevertheless, seldom fulfilled their potential due to misfortune and foreign bias. Profusely used by the Franco dictatorship, the fury and failure narrative declined in the 1980s and 1990s. As the country modernised and a democratic regime was consolidated, the association of Spaniards with passion, fury and courage was rendered gradually obsolete, even though the repeated underperformances of the *selección española* kept the failure part of the narrative alive. It was only in the first decade of the twenty-first century that the 'success narrative' that represented Spain as a modern, 'normal' European country became hegemonic in Spanish society. From this perspective, the *selección española's* victory in Euro 2008 confirmed the death of the individualistic and passionate Don Quixote and certified the birth of a new modern and rational Spaniard who was able to collaborate for the national good. The success of *la Roja* continued with the triumphs at the 2010 World Cup and Euro 2012, resulting in the consolidation of the 'narrative of success' and the growth of Spanish national pride to unprecedented levels. Paradoxically, these phenomena occurred as the economic crisis deepened, which paved the way for counter-national narratives that questioned the modernity of the nation and denounced the placebo effect of football victories and patriotism-related celebrations on increasingly impoverished Spaniards.

The nature of national narratives relating to football and their social impact are determined by the historical context in which they operate. More precisely, national football narratives depend on three interwoven components, namely, the political regime, the mass media and the society in which the discourses are elaborated and reproduced. In the case of Spain, we have seen how the political system went from a dictatorship that controlled the mass media and used censorship indiscriminately to a parliamentary monarchy that gradually removed censorship and allowed free press – even though both central and regional authorities have demonstrated a great penchant for influencing public and private media. Politically, the democratic regime also led to further state, regional and municipal investment in sport. On top of this,

changes in social attitudes and economic growth led to a continuous rise in the number of citizens playing football, especially in the period 1975–2000. Investment and popular interest in the sport made the public's reception of national football narratives easier, as football became central to the lives of many Spaniards.

Yet it was the transformation of the mass media which most dramatically enhanced the social presence of football and facilitated the grounding of national identities. Firstly, in the past five decades Spanish mass media have become more and more 'sportified'; that is, they increasingly incorporate sports, mostly football, into their pages, radio broadcasts, TV programmes and webpages. Secondly, as we have seen throughout the book, the mass media have had a 'cumulative effect' on transmitting football narratives and, therefore, on creating national identities. At the beginning of the twentieth century, football narratives were 'experienced' by the Spanish public exclusively via newspapers and magazines. From the late 1920s, radio broadcasts added to the manner in which individuals could experience the collective identity associated with a given football team. From the 1940s, the newsreels of NO-DO allowed for the 're-experience' of a particular match months after the game had been played and, from the late 1950s, television fostered the 'cumulative media effect' even further. Live TV coverage provided a new way to promote national narratives and football highlights allowed the retelling of a particular match in living rooms and bars all over the country. The development of terrestrial and satellite private channels in the 1980s and 1990s hastened the 'sportisation' of the media, which in turn intensified the impact of football narratives on spectators. In the past decade, football broadcasts have mushroomed on Spanish TV channels and football matches recurrently top the most-viewed programmes table. The internet has also furthered the cumulative media effect to an unprecedented level. At present, individuals can access multiple newspapers, radios, televisions and social networks, so they can read about, listen to and see footage of a particular match from innumerable sources with no time restriction. On top of this, the web provides live football and videos of old games. New media technically enables a potential 24/7 exposure to national soccer narratives, a never-ending experience of football and nation.

The 'sportisation' and the 'cumulative effect' of the media were crucial in the propagation of a Spanish national identity that was more solidly grounded than is sometimes acknowledged. True, the Francoist idea of Spain had suffered a serious crisis of legitimacy by the end of the dictatorship. And yet many Spaniards identified with the *selección* and with Spanish clubs playing in international competitions, regardless

of the blunt political utilisation that Francoism made of them. Following the death of the dictator, the reconstruction of Spain was relatively unproblematic in the cultural realm. Football remained the most popular pastime in the country and acted as a key tool in the process of national cultural renovation. The 1970s and 1980s witnessed the growth in sponsors and TV money and an increasing commodification of football, which included the mass production of soccer-related merchandising products. The 1982 World Cup was the paradigmatic example of this process of football commodification in Spain. It combined the biggest audience in the history of television, an unprecedented number of sponsors and an immense commercialisation of merchandising. Crucially, the commodification of football meant that the mechanisms of informal nationalisation hastened in their impact, as the nation was increasingly commercialised in the shape of football merchandising. Purchasing 'nationalised' football merchandise (that is, goods with national symbols on them) meant that individuals incorporated the Spanish nation into their daily lives. Buying a T-shirt, a mug or a football mascot with the Mundial 82 logo resulted in millions of citizens bringing into their lives, and quite literally into their homes, objects that symbolised the Spanish nation.

In the 1990s, the collapse of the Soviet Union brought about further economic liberalisation and stimulated aggressive individualism and self-interest all over the planet. At the same time, and somewhat paradoxically, the post-Cold War world saw the re-emergence of both state and stateless nationalist movements, which were often to use sport to channel their reaffirmation of a common nationhood. In Spain, the re-elaboration of the discourse about the nation was carried out in the context of modernisation and Europeanisation. International victories by Spanish athletes and football clubs were portrayed as the proof of progress. Even lack of success did not prevent identification with the nation. The relentless 'failure narrative' constructed around the underachievement of the *selección española* nevertheless showed Spaniards' strong emotional link with a team that tended to unite citizens in pain rather than joy. Opinion polls, match attendance figures and media coverage all suggest that support for the *selección* was widespread and on the rise in the 1990s. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, football continued to facilitate the process of reclaiming the nation-state and the 'normalisation' of patriotic expressions. Like other countries with a 'difficult' fascist past, such as Germany and Portugal, football became the medium for reclaiming a national identity previously tainted with a dictatorial legacy, as thousands of fans, waving

Spanish flags and wearing red shirts, gathered in squares all over Spain. The new expressions of Spanish football patriotism were presented as separate from political connotations, as purely cultural manifestations of love for the fatherland. Nevertheless, it seems unquestionable that such displays of national symbolism at the very least implied the passive acceptance of the constitutional monarchy and some degree of acquiescence in the political status quo.

The unprecedented growth of both patriotic narratives associated with existing nation-states and popular demonstrations of nationalist pride related to football in the past two decades seem to indicate that the processes of globalisation do not accelerate the demise of the nation-state. On the contrary, the increasing impact of international football competitions, the 'cumulative media effect', and the attempt of political and media elites to build a strong nation-state identity via football narratives to reinforce their legitimacy suggests that national identities have been strengthened in the era of post-modern football. This is not to say, however, that football identities are monolithic. As this book has insisted repeatedly, Spaniards have developed multiple identities through football. More to the point, dual identities (individuals' identification with both region and nation) can be traced back to 1920s football and, in different shapes and forms, can be found during the Second Republic and the Franco dictatorship. In the current democratic period, dual identities have been the norm, as the vast majority of citizens identify with both Spain and their autonomous community.

Dual identities have also been the main option for the populations of Catalonia and the Basque Country. However, high levels of dual patriotism notwithstanding, these autonomous communities have been territories marked by identity confrontation, where regional and Spanish nationalisms have fought for political and cultural hegemony. In this context of long-lasting conflicts, football has remained a key conduit for elaborating, transmitting and recreating both Spanish and stateless national identities. The Catalanist connotations of FC Barcelona were highlighted during the transition years and the club has certainly contributed to the promotion of Catalan nationalist narratives and symbolic repertoires in the autonomous community. Nevertheless, *Barça* has also been used as a device of integration for Spanish immigrants and been claimed, and acclaimed, by non-Catalanist supporters in and outside of Catalonia. Athletic de Bilbao and Real Sociedad also contributed to the hegemonic position achieved by Basque nationalist discourses and symbolism in Euskadi. Yet Basque clubs also recreated and transmitted opposing provincial identities while gathering supporters

from very different political and identity backgrounds – Basque nationalists and non-Basque nationalists alike.

The representation of Spain by national ‘others’ has been a central theme of this book. In the case of Catalan and Basque nationalists, Spain has frequently been typified in football reporting as backward, unsophisticated, centralist and militaristic. These representations strengthened a narrative that portrayed Spain as having an intrinsically authoritarian nature which led her to oppress different peoples, regardless of the political regime in place. From this perspective, some Catalan and Basque nationalists have concluded that the character of the national ‘other’, that is, Spain, is fixed and unchangeable; consequently, the only sensible option is secession. The foreign media representation of Spain has also been heavily based on negative stereotypes. Spaniards were more often described as backward, corrupt, authoritarian, lazy and chaotic than as friendly, passionate, hardworking, modern and well-organised. There is a simple reason for this: the representation of Spain abroad did not seek an understanding of the ‘national other’ but rather used it as a counterpoint for reaffirming positive stereotypes at home. Thus, the French representation of Spanish football fans as choleric, uncivilised, feral creatures underscored the positive self-perception of Gallic civilisation. The British press’s emphasis on Spain’s underachievement played a self-healing role, as it partially concealed or diverted attention from England’s own underperformance in international tournaments. The German portrayal of Spanish footballers as brutal, undisciplined, backward and irrational strengthened the stereotype of the Teutonic national as civilised, disciplined, modern and rational. The patronising tone of the Italian media when dealing with Spanish footballing failures communicated an undeniable sense of superiority. Stereotyping helps individuals and national groups to feel better by accentuating positive self-evaluation through invidious comparison with a national ‘other’.

The representations of Spain abroad have nonetheless changed over time. As the country modernised and grew economically and the *selección española* became one of the best and most-admired teams in the history of football, some of the old clichés were revised. Spaniards came to be depicted as sophisticated, advanced, tenacious and self-confident, with a great capacity for success. The stereotype of mental feebleness and laziness faded away and Spaniards came to be dubbed the ‘Germans of the South’. According to the foreign media, by winning major tournaments with organisation, skill and technical excellence Spaniards were acting in an ‘un-Spanish’ manner. The media then decided that it was

easier to 'grant' Spaniards a different nationality (German in this case) than to reconsider the validity of the stereotypes traditionally associated with the Iberians. This case is highly illustrative of the limited scope there is for transforming stereotypes about the national 'other'. Still, stereotypes could vary. For years, the British press were very fond of the idea that Spain's regional diversity somehow affected the results of the *selección* in a negative manner. From 2008 onwards, the idea of Spain's regional diversity remained a central part of the analysis, but it began to be presented as a positive element for the squad. Diversity became a great advantage when the right balance between Castilians, Catalans and Basques was struck. The cliché remained but its meaning was turned upside-down.

But, despite footballing victories and excellent results in international competitions in a wide range of other sports, the economic crisis has seriously worsened the image of Spain abroad. With recession, the old derogatory myths, prejudices and stereotypes have re-emerged with a vengeance. Nowadays, Don Quixote is scavenging for food in rubbish bins. Save for football, Spaniards are again being presented by the European (and American) media as lazy, unorganised, irrational and, more recently, impoverished. The resurgence of these negative stereotypes is testament to the endurance of nationalist and xenophobic currents in European society.

The football media constantly play the identity card and, subsequently, reinforce rather than challenge notions of national identity. The prolific use of national stereotypes in football reporting has intrinsic conservative connotations. Stereotypes strengthen the idea that national identities are immutable and promote the myth of the existence of quintessential national features. This is based on a self-fulfilling prophecy: footballers from a particular country did, do and will play in a particular manner because it is in their national identity to do so. In the last analysis, the use and abuse of stereotypes fosters circular arguments and hampers critical thinking. The central role played by stereotypes in the definition of national identities is unlikely to change in the near future. Like national myths, stereotypes simplify reality, tend to represent one's nation as superior to others', thus fostering a feel-good factor, and often help in the use of foreigners as scapegoats. In a time of economic and political crisis, in an era with an overflow of manipulated information, the use of stereotypes and myths is an attempt to hold to what is familiar in an increasingly disorderly environment. Yet the price for entering these comfort zones of ready-made certainties is the limitation of our ability to think critically about football, national identities or anything else.

# Notes

## 1 Football, National Narratives and the Cumulative Media Effect

1. Hobsbawm (1990), p. 143.
2. *ABC*, 22-6-2000; *El Mundo Deportivo*, 22-6-2000.
3. *ABC*, 22-6-2000.
4. *ABC*, 26-6-2000; *El Mundo Deportivo* 26-6-2000.
5. *ABC*, 26-6-2000.
6. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 26-6-2000.
7. *ABC*, 26-6-2000.
8. The idea of nation as narration have nevertheless been analysed from different academic perspectives. The pioneering works of Kedourie (1960) concentrated on the writings of intellectuals that sought to create national identities. In a similar line, Benedict Anderson (1991) emphasised language and narratives in the artificial historical creation of nations by elites. Homi K. Bhabha (1990) took a literary approach to highlight the complexities of nation-building and the impossibility of creating a coherent national identity; while Partha Chatterjee (1986) used post-colonial theory to show that the conceptualization of the nation is challenged by the presence of different narratives about cultural traditions, gender and ethnic identities which precludes the full realization of nations. In recent years Stefan Berger (2009) has taken historical approaches to analyse the construction of master narratives and myths in nation-building; see also Kramer (1997).
9. Berger (2007).
10. Berger, 'Introduction', in Berger et al. (2011) pp. 1–16; Storm (2009).
11. Paletschek (2011), pp. 3–5.
12. For the case of Spain see Domínguez Almansa (2011); McFarland (2008); Bahamonde (2011). There are more European cases in Holt (1992); Arnaud (1987); Porro (1995).
13. Marschik (2001).
14. Duke and Crolley (1996), pp. 4–5; Anderson (1991), p. 6.
15. Hobsbawm (1990), p. 143.
16. Crolley and Hand (2002), pp. 6, 9. See, for example, the 'Austrification' of football in Horak and Spitaler (2003). The naturalization of Basque football in MacClancy (1996), p. 10; Alabarces (2008), p. 37.
17. Walton (2001b).
18. Özkirimli (2005), pp. 49–50; Confino and Sakaria (2002), pp. 9–10; Applegate (1999); Storm (2003); Petri (2006). For the Spanish case see: Archilés (2004); Martí and Romero (2006); Duarte (2006); Castells (2011).
19. McFarland (2011).
20. Shaw (1987); Duke and Crolley (1996).
21. Caspistegui and Walton (2001); Walton (2011); Uría (2008). Pujadas (2011, 2007b).

22. McFarland (2004, 2007, 2008a, 2011).
23. MacClancy (1996b).
24. Castañón Rodríguez (1993).
25. Crolley and Hand (2002, 2006).
26. Against the realist school of discourse analysis, that understands the media discourse as the representation of social attitudes, the post-structuralist school argues that the discourses of the media both reproduce and create identities. See Boyle and O'Donnell (1993), Chapter 1.
27. Hand and Crolley (2005), p. 299.
28. Beller and Leersen (2007), 'Foreword', p. xiv.
29. Ibid.
30. Spain has also played a key role as 'the Other' in Dutch and Portuguese nation-building. However, we do not include these cases in our analysis, for the Netherlands and Portugal have not had a prominent role as the Spanish Other.
31. Billig (1995), pp. 175–176.
32. In *The Prison Notebooks* (Gramsci 1992).
33. Graham and Labanyi (1995), 'Introduction', p. 4.
34. León Solís (2003), p. 8.
35. Shobe (2008), p. 8.
36. Alabarces (2008), p. 27.
37. Sampedro Blanco (2003), p. 10.
38. Tranche and Sánchez Biosca (2000).
39. Fernández Santander (1990), pp. 14, 242.
40. Crolley and Hand (2002), p. 3.
41. Bodin (2011).
42. López López (2011), pp. 431–432.
43. Crolley (2008); Eriksen (2007).
44. Llopis Goig (2009a), pp. 9–10.
45. Hutchinson and Guibernau (2001).
46. Billig (1995), pp. 8, 176.
47. Rowe (2003); Lechner (2007).
48. Rowe et al. (2002). Crolley and Hand (2002), pp. 10–11; Tomlinson and Christopher (2006), pp. 2–6; Miller et al. (2001), pp. 31–32.
49. Giulianotti and Robertson (2009), p. xiv.
50. Andrews and Ritzer (2007), p. 137.
51. Ibid.

## 2 Invention and Propagation of the Fury and Failure Narrative (1920–1975)

1. Handicap, *Madrid-Sport*, 16-9-1920.
2. *ABC*, 11-7-1975.
3. *ABC*, 11-7-1975.
4. *ABC*, 4-12-1975.
5. Betriu comments at: [www.ojosdepapel.com/Article.aspx?article=1465](http://www.ojosdepapel.com/Article.aspx?article=1465) [accessed 21 August 2011].
6. *Dirigido por* (1975), pp. 36–37.

7. Following the victory of Spain over Holland, the French newspaper published that despite its 'scientific' style, the Dutch team had been 'outflanked by the Spanish enthusiasm' (*debordé par la fougue espagnole*), *L'Auto*, 6-9-1920, p. 3.
8. Martialay (2000), pp. 287–288.
9. Ucelay Da-Cal (1999).
10. Balfour and Quiroga (2007), p. 165; Shelmerdine (2006); Fernández-Montesinos (2009).
11. The expression Spanish fury was, albeit infrequently, used to refer to the events in late-sixteenth-century Belgium and the alleged intransigence of Spaniards before 1920. For example, in *ABC*, 26-9-1910 and 22-6-1919.
12. *Madrid-Sport*, 16-9-1920.
13. *Ibid.*
14. de Salazar (1996), pp. 24–25.
15. In the years immediately after the Antwerp Olympics, the Spanish press did not often use the term fury to describe the playing style of the national team. There are some mentions, nonetheless, in *El Mundo Deportivo*, 3-4-1922; 16-9-1922; 9-9-1923.
16. Some advertisements for the book in *ABC*, 2-4-1924 and 6-4-1924. *Furia española* is also in the list of recently published books in *ABC*, 2-4-1924.
17. *Deportista* (1924), pp. 16, 20.
18. *Furia española*, n. 1, 1929.
19. For instance, *La Vanguardia*, 20-3-1924; *El Mundo Deportivo*, 21-12-1924; 22-11-1924; *Madrid-Sport*, 3-1-1924; *ABC*, 19-04-1927.
20. *La Vanguardia*, 24-12-1924.
21. *Blanco y Negro*, 24-5-1925. Along similar lines, *El Mundo Deportivo*, 21-12-1924; 18-5-1925; 5-6-1925; 27-9-1925.
22. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 16-5-1929; *La Nación* 16-5-1929.
23. *Nuevo Mundo*, Sergio Valdés, n. 2041, 28-4-1933.
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Madrid-Sport*, 9-9-1920.
26. *Ibid.*
27. *Madrid-Sport*, 16-9-1920.
28. *Madrid-Sport*, 9-9-1920.
29. *La Vanguardia*, 27-5-1924.
30. *La Vanguardia*, 27-5-1924.
31. *ABC*, 2-6-1924.
32. Ball (2001).
33. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 3-6-1928.
34. *La Vanguardia*, 5-6-1928.
35. *La Vanguardia*, 5-6-1928; *El Mundo Deportivo*, 6-6-1928.
36. *La Vanguardia*, 5-6-1928.
37. Álvarez Junco (2001), pp. 567–584.
38. Goode (2009).
39. Núñez Florencio (2010).
40. Álvarez Junco (2001), p. 258.
41. Quiroga (2007), p. 172.
42. *La Nación* 16-5-1929.
43. *El Debate*, 16-5-1929; *La Nación* 16-5-1929.

44. Uría (2008), pp. 141–143.
45. Martin (2004).
46. *El Debate*, 31-5-1934; 1-6-1934.
47. *El Socialista*, 2-6-1934.
48. *El Socialista*, 1-6-1934.
49. *El Debate*, 1-6-1934; 2-6-1934. For a similar line see *ABC*, 1-6-1934.
50. Uria (2008) p. 146.
51. Burns Marañón (1999), pp. 123–142.
52. Shobe (2008), p. 336.
53. Díaz Noci (2000), pp. 6–8.
54. Gotzon (1998), pp. 45–125.
55. Díaz Noci (2000), pp. 10–13.
56. Walton (2011).
57. *Madrid-Sport*, 16-9-1920, p. 6.
58. *Madrid-Sport*, 16-9-1920, p. 6.
59. *El Debate*, 11-9-1920; *El Mundo Deportivo*, 16-9-1923.
60. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 16-9-1920.
61. *El Debate*, 10-9-1920.
62. *El Debate*, 12-9-1920.
63. *El Debate*, 16-9-1920.
64. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 14-3-1924.
65. *Cuadernos de Fútbol*, September 2009.
66. Díez-Medrano and Gutiérrez (2001), p. 757.
67. *El Mundo Deportivo* 24-2-1936.
68. *Marca*, 21-12-1938.
69. *Marca*, 21-12-1938.
70. González Aja (2002), p. 183.
71. Bahamonde Magro (2002), p. 185.
72. *Ibid.*
73. de la Viuda (2011), pp. 316–317.
74. *Marca*, 18-3-1941.
75. *ABC*, 17-3-1942.
76. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 16-3-1942.
77. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 16-3-1942.
78. *Marca*, 3-1-1939.
79. Ricardo Zamora, ‘Tácticas de juego en Fútbol’, *Marca*, 18-1-1939.
80. *Marca*, 3-1-1939.
81. *Marca*, 3-1-1939.
82. Molina Aparicio (2005).
83. Ugarte (1998).
84. Díaz Noci (2000), p. 8.
85. Castro-Ramos (2008), p. 703; Castillo (2007a), p. 30.
86. Núñez Seixas and Umbach (2008).
87. Cavazza (2006), pp. 107–119.
88. Martin (2004), pp. 209–214.
89. Sevillano (2010), pp. 136–137; Gómez and Marco (2011), pp. 315–334.
90. Mentions to the Spanish fury can be found in every match Spain played in 1941 and 1942. See, for instance, *Marca*, 14-1-1941; 18-3-1941; 30-12-1941; *Mundo Deportivo*, 16-3-1942; 17-4-1942, and *ABC*, 17-3-1942; 14-4-1942; 21-4-1942.

91. Teus (1941), pp. 7–8.
92. *Ibid.*, pp. 9–10.
93. *ABC*, 17-3-1941.
94. *Marca*, 3-7-1950; *El Alcázar*, 3-7-1950.
95. *Marca*, 3-7-1950.
96. *Marca*, 3-7-1950.
97. *El Alcázar*, 3-7-1950.
98. González Calleja (2010).
99. *ABC*, 14-6-1956.
100. Quoted in Shaw (1987), p. 58.
101. *Marca* 20-6-1949; de Salazar (1996), pp. 112–120.
102. Mendoza (1986), p. 293.
103. Llopis Goig (2008), pp. 57, 60.
104. Fernández Santander (1990), pp. 14, 242.
105. González Aja (2011), pp. 337–340.
106. *Marca*, 22-6-1964.
107. *El Alcázar*, 23-6-1964.
108. Franco Salgado-Araujo (2005), p. 563.
109. *ABC*, 26-6-1964.
110. Ramos (2012).
111. *Marca*, 22-6-1964.
112. *Marca*, 22-6-1964.
113. *Marca*, 22-6-1964.
114. *ABC*, 23-6-1964.
115. Shaw (1985).
116. *Marca*, ‘Política deportiva’, 25-6-1964.
117. *Ibid.*
118. *Marca*, 22-6-1964.
119. *Marca*, 22-6-1964.
120. *Marca*, 22-6-1964.
121. *Marca*, 22-6-1964.
122. *Marca*, 22-6-1964.
123. *La Vanguardia*, 21-7-1966; *AS*, 10-9-1975; *ABC*, 5-10-1973; *ABC*, 24-7-1973; *La Vanguardia*, 10-7-1974. *La Vanguardia*, 15-2-1972.
124. *La Vanguardia*, 4-4-1968.
125. *AS*, 28-10-1971.
126. For the pessimistic view of intellectuals and historians see Núñez Florencio (2010).
127. Núñez Seixas (2007); Pérez-Agote (2006); Johnston (1991).
128. Santacana Torres (2006), pp. 219–220.
129. Shobe (2008), p. 341; Burns Marañón (1999), pp. 254–261, 280–283; Santacana (2006), p. 201.
130. *ABC*, 1-6-1971.
131. *ABC*, 1-6-1971; *ABC*, 9-4-1974.
132. Balfour and Quiroga (2007), p. 153.
133. MacClancy (1996b), p. 186.
134. Unzueta (1999), p. 149.
135. Díaz Noci (2000), p. 5.
136. Leguineche et al. (1998), p. 98.

137. Castañón Rodríguez (1993), p. 65.
138. Quiroga (2011), p. 138.
139. *ABC*, 12-5-1966.
140. Arbena (1990); Scher (1996).
141. Sevillano (2000), pp. 36, 210–211.
142. Balfour and Quiroga (2007), p. 166.
143. Manrique (2011), pp. 271–272.
144. Cazorla Sánchez (2010), pp. 176–178, 198–200.
145. *Ibid.*, pp. 198–199.
146. Sanz Hoya (2012), p. 428; Fuentes Muñoz (2012), p. 293.
147. Ucelay Da-Cal (1999).
148. Álvarez Junco (2001), p. 592.
149. Núñez Florencio (2003), p. 198.

### 3 Transition to Democracy (1975–1982)

1. Sartorius and Sabio (2007), p. 79.
2. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 13-8-1976.
3. *La Vanguardia*, 1-5-1976.
4. Castañón Rodríguez (1993), p. 62.
5. Shaw (1987), p. 219.
6. Castañón Rodríguez (1993), p. 66.
7. *Don Balón*, 30-5-1977.
8. *El País*, 2-12-1977; *Mundo Deportivo*, 25-1-1978.
9. Shaw (1987), pp. 224–226.
10. Abadía i Naudí (2011), pp. 375–378.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 387–390.
12. Bernecker (2007).
13. Radcliff (2011); Abadía i Naudí (2010).
14. Abadía i Naudí (2011), pp. 371–373.
15. Klandermans (2001).
16. Ederson (2002), p. 78; Skey (2011), p. 7.
17. Castañón Rodríguez (1993), p. 64.
18. Bonaut Iriarte (2008), pp. 127–129.
19. Castañón Rodríguez (1993), pp. 34–35.
20. Díaz Gutiérrez (2011).
21. [www.mundodeportivo.com/hemeroteca/index.html](http://www.mundodeportivo.com/hemeroteca/index.html)
22. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 1-12-1977.
23. *ABC*, 1-12-1977.
24. For example, *La Vanguardia*, 5-2-1977; *El Mundo Deportivo*, 26-2-1977; 31-5-1978; 14-5-1981; 15-5-1981; 11-7-1981; 26-2-1982. For Stielike see *El Mundo Deportivo*, 28-11-1980 and *El País*, 2-2-1982.
25. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 14-3-1976; 12-11-1976; *El País*, 19-1-1980.
26. For example, *El Mundo Deportivo*, 31-12-1978; 2-2-1981; 29-5-1982; *La Vanguardia*, 6-9-1977; 8-9-1978; *El País*, 20-12-1979.
27. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 28-3-1979; 12-9-1979.
28. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 20-8-1978; 18-9-1978; 26-11-1978; 24-12-1979.
29. For instance, *El Mundo Deportivo*, 3-6-1976; 7-11-1976; 2-6-1982.

30. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 22-8-1979.
31. For instance, *La Vanguardia*, 25-10-1977; *El Mundo Deportivo*, 11-4-1981.
32. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 26-2-1982.
33. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 21-6-1982.
34. *La Vanguardia*, 12-8-1982.
35. Levinger and Franklin Lytle (2001).
36. Archilés (2011).
37. *ABC*, 23-5-1976; *La Vanguardia*, 23-5-1976; *El Mundo Deportivo* 23-5-1976; *Avui*, 23-5-1976.
38. *ABC*, 8-6-1978; *La Vanguardia*, 8-6-1978; *El País*, 9-6-1978.
39. *La Vanguardia*, 19-6-1980; *ABC*, 19-6-1980; *El Mundo Deportivo*, 19-6-1980.
40. *El País*, 19-6-1980.
41. *La Vanguardia*, 26-6-1982; 3-7-1982; *El Mundo Deportivo*, 26-6-1982; 3-7-1982.
42. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 3-7-1982.
43. Abadía i Naudi (2011), p. 362.
44. *El País*, 20-10-1979.
45. *El País*, 18-7-1982. The quotation in *La Vanguardia*, 3-7-1982.
46. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 4-7-1982.
47. For instance, *La Vanguardia*, 3-7-1982; *El Mundo Deportivo*, 4-7-1982.
48. *El País*, 3-7-1982.
49. Balfour and Quiroga (2007), pp. 85, 99.
50. Graham and Quiroga (2012), p. 517.
51. Noya (2002), p. 36.
52. Muñoz Soro (2011), pp. 34–35.
53. García Carrión (2012), pp. 494–497; Archilés (2012), pp. 450–457.
54. Archilés (2012), p. 448.
55. Peris Blanes (2011), pp. 218–219.
56. *El País*, 27-5-1982.
57. *El País*, 9-9-1982.
58. *El País*, 14-5-1983; 23-10-1984; 3-4-1987.
59. The comments of Pablo Porta, in *Mundial 82. La Película*, at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBMewNg4a9I](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBMewNg4a9I) (accessed 24 August 2012).
60. *El País*, 3-7-1982.
61. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 30-5-1979.
62. *El País*, 1-6-1979.
63. *El País*, 1-6-1979.
64. *El País*, 18-7-1982.
65. *ABC*, 26-6-1982.
66. *ABC*, 26-6-1982.
67. For example, on television, 'Fiasco financier du mondial', IT1 13H, *Télévision Française 1*, 18-06-1982; in the press, *Le Monde*, 10-7-1982; *L'Equipe*, 8-6-1982; on the radio, 'Bilan du mondial 1982', Inter actualités de 12H00, *France Inter*, 11-07-1982.
68. 'Mundial 82-cérémonie d'ouverture', *Télévision Française 1*, 13-06-1982, min 21.
69. 'Fiasco financier du mondial', IT1 13H, *Télévision Française 1*, 18-06-1982, min 45.

70. 'Bilan du mondial 1982', Inter actualités de 12H00, *France Inter*, 11-07-1982.
71. 'Espagne', Les jeux du stade, *Antenne 2*, 3-04-1982.
72. *Le Monde*, 10-7-1982. Along similar lines, *Le Monde*, 1-7-1982.
73. 'Mondial 82-cérémonie d'ouverture', *Télévision Française 1*, 13-06-1982, min 21.
74. *L'Equipe*, 24-6-1982.
75. *L'Equipe*, 24-6-1982.
76. 'Football: grève Espagne, JA2 20H, *Antenne 2*, 5-3-1979, 20h 11 min.
77. 'Football: grève Espagne', JA2 20H, *Antenne 2*, 5-3-1979, 20h 11 min.
78. 'Espagne', Les jeux du stade, *Antenne 2*, 3-04-1982; 'Inter actualités de 19H00 du 8 juin 1982', *France Inter*, 08-06-1982.
79. *L'Equipe*, 13-7-1982.
80. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 27-5-1982.
81. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Travel supplement, 27-5-1982.
82. For example, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 3-6-1982; 5-6-1982; 11-6-1982; 12-6-1982; 12-7-1982; *Bild*, 10-6-1982; *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 3-6-1982; 12-6-1982; 15-6-1982; 19-6-1982; *Der Spiegel*, 12-7-1982.
83. *Der Spiegel*, 21-6-1982.
84. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 2-6-1982; *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 3-6-1982.
85. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Travel supplement, 27-5-1982; 2-6-1982.
86. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 27-5-1982; *Der Spiegel*, 21-6-1982.
87. The literary and historical perception of Spain in Germany is covered in Aschmann (2000).
88. For example, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 12-6-1982 and 5-7-1982.
89. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 26-4-1976; 2-7-1982; 5-7-1982; 7-7-1982; *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 26-4-1976; 24-5-1976; *Bild*, 26-4-1976; 2-7-1982; 5-7-1982.
90. König (2002).
91. *Bild*, 22-5-1976; 22-6-1982; *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 26-4-1976; 3-6-1982; 3-4-7-1982.
92. *Bild*, 24-6-1982; *Der Spiegel*, 28-6-1982. The quotation comes from the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 12-7-1982.
93. *Bild*, 10-6-1982; *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 15-6-1982; 5-7-1982.
94. Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (1977), p. 204.
95. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 15-6-1982.
96. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 12-7-1982.
97. *The Guardian*, 12-6-1982.
98. *The Guardian*, 10-7-1982.
99. *The Observer*, 20-6-1982.
100. *The Guardian*, 1-7-1982; 3-7-1982; 7-7-1982.
101. *The Guardian*, 6-7-1982.
102. *The Times*, 17-6-1982.
103. *The Times*, 30-6-1982.
104. *The Guardian*, 26-6-1982.
105. *La Repubblica*, 13-14-6-1982.
106. *La Repubblica*, 13-14-6-1982.
107. *La Repubblica*, 14-7-1982.
108. *La Repubblica*, 14-7-1982.

109. *La Repubblica*, 27-28-6-1982.
110. *La Repubblica*, 4-7-1982.
111. *La Repubblica*, 27-28-6-1982.
112. *La Repubblica*, 27-28-6-1982.
113. *La Repubblica*, 4-7-1982; 14-7-1982.
114. *La Repubblica*, 14-7-1982.
115. Archilés (2011), p. 274.
116. *La Vanguardia Española*, 23-5-1976.
117. For example, *La Vanguardia Española*, 23-5-1976.
118. *Avui*, 15-6-1982 : 'Barcelonins, catalans, espanyols tots, gràcies, moltes gràcies per l'acolliment als nostres visitants.'
119. Footage of the Valencian and Spanish flags in *Tele Mundial 1982*, 25/06/1982, Archivo de RTVE, Signature 4N3229; and *Tele Mundial 1982*, 28/06/1982, Archivo de RTVE, Signature 4D0932.
120. Núñez Seixas (2009a); Fuentes Muñoz (2012); Archilés (2011).
121. Sánchez Cornejo (2009), p. 10.
122. Quiroga (2009); Archilés (2009).
123. Núñez Seixas (2009b).
124. García Candau (1982).
125. Llopis Goig (2006b), p. 45.
126. Archilés (2011), pp. 287–289.
127. The massive support received by the *selección* was a constant topic in the media. See, for example, *Tele Mundial 1982*, 25-06-1982, Archivo de RTVE, Signature 4N3229; *Tele Mundial 1982*, 28-06-1982, Archivo de RTVE, Signature 4D0932; *La Vanguardia*, 26-6-1982; 3-7-1982; *ABC*, 26-6-1982; *El Mundo Deportivo* 4-7-1982.
128. Giulianotti (1999); Castillo (2007a), p. 24.
129. *El País*, 17-1-1982.
130. *El País*, 20-7-1979.
131. For instance, *El País*, *El Mundo Deportivo*, *El Diario Vasco*, *El Correo Español*, *El Pueblo Vasco* and *ABC*. Interestingly the Catalan nationalist *Avui* and the Basque nationalist *Diea* also incorporated the symbol. On TVE special programmes and coverage of the World Cup, see *El País*, 16-6-1982.
132. Some of the TV ads in *Mundial 82. La película*, are at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBMewNg4a9I](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBMewNg4a9I)
133. *El País*, 3-7-1982; *Avui* 20-6-1982.
134. Quiroga (2011a); Palmer (1998); Fox (2006).
135. Castro-Ramos (2008), p. 697.

#### 4 In Search of Modernity's Ark (1982–2000)

1. *El País*, 13-6-1998.
2. *El País*, 15-3-1999.
3. *El País*, 15-3-1999.
4. Núñez Seixas (2010), p. 86.
5. Balfour and Quiroga (2007), pp. 81–84.
6. Bodin (2011), p. 447.
7. *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, n. 249, 17-10-1990.

8. García Ferrando (1997).
9. The footage is at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBDDpvRYMys](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBDDpvRYMys) (accessed 20 December 2012).
10. *La Vanguardia*, 26-6-1984.
11. *Diario 16*, 22-6-1990; 10-7-1994; *El País*, 9-8-1992; *AS*, 10-7-1994; 11-7-1994.
12. Balfour and Quiroga (2007), pp. 106–110.
13. *ABC*, 19-2-1997.
14. López López (2011), p. 420.
15. de Moragas (2008).
16. Croelly and Hand (2002), p. 3.
17. López López (2011), pp. 398–401.
18. Malvar (2005), pp. 57–66.
19. López López (2011), p. 418.
20. Bonaut Iriarte (2008), p. 130.
21. León Solís (1996), p. 43.
22. López López (2011), p. 432.
23. Alabarces (2008), p. 27.
24. León Solís (2003), p. 146.
25. *Ibid.*, pp. 47–64.
26. García Ferrando (2001), p. 55.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
28. A different view is expressed in Díaz Gutiérrez (2011).
29. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 22-12-1983.
30. *ABC*, 22-12-1983.
31. *ABC*, 22-12-1983.
32. *ABC*, 22-12-1983.
33. *El País*, 7-7-1984.
34. *El País*, 19-6-1986.
35. *El País*, 23-6-1986.
36. For the use of the *furia* in conversations in bars and in the streets of Madrid during the 1990 and 1994 World Cups see, for example, *El Mundo* 29-6-1990; and 10-7-94. For the use of the Spanish fury in press reports see *AS*, 14-6-1990; 11-7-1994.
37. *El Diario Vasco*, 9-8-1992.
38. *Mundo Deportivo*, 9-8-1992.
39. *El País*, 23-6-1998.
40. The footage is available at: [www.rtve.es/alcarta/videos/informe-semanal/informe-semanal-informe-semanal-repasa-historia-fracasos-espana-euro-copa-2004/90980](http://www.rtve.es/alcarta/videos/informe-semanal/informe-semanal-informe-semanal-repasa-historia-fracasos-espana-euro-copa-2004/90980) (accessed 12 September 2012).
41. *La Vanguardia*, 28-6-1984.
42. *La Vanguardia*, 28-6-1984.
43. *Mundo Deportivo*, 28-6-1984.
44. *Mundo Deportivo*, 28-6-1984.
45. See, for example, *Mundo Deportivo*, 15-6-1988 on Spain's defeat against Italy in Euro 1988. The Catalan newspaper acknowledged that Italy were by far the best team. However, three days later, *El Mundo Deportivo*, 18-6-1988, returned to the old narrative and claimed that Spain had been unlucky and deserved better in their 2–0 defeat against West Germany.
46. *El País*, 27-6-1990; *Diario 16*, 27-6-1990; *AS*, 27-6-1990; 28-6-1990.

47. *El Mundo*, 28-6-1990.
48. *El Mundo*, 28-6-1990.
49. The aggression was mocked by the popular comedians Martes y Trece at the 1994 TVE New Year's Eve Special. See [www.youtube.com/watch?v=M\\_mZbycGE9Q](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_mZbycGE9Q) (accessed 8 September 2012).
50. In 2007, the band Deneuve released an album entitled *El codazo de Tassotti* ('Tassotti's elbowing'). The album includes the song 'Electromecánicas unidas' that mentions Tassotti's incident. Other songs that refer to it are Aaron Saez's 'El gol de Cardeñosa' (2008) and Anicet's 'Tu no me dolió como el codazo de Tassotti' (2011).
51. For the comments on *Cadena SER*, *Radio Nacional*, *COPE* and *Onda Cero* radio stations see *El Mundo*, 10-7-1994. The same narrative is to be found in newspapers. See, among others, *Diario 16*, 10-7-1994; 11-7-1994; *As*, 10-7-1994; 11-7-1994; *El Mundo*, 10-7-1994; *El País*, 10-7-1994; *El Periódico*, 10-7-1994; *El Correo Español*, 10-7-1994; and *El Mundo Deportivo*, 10-7-1994.
52. *As*, 10-7-1994.
53. Only very few journalists pointed at Javier Clemente as the person responsible for Spain's 1994 defeat against Italy. One of them was Julián García Candau in *As*, 11-7-1994.
54. *As*, 11-7-1994. For the 1990 World Cup see, for instance, *As*, 28-6-1990.
55. The commentary is at: [www.rtve.es/deportes/20080522/espana-eurocopa-iii-ausencia-ano-las-olimpiadas-era-clemente/61450.shtml](http://www.rtve.es/deportes/20080522/espana-eurocopa-iii-ausencia-ano-las-olimpiadas-era-clemente/61450.shtml) (accessed 5 October 2012).
56. Crolley and Hand (2002), pp. 112–113.
57. Archilés (2011).
58. *El País*, 13-6-1998.
59. *El País*, 13-6-1998.
60. Fernández (1983), p. 245.
61. *Ibid.*
62. *Ibid.*
63. *El País*, 9-8-1992.
64. *El País*, 9-8-1992.
65. *El País*, 9-8-1992.
66. The writer and journalist Manuel Vázquez Montalbán denounced the Seville Expo and the Barcelona Olympics as a 'theatrical show of Spain's modernity'; Vázquez Montalbán (1993), p. 108.
67. Abad (1991), p. 110.
68. Toro (1993), pp. 400–401. The quotations are on page 400.
69. For example, Fernández (1995), p. 331.
70. *El Mundo*, 16-6-1994; *El País*, 16-6-1994.
71. *AS*, 12-7-1994.
72. [www.uefa.com/memberassociations/uefarankings/country/index.html](http://www.uefa.com/memberassociations/uefarankings/country/index.html) (accessed 15 June 2012).
73. León Solís (2003), p. 41. Both quotations are from *El País* World Cup magazine, 16-6-1994.
74. *El País*, 5-8-1996.
75. *El País*, 18-12-2000.
76. See, for instance, *L'Equipe*, 26-6-84; *L'Equipe*, 20-2-1991.
77. *L'Equipe*, 27-6-84.

78. 'Telefoot', *Télévision Française Canal 1*, 17-02-1991.
79. 'France/Espagne. Football : Euro 96', *Canal 2*, 15-06-1996.
80. 'Inter actualités de 13H00', *France Inter*, 28-06-1984.
81. 'Inter actualités de 19H00', *France Inter* 28-6-1984.
82. 'Avant Espagne/France', IT1 13H, *Télévision Française Canal 1*, 12-10-1991; 'Telefoot', *Canal 1*, 13-10-1991.
83. Crolley and Hand (2006), p. 114.
84. See 'L'Espagne vingt ans après', *L'Equipe*, 26-6-84; 'De l'Eldorado au Pays basque', *L'Equipe*, 26-6-84.
85. For instance, *Il Messaggero*, 20-5-1992; 9-7-1994; 20-5-1998; 13-6-1988; 9-8-1992; 10-8-1992; 9-7-1994; 10-7-1994.
86. *Il Tempo*, 14-6-1988; *Il Messaggero*, 10-7-1994.
87. *Il Messaggero*, 13-6-1988.
88. *Il Tempo*, 14-6-1988.
89. *Il Popolo*, 11-8-1992.
90. Crolley and Hand (2005), p. 308.
91. The front page of *The Times* described the England vs. Spain quarter-final of Euro 96 as 'the most important encounter between the two countries since 1588', the year the Armada was sent against Queen Elizabeth I. Hamilton and Goodbody (1996).
92. Hand and Crolley (2005), p. 309.
93. *The Times*, 19-6-1996; 21-6-1996; 22-6-1996.
94. Poulton (1999).
95. Hand and Crolley (2005), pp. 310-311.
96. *The Times*, 23-6-2000.
97. *Süddeutsche Zeitung* 22-6-1984; 29-6-1984; *Bild*, 29-6-1984; 16-10-1986 *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* 17-6-1986; 9-6-1988.
98. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 9-6-1984; 29-6-1984; 15-10-1986 *Bild*, 20-6-1984; 27-6-1984; 28-6-1984; 15-10-1986; 16-6-1988; 22-6-1994; *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 8-6-1988.
99. The quotation is in *Bild*, 10-4-1987. The description of Spaniards as temperamental beasts is in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 9-4-1987; 10-4-1987; *Bild*, 9-4-1987; *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 10-4-1987.
100. The quotations in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 8-6-1988; *Bild*, 16-6-1988.
101. For instance, *Bild*, 19-6-1984.
102. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 9-6-1988.
103. *Bild*, 10-4-1987; 16-6-1988; 21-6-1994; 22-6-1994; 22-2-1995; 20-6-2000.
104. *Bild*, 14-6-2000.
105. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 15-6-2000.
106. Collado (2002), pp. 102-103.
107. Inthorn (2002).
108. *Der Spiegel*, 29-1-1996; 22-5-2000.
109. Giulianotti (1999); Castillo (2007a), pp. 24-25.
110. Miller et al. (2001), pp. 49-50.
111. Brochand (1999), p. 102.
112. Soto (2005), p. 403.
113. Llopis Roig (2008), p. 61.
114. *La Vanguardia*, 3-7-1994.
115. Sanz Hoya (2012), p. 430.

116. For the football players see Butragueño (1987), p. 321. For the politicians see the comments of the socialist Minister of Education, Gustavo Suárez Pertierra, in *AS*, 11-7-1994.
117. *AS*, 28-6-1990; 10-7-1994; *El Mundo*, 10-7-1994.
118. 'Telefoot', *Télévision Française Canal 1*, 17-02-1991.
119. *Il Messaggero*, 9-7-1994.
120. *El País*, 10-5-1989.
121. Zubizarreta's comments are in 'Barça, campió d'Europa 1992', TVE Catalunya, 20-5-1992, at: [www.rtve.es/alicarta/videos/arxiu/arxiu-tve-catalunya-barca-campio-deuropa/363964](http://www.rtve.es/alicarta/videos/arxiu/arxiu-tve-catalunya-barca-campio-deuropa/363964) (accessed 27 October 2012). For the 2000 final see TVE three o'clock news, 25-5-2000, at: [www.rtve.es/alicarta/videos/deportes-en-el-archivo-de-rtve/madrid-valencia-final-espanola-champions-2000/773209](http://www.rtve.es/alicarta/videos/deportes-en-el-archivo-de-rtve/madrid-valencia-final-espanola-champions-2000/773209) (accessed 27 October 2012).
122. Martínez Herrera (2002); Moreno (2001); Bollen and Díez Medrano (1998).
123. Moreno (2001), p. 114.
124. Balfour and Quiroga (2007), p. 153; Martínez Herrera (2002), p. 436.
125. *El País*, 10-5-1989; *ABC*, 11-5-1989; 21-5-1992. *El Mundo Anuario 1993*, 401; *El Mundo Deportivo*, 21-5-1992.
126. *Diario 16, Edición Aragón*, 11-5-1995.
127. Núñez (1986), p. 292.
128. *El País*, 9-8-1992.
129. Hargreaves and García Ferrando (1997), p. 85.
130. [www.rtve.es/alicarta/videos/deportes-en-el-archivo-de-rtve/madrid-valencia-final-espanola-champions-2000/773209](http://www.rtve.es/alicarta/videos/deportes-en-el-archivo-de-rtve/madrid-valencia-final-espanola-champions-2000/773209) (accessed 20 November 2012).
131. The footage of the flags is at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q4T3U9a2dzY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q4T3U9a2dzY) (accessed 20 November 2012).
132. *ABC*, 11-12-2000.
133. Lechner (2007).

## 5 From Patriotic Bulimia to Nationalist Obesity (2001–2012)

1. *Bloomberg*, 8-6-2012, at: [www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-06-09/spain-seeks-125-billion-bailout-as-bank-crisis-worsens.html](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-06-09/spain-seeks-125-billion-bailout-as-bank-crisis-worsens.html) (accessed 10 June 2012); *The Guardian*, 9-6-2012.
2. *Cinco Días*, 11-6-2012; *Bloomberg*, 10-6-2012, at: [www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-06-10/spain-s-bailout-defeat-weakens-rajoy-s-bid-to-meet-deficit-goal.html](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-06-10/spain-s-bailout-defeat-weakens-rajoy-s-bid-to-meet-deficit-goal.html) (accessed 10 June 2012).
3. *The Guardian*, 11-6-2012.
4. *Marca*, 1-6-2012.
5. *Sport*, 2-7-2012.
6. *El País*, 21-3-2001.
7. Balfour and Quiroga (2007), pp. 114–117.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 120
9. Uriarte (2002).
10. Lamo de Espinosa (2002), p. 4.
11. Peralba (2002); Peralba (2009).

12. *El País*, 19-8-2007; 14-10-2009.
13. Íñiguez (2006); William Chislett in *El País*, 28-12-2007; 'Vender la imagen comercial de España'; Miguel Ángel García Vega, 'El precio de la mala imagen', *El País, Extra Marcas*, 30-11-2012.
14. [www.socialwatch.eu/wcm/documents/European\\_Social\\_Watch\\_Report\\_2010.pdf](http://www.socialwatch.eu/wcm/documents/European_Social_Watch_Report_2010.pdf) (accessed 28 November 2012).
15. *El País*, 31-10-2011.
16. *El País*, 28-3-2005.
17. *El País*, 11-10-2012.
18. *El País*, 1-7-2008.
19. *La Gaceta*, 12-7-2010.
20. *El País*, 9-8-2007.
21. *El País*, 9-8-2007.
22. Paniagua Santamaría (2009), pp. 155–176.
23. López López (2011), p. 407.
24. *Ibid.* p. 402.
25. *Ibid.* pp. 420–426; *Marca*, 30-6-08.
26. Peris Blanes (2011), p. 241.
27. González-Ramallal (2008), p. 221.
28. Crolley (2008).
29. López López (2011), p. 428.
30. Eriksen (2007).
31. Llopis Goig (2011), p. 140.
32. Ederson (2002), p. 79.
33. García Ferrando (2006), p. 36.
34. Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (2007).
35. *El País*, 7-6-2004.
36. <http://archivo.marca.com/mundial2002/fedex//index.html> (accessed 12 January 2013).
37. The quotations are in *El Mundo Deportivo*, 23-6-2002; *Marca*, 23-6-2002; *El Mundo*, 23-6-2002.
38. The comments of King Juan Carlos are in *El Mundo*, 24-6-2002.
39. *El País*, 23-6-2002; 24-6-2002; *El Mundo*, 23-6-2002.
40. *El Mundo*, 21-6-2004; 22-6-2004; *Marca*, 22-6-2004; *AS*, 21-6-2004; *El País*, 21-6-2004; *La Razón*, 21-6-2004.
41. *Marca*, 21-6-2004; *El Mundo*, 22-6-2004.
42. *Marca*, 21-6-2004.
43. *El Mundo*, 5-7-2004.
44. *Marca*, 28-6-2006; *El Mundo Deportivo*, 28-6-2006; *AS*, 28-6-2006; *El Periódico de Catalunya*, 28-6-2006; *La Razón*, 28-6-2006; *La Vanguardia*, 28-6-2006; *El Mundo*, 28-6-2006; 29-6-2006.
45. *El País*, 28-6-2006.
46. *Sport*, 28-6-2006.
47. *El Mundo*, 24-6-2002; *AS*, 24-6-2002; *Marca*, 24-6-2002.
48. *El País*, 26-6-2002.
49. *Marca*, 22-6-2004.
50. *El País*, 16-5-2001; 23-6-2002; 25-6-2002; *El Mundo*, 23-5-2002; 22-6-2004; 5-7-2004; *Marca*, 21-6-2004; *La Razón*, 22-6-2004.

51. 'Informe semanal', TVE 1, 26-4-2004, at: [www.rtve.es/alacarta/videos/informe-semanal/informe-semanal-informe-semanal-repasa-historia-fracaso-espana-eurocopa-2004/90980](http://www.rtve.es/alacarta/videos/informe-semanal/informe-semanal-informe-semanal-informe-semanal-repasa-historia-fracaso-espana-eurocopa-2004/90980) (accessed 20 January 2013).
52. *El País*, 29-6-2008.
53. *El País*, 28-6-2008.
54. *ABC*, 8-8-2008.
55. For example, *El Mundo*, 9-7-2010; *ABC*, 9-7-2010; *La Razón*, 9-7-2010.
56. *Público*, 11-7-2010. The quotation is in *El País*, 28-7-2010.
57. *El País*, 26-6-2008.
58. *El País*, 7-9-2010.
59. Grijelmo, A. (2009), pp. 10–11.
60. *Marca*, 7-7-2008; *La Vanguardia* 27-7-2008; *El País* 28-7-2008.
61. *El País*, 28-7-2008.
62. *El Mundo*, 10-6-2010; *El País*, 5-7-2010.
63. Molina (2009).
64. León (2003).
65. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPksdghtm34](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPksdghtm34) (accessed 3 August 2012).
66. *Marca*, 13-6-2008.
67. *El País*, 5-6-2005.
68. Llopis Goig (2009a), p. 10.
69. *El Mundo*, 21-6-2004; *Marca*, 21-6-2004.
70. *La Razón*, 22-6-2004.
71. *El Mundo*, 28-6-2006
72. For example, 'Sé lo que hiciste' by Melendi; 'Himno no ofisiá der Mundiá de Alemania' by Mojinos Escozíos; 'Pasar de cuartos' by Pignoise; and 'El gol de Cardeñosa' by Aaron Sáez.
73. For the English case see Tom de Castella, 'Hysterical, Deluded and Thoroughly English', *BBC News*, 26-6-2010.
74. Sanz Hoya (2012), pp. 433–436.
75. *El País*, 9-7-2010; 28-7-2010; *El Mundo*, 9-7-2010; 12-7-2010; *ABC*, 12-7-2010; *AS*, 12-7-2012; *Que*, 13-7-2010; *Sport*, 2-7-2012; *El Mundo Deportivo*, 2-7-2012, *La Vanguardia*, 2-7-2012; *ABC*, 2-7-2012.
76. Plaza Martín, D. (2009).
77. *ABC*, 18-7-2010; *Público*, 28-7-2010.
78. Castelló et al. (2009), p. 6.
79. *El Mundo*, 2-10-2007; *El País*, 24-10-2007; 17-1-2008.
80. *El País*, 3-6-2009; *El Mundo*, 12-11-2009.
81. *ABC*, 8-12-2012.
82. *ABC*, 18-7-2010; *El Mundo*, 10-6-2010; *El País*, 9-7-2010; *Público*, 28-7-2012.
83. *The Daily Mirror*, 15-6-2002.
84. *The Times*, 15-6-2002; *The Sunday Times*, 18-6-2006; *The Guardian*, 27-6-2008; *The Daily Mirror*, 5-6-2008. The same argument also features in the books written by English journalists on Spanish football. See Ball (2001), p. 161; and Burns Marañón (2012), p. 223.
85. Interview with Santiago Segurola in the documentary *El Clásico. More than a game* (2011).
86. *The Sun*, 15-6-2002; *The Times*, 11-6-2008.
87. *The Guardian*, 12-6-2004.
88. *The Times*, 17-6-2004.

89. *The Sunday Times*, 18-6-2006.
90. *The Sunday Times*, 18-6-2006.
91. On television 'Football: l'Espagne', *Stade 2*, Canal 2, 25-06-2006; 'Euro 2008: la malédiction de l'Espagne', *20 heures*, Canal 2, 29-06-2008. In the press see, for example, *L'Equipe*, 19-6-2006.
92. 'Football: l'Espagne', *Stade 2*, Canal 2, 25-06-2006; 'Football. Coupe du monde 2006: les espagnols aiment Zidane', *TF1 20 heures*, Canal 1, 26-06-2006; *L'Equipe*, 27-6-2006; 29-6-2006; *Le Monde*, 28-6-2008.
93. *Le Monde*, 29-6-2006.
94. 'Football. Coupe du monde 2006. France – Espagne', *TF1*, Canal 1, 26-06-2006.
95. *The Sun*, 17-11-2004.
96. *The Sun*, 19-11-2004; *The Guardian*, 19-11-2004.
97. *Bild*, 15-6-2006; 20-6-2006; 27-6-2008; *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 28-29-6-2008.
98. *Der Spiegel*, 26-6-2006.
99. *Der Spiegel*, 27-5-2002; 26-6-2006; *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 12-2-2003; *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 28-6-2008. On TV 'Tagestheme', 21:45, 28-6-2008, ARD.
100. *Der Spiegel*, 26-6-2006; *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 28-6-2008.
101. 'Tagesschau', 20:00 h, 29-6-2008, ARD.
102. *Die Zeit*, 28-6-2008.
103. 'Pourquoi l'Espagne domine le monde?', *Téléfoot*, Canal 1, 10-10-2010; *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 28-29-6-2008; *The Independent*, 1-8-2008.
104. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 1-7-2008. The quotation is in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1-7-2008;
105. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1-7-2008.
106. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1-7-2008.
107. *Bild*, 30-6-2008.
108. *The Observer*, 29-6-2008.
109. *The Guardian*, 10-7-2010.
110. *The Independent*, 4-6-2012.
111. 'Tagestheme, 22:15', 30-6-2008, ARD; *Corriere della Sera*, 30-7-2008.
112. 'Pourquoi les Espagnols trustent les podiums?', *TF1*, 1-8-2010; 'Pourquoi l'Espagne domine le monde?', *Téléfoot*, 10-10-2010; 'Foot: la formation espagnole versus la formation française', *TF1*, 7-5-2011; *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 28-29-6-2008.
113. McFarland (2008b), p. 609.
114. *The Independent*, Extra, 1-7-2008. See also *La Repubblica*, May, 2010.
115. 'Un bain de foule de 5h30 dans les rues de Madrid', *France 24*, 13-7-2012, 7h, at: [www.france24.com/fr/20100712-retour-espagne-triomphe-heros-roja-football-coupe-monde-champions](http://www.france24.com/fr/20100712-retour-espagne-triomphe-heros-roja-football-coupe-monde-champions) (accessed 11 December 2012); *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 1-7-2008; *Bild*, 1-7-2008; *The Times*, 3-7-2012.
116. *Bild*, 13-7-2010.
117. 'Retour triomphal en Espagne pour les héros de la Roja', 13-7-2010, *France 24 international*, at: [www.france24.com/fr/20100712-retour-espagne-triomphe-heros-roja-football-coupe-monde-champions](http://www.france24.com/fr/20100712-retour-espagne-triomphe-heros-roja-football-coupe-monde-champions) (accessed 30 November 2012).
118. *The Economist*, 6-11-2008.
119. *Die Zeit Online*, 30-6-2008.

120. *The Guardian*, 30-5-2012.
121. Some English books even attempted to explain 'the concept behind the term mañana'. See for instance, Graff (2008); Kerr (2004).
122. The quotation in 'Tagesschau. 20:00', 12-7-2010, ARD. See also *Corriere della Sera*, 30-6-2008; *Die Zeit Online*, 7-7-2010; *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 12-7-2010; *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 10 and 11-7-2010; 'Tagesthema 22:15', 12-7-2010, ARD; 'Espagne remporte la Coupe du monde de football en Afrique du Sud', *Radio France Culture*, 07:00 12-07-2010; 'Et maintenant qu'allons nous faire de cette victoire?', 07:31, *France culture*, 12-07-2010; *Financial Times*, 13-7-2010.
123. *The Economist*, 6-11-2008.
124. *Der Spiegel*, 21-6-2010.
125. *Der Spiegel*, 21-6-2010.
126. Porro and Russo (1999), p. 156.
127. *El Mundo*, 2-6-2004.
128. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 5-7-2010.
129. As argued by Rowe (2003).
130. Llopis Goig (2009a), p. 10.
131. Giulianotti and Robertson (2009), p. xv.
132. Martínez-Herrera and Miley (2010); Llera (2009); Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (2007).
133. Castro-Ramos (2008), p. 707.
134. *El País*, 13-7-2010.
135. *Le Monde*, 19-11-2011.
136. *El Mundo*, 25-11-2011.
137. *AS*, 8-2-2012; *Marca*, 7-2-2012; *ABC*, 9-2-2012; *El País*, 11-2-2012.
138. *ABC*, 10-2-2012.
139. *ABC*, 9-2-2012; 15-2-2012.
140. *ABC*, 15-2-2012.
141. *El País*, 11-2-2012; 12-2-2012.
142. For instance, *El Mundo*, 16-9-2008.
143. *The Economist*, 28-7-2012.
144. *El Heraldo de Aragón*, 17-6-2012; *El País*, 16-6-2012; 29-6-2012; Cardenal (2012); Sobrino (2012).
145. *ABC*, 25-1-2012; *El País*, 27-4-2012.
146. *El País*, 29-6-2012; *ABC*, 12-8-2012.
147. *El Mundo*, 6-3-2012.
148. *Der Spiegel*, 23-4-2012.
149. Noya (2002), pp. 236–240.
150. *El País*, 2-5-2012.
151. *El País*, 2-5-2012.
152. For instance, Víctor Mirabet at Coleman CBX and Enrique Alcat at the Instituto de Empresa. *El País*, 30-11-2012.
153. *El Mundo*, 8-4-2012.
154. *El Mundo*, 11-8-2012.
155. *ABC*, 16-4-2012.
156. *El País*, 30-11-2012.
157. Noya (2010); *El País*, 16-9-2012.
158. *La Nueva España*, 19-5-2011.

159. According to the EU agency Eurofound, Spaniards work an average of 1,752 hours per year and have 22.8 days of holidays per annum. Germans, on the other hand, work 1,658 hours and have 30 days of holidays per year. *Heraldo de Aragón*, 1-7-2012. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Spaniards worked an average of 1,690 hours in 2011, while Germans worked for 1,413 hours. Data at: [www.rtve.es/contenidos/documentos/horas\\_trabajo\\_2011\\_OCDE.pdf](http://www.rtve.es/contenidos/documentos/horas_trabajo_2011_OCDE.pdf) (accessed 8 November 2012).
160. *Heraldo de Aragón*, 1-7-2012.
161. *El País*, 16-9-2012.
162. Crolley and Hand (2002), pp. 9–10.
163. *El País*, 1-5-2012.
164. *El Mundo*, 10-6-2010.
165. *Heraldo de Aragón*, 17-6-2012.
166. *El País*, 10-6-2012.
167. *El País*, 30-6-2012; 3-7-2012; *Heraldo de Aragón*, 8-7-2012.

## 6 Football and Identities in Catalonia

1. *El País*, 13-12-2009.
2. The number of demonstrators varies hugely depending on the sources. Barcelona police reckoned there were 1.1 million people. *El País* calculated 425,000 demonstrators; *El País*, 11-7-2010.
3. *La Vanguardia*, 12-7-2010; *Mundo Deportivo*, 12-7-2010. The Barcelona police reported 75,000 gathered in the Avenida María Cristina to watch the final on a giant screen.
4. González Calleja (2006), p. 157.
5. Colomé (1999), p. 174.
6. *Avui*, 27-5-1976.
7. *Mundo Deportivo*, 10-6-1976.
8. Santacana Torres (2006), pp. 243–245.
9. *La Vanguardia*, 22-2-1977.
10. Santacana Torres (2006), p. 310.
11. *Ibid.*
12. *La Vanguardia*, 1-11-1977.
13. Santacana Torres (2006), pp. 252–253.
14. Abadía i Naudí (2010), p. 51.
15. Abadía i Naudí (2011), p. 382.
16. Pérez de Rozas and Relaño (1982).
17. In 1978 TVE in Catalonia broadcast 68 hours per month in Catalan. By 1980 the number of hours had reached 83; ‘2a Part. Història de TVE a Catalunya’, at: [www.rtve.es/television/20081119/2-part-historia-tve-catalunya/196116.shtml](http://www.rtve.es/television/20081119/2-part-historia-tve-catalunya/196116.shtml) (accessed 3 September 2012).
18. The concept of ‘disjunctive discourse’ is in León Solís (2003), p. 65. The representation of Spain by Catalanists is in Ucelay Da-Cal (2005), p. 23.
19. *Avui*, 2-5-1976; 4-5-1976; 8-5-1976; 20-5-1976.
20. For instance, *Avui*, 2-5-1976; 6-5-1976.
21. *Avui*, 29-4-1976; 2-5-1976; 17-5-1979; 19-5-1979.

22. *La Vanguardia*, 17-5-1979.
23. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 17-5-1979.
24. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 17-5-1979, p. 7.
25. 'FC Barcelona v. Fortuna Düsseldorf. Final de la Recopa de Europa', TVE, 16-5-1979, at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=2uBu4uaKwtk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2uBu4uaKwtk) (accessed 11 September 2012).
26. *Marca*, 17-5-1979.
27. *Avui*, 17-5-1979.
28. *La Vanguardia*, 17-5-1979.
29. *La Vanguardia*, 17-5-1979.
30. *La Vanguardia*, 18-5-1979.
31. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 18-5-1979.
32. *Avui*, 18-5-1979.
33. Sobrequés (2010).
34. Dowling (2012).
35. *Don Balón*, n. 4 (1975), pp. 16–17.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 4; *El País*, 25-2-1977.
37. *El País*, 15-9-1982.
38. Burns Marañón (1999), p. 301.
39. *El País*, 25-2-1977.
40. *Avui*, 17-5-79.
41. Pérez de Rozas and Relaño (1982), p. 27.
42. *El País*, 18-1-1977.
43. *El País*, 18-1-1977.
44. *Avui*, 13-3-1979.
45. Martínez Herrera (2002), p. 435.
46. Flynn (2001), p. 711.
47. Dowling (2005), p. 111.
48. *Ibid.*, pp. 111–112.
49. de Moragas (1988); Gifreu and Corominas (1991).
50. Peris Blanes (2011), pp. 216–217; Castelló (2007).
51. Farré, J. et al. (2003), pp. 88–89.
52. García Altadill (1996), p. 98.
53. Dowling (2005), p. 116.
54. For example, *La Vanguardia*, 13-5-1982; 21-5-1992; *El País*, 10-5-1989; *ABC*, 11-5-1989; 21-5-1992; *El Mundo Anuario 1993*, p. 401; *El Mundo Deportivo*, 21-5-1992; *Marca*, 20-5-1994.
55. *El Mundo Anuario 1993*, pp. 402, 406; *Anuario El País 1993*, p. 110.
56. *El País*, 9-8-1992.
57. *El País*, 9-8-1992.
58. For example, *Telediario 1*, 09/08/1992, Archivo RTVE, Tape 041CP30, Signature IV8AI027 and *Telediario 2*, 09/08/1992, Archivo RTVE, Tape 041CP30, Signature IV8AI027.
59. For example, *La Vanguardia*, 9-8-1992; 10-8-1992; 11-8-1992; *El Periódico de Catalunya*, 9-8-1992; 10-8-1992; *El Mundo Deportivo*, 9-10-8-1992; 10-8-1992; *Sport*, 9-8-1992. The quotation in *La Vanguardia*, 10-8-1992. For an analysis of the tensions between Spanish and Catalan nationalisms during the Olympics see Hargreaves (2000).

60. *La Vanguardia*, 5-8-1992.
61. *Avui*, 12-8-1992.
62. *Avui*, 10-8-1992.
63. *Avui*, 12-8-1992.
64. For instance, *Avui*, 11-5-1989; 10-5-1994; 15-5-1994; 18-5-1994.
65. *Avui*, 15-6-1984; 22-5-1986; 7-6-1986; 8-6-1986; 13-6-1986; 19-6-1986. This changed, however, in the 1994 World Cup as *Avui* referred to the team as 'Spain' and the 'Spanish selección'. For instance, 6-6-1994; 19-6-1994; 20-6-1994; 22-6-1994.
66. *Avui*, 28-6-1984; 29-6-1984; 20-6-1986.
67. *Avui*, 29-6-1984.
68. For instance *Avui*, 20-6-1986; 29-7-1992; 18-5-1994. For more examples, see León Solís (2003), pp. 66–73.
69. For instance, *Avui*, 5-5-1994; 10-5-1994; 18-5-1994; 24-5-1994; 28-5-1994; 12-6-1994.
70. Duch (2005).
71. Relaño (2012); Naranjo de Arcos (2011).
72. Duch (2005), pp. 179–264.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 176; Crolley (1999), p. 307.
74. On 18-5-1979, *Avui* reckoned there were a million and a half people on the streets of Barcelona and 90,000 at the Camp Nou in 1979. The same newspaper gave figures of 20,000 supporters at the Camp Nou in 1992; *Avui*, 22-5-1992. *La Vanguardia*, 22-5-1992, calculated there were around 20,000 people to welcome Barça at Plaça Sant Jaume.
75. *Avui*, 22-5-1992.
76. Burns Marañón (1999), pp. 303–306.
77. *Ibid.*, p. 372.
78. Jordi Badia, 'Barça is not Catalonia', *El País*, 11-9-2012.
79. *Sport*, 6-3-2008.
80. Duch (2005), p. 173.
81. Eudox (1999).
82. According to 2001 data, 15 per cent of Catalans identified exclusively with Spain, while 13 per cent identified with Catalonia only; Martínez Herrera (2002), p. 447.
83. *Público*, 20-9-2009.
84. For Laporta see *El País*, 13-12-2009. For the scholars, see, for example, the comments of the historian Josep Maria Solé i Sabaté in *La Vanguardia*, 25-10-2009. He declared that 'Barça have always been the industrial, modern, democratic Catalan alternative to the Spanish status quo'. David Goldblatt (2006: p. 211), most intriguingly, writes about 'Barcelona's socios and directors' being 'among the many petitioning the Madrid government for Catalan independence in the early 1920s'. However, there is no historical record of such a petition.
85. *El Mundo*, 4-7-2010.
86. *Público*, 20-9-2009; *Marca*, 11-11-2009; 2-12-2009.
87. *Marca*, 12-11-2009.
88. *El País*, 13-12-2009.
89. *El País*, 27-9-2009; *Público*, 20-9-2009; *El Mundo*, 27-11-2009. Duch (2005), p. 156.

90. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 15-9-2003.
91. Roy (2007).
92. *El Correo*, 4-10-2012.
93. *Marca*, 12-10-2009.
94. *Marca*, 12-10-2009.
95. *20 Minutos*, 9-10-2009.
96. *La Vanguardia*, 25-10-2009.
97. Giulianotti and Robertson (2009), p. xv.
98. Castro-Ramos (2008), p. 700.
99. <http://fundacion.fcbarcelona.es/proyectos/alianzas> (accessed 20 December 2012).
100. Jordi Badia, 'Barça is not Catalonia', *El País*, 11-9-2012, p. 46.
101. 32.8 per cent supported Real Madrid and 25.7 per cent supported Barça. Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (2007), p. 11.
102. *AS*, 10-10-2011.
103. *El País*, 7-10-2012.
104. *Sport*, 12-10-2012.
105. *Sport*, 11-12-2012.
106. *Sport*, 15-12-2012.
107. *El Mundo Deportivo*, 12-9-2012.
108. *El País*, 7-10-2012; *El Mundo*, 22-10-2012.
109. *El País*, 5-12-2012.
110. Dowling (2005), pp. 115–116.
111. [www.gencat.cat/generalitat/cas/estatut/index\\_2006.htm](http://www.gencat.cat/generalitat/cas/estatut/index_2006.htm) (accessed 13 January 2013).
112. In 2010, the Generalitat devoted €30 million to fund Catalan newspapers. Additionally, the Catalan government devoted €70 million to pay for the Generalitat's campaigns in the Catalan press. *El Mundo*, 27-11-2009.
113. See the 2006 budget at: [www.gencat.net/economia/pressupost2006/arxius/pressupostos/6250.pdf](http://www.gencat.net/economia/pressupost2006/arxius/pressupostos/6250.pdf) (accessed 13 January 2013).
114. See the 2010 budget at: [www15.gencat.cat/ecofin\\_wpres10/pdf/VOL\\_L\\_ART.pdf](http://www15.gencat.cat/ecofin_wpres10/pdf/VOL_L_ART.pdf) (accessed 13 January 2013).
115. Muñoz and Tormos (2012), p. 20.
116. Kiely et al. (2005).
117. *La Vanguardia*, 29-7-1999.
118. The figures are in Llopis Goig (2006b), p. 61.
119. *El Mundo*, 2-6-2004.
120. *ABC*, 18-9-2007.
121. *El País*, 30-12-2007.
122. *El País*, 28-12-2010.
123. Lluís Regàs, 'La selección catalana pierde apoyo popular', *Diariogol.com*, 3-1-2013, at: [www.diariogol.com/es/mobile-viewer.php?IDN=2013\\_01\\_29696](http://www.diariogol.com/es/mobile-viewer.php?IDN=2013_01_29696)
124. *Sport*, 31-5-2012.
125. *Avui*, 25-5-2006; 26-5-2006; 22-9-2006; 28-12-2007; 30-12-2007; *El 9*, 27-12-2010.
126. *Avui*, 25-9-2006; 28-9-2006; 6-10-2006; *El 9*, 29-12-2007; 30-12-2007.
127. O'Donnell and León Solís (2012), p. 188.
128. *Avui*, 6-10-2006.
129. *ABC*, 30-12-2007.

130. *ABC*, 10-10-2006; *El Mundo*, 31-12-2007.
131. *ABC*, 9-10-2006; 10-10-2006; 5-9-2007; *El Mundo*, 9-10-2006; 29-12-2010.
132. Cited in O'Donnell and León Solís (2012), p. 193.
133. *El Mundo*, 10-10-2006.
134. *ABC*, 8-8-2008; 9-7-2010; *El Mundo*, 9-7-2010; *La Razón*, 9-7-2010.
135. *El Periódico de Catalunya*, 15-6-2006; 19-6-2006; 27-6-2006. For the coverage of the *selección* by *El Mundo Deportivo* and *Sport*, see González-Ramallal (2008), pp. 220–238; for *La Vanguardia*, see León Solís (2003), p. 77.
136. *La Vanguardia*, 28-6-2008; 30-6-2008; *Mundo Deportivo*, 28-6-2008.
137. *La Vanguardia*, 27-6-2008.
138. *Avui*, 30-6-2008.
139. 'El matí de Catalunya Ràdio: Tertúlia d'esports', *Catalunya Ràdio*, 30-6-2008; 'Catalunya vespre esports', *Catalunya Ràdio*, 12-7-2010; 'El club de la mitjanit: 2a hora', 1-7-2012.
140. 'El matí de Catalunya Ràdio: Tertúlia d'esports', *Catalunya Ràdio*, 30-6-2008; 'El club de la mitjanit: 2a hora', *Catalunya Ràdio*, 29-5-2011; 'El club de la mitjanit: 2a hora', *Catalunya Ràdio*, 1-7-2012. The same argument appears in *Avui*, 26-6-2008.
141. *Avui*, 5-10-2009.
142. 'El club de la mitjanit: 2a hora', *Catalunya Ràdio*, 01-07-2012.
143. The Euro 2012 final reached ratings of 75 per cent in Catalonia. *La Vanguardia*, 7-7-2012.
144. Muñoz and Tormos (2012); the 2012 data is in Centre d'Estudis d'Opinió (2012).
145. Muñoz and Tormos (2012), pp. 6–7, 28–30.
146. Centre d'Estudis d'Opinió (2012).
147. [www.directe.cat/noticia/220295/espanya-tambe-ens-roba-les-victories-esportives-catalanes](http://www.directe.cat/noticia/220295/espanya-tambe-ens-roba-les-victories-esportives-catalanes) (accessed 28 December 2012).
148. Jordi Badia, 'La causa del fútbol', *El País*, 8-7-2012.
149. Juncà (2010), pp. 317–318.
150. Billig (1995), pp. 8, 37–59.
151. *El Periódico de Catalunya*, 3-7-2012.
152. Núñez Seixas (2010), pp. 134–135.
153. *El Periódico de Catalunya*, 26-5-2012.
154. [www.seleccions.cat/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=12234%3Ala-seleccio-panyola-tambe-ens-roba&catid=94%3Aeditorial&Itemid=109&lang=fr](http://www.seleccions.cat/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=12234%3Ala-seleccio-panyola-tambe-ens-roba&catid=94%3Aeditorial&Itemid=109&lang=fr) (accessed 23 January 2013).
155. Martínez-Herrera and Miley (2010). See also the results of the *Metroscopia* survey in *El País*, 6-10-2012.
156. *El País*, 21-12-2012.

## 7 Football and Identities in the Basque Country

1. Quoted in Shulman (2004), p. 69.
2. Iturria Martín (2001), pp. 143–144. The gesture is also discussed by Iribar and the Real Sociedad striker Roberto López Ufarte in *El País*, 22-4-2011.
3. *ABC*, 8-7-2010.

4. Following the British practice, I use in this chapter the Spanish spelling of Basque cities, towns and provinces.
5. de Pablo and Mees (2005), pp. 369–370.
6. Quiroga (2009).
7. Molina (2009b), p. 50.
8. *La Vanguardia*, 22-2-1977.
9. Iturria Martín (2001), pp. 143–144; MacClancy (1996b), pp. 192–193.
10. *El País*, 31-5-1977.
11. *Mundo Deportivo*, 10-8-1977.
12. Fernández Monje (2001), p. 217; MacClancy (1996b), pp. 192–193.
13. Fernández Monje (2001), p. 217.
14. Ildefonso Olmedo, 'La selección de ETA', *El Mundo*, 17-12-2000.
15. *Egin*, 31-12-1978.
16. *Egin*, 17-8-1979.
17. Gotzon (1998), pp. 129–134.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 137–139.
19. Fernández Monje (2001), pp. 181–182.
20. *El Correo Español. El Pueblo Vasco*, 5-8-1980.
21. *Deia*, 5-8-1980.
22. For the political and territorial divisions of the Basque Country see Mansvelt-Beck (2005).
23. *Deia*, 22-12-1979.
24. *Egin*, 23-12-1979.
25. For example, MacClancy (1996b), p. 183; Crolley and Hand (2002), p. 134; Shulman (2004), pp. 57–71.
26. *Egin*, 5-8-1980.
27. See, for instance, TVE footage of the Guipuzcoan fans at the Molinón stadium in Gijón, the day Real Sociedad won their first league title on 25 April 1981, at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=AlJHSU96Elg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AlJHSU96Elg) (accessed 12 January 2013). For Real Sociedad fans' celebrations of the second league title in 1982, see: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=BZliffmDxB-I](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BZliffmDxB-I) (accessed 12 January 2013). For the press response, see, for example, *El Diario Vasco*, 2-6-1982.
28. Walton (2001a), pp. 119–120; Unzueta (1986), pp. 126–131.
29. Castillo (2007b), p. 682.
30. Aranes and Landa (2000); Aranes and Landa (2003).
31. *El País*, 25-1-1977.
32. Fernández Monje (2001), pp. 230–231.
33. Unzueta (1999), p. 149.
34. Castillo (2007b), pp. 685–687.
35. del Valle (2003).
36. *Egin*, 1-6-1982; 7-8-1982.
37. *Egin*, 1-6-1982.
38. MacClancy (1996a).
39. Molina (2009b), p. 47.
40. *Diario 16*, 9-1982.
41. *El Diario Vasco*, 10-7-1982.
42. *Deia*, 11-7-1982.
43. *El Diario Vasco*, 26-6-1982; *Egin*, 1-7-1982; 2-7-1982.
44. *Egin*, 3-7-1982; 4-7-1982. *El Diario Vasco*, 4-7-1982; *El Correo Español*, 7-7-1982.

45. *Egin*, 2-7-1982; 3-7-1982; *El Diario Vasco*, 8-7-1982; 10-7-1982; 11-7-1982. The quotation appears in *El Diario Vasco*, 10-7-1982.
46. *El Diario Vasco*, 5-6-1982.
47. *El Diario Vasco*, 16-8-1982.
48. *El Diario Vasco*, 16-8-1982.
49. *El Diario Vasco*, 16-8-1982.
50. According to a 1979 survey, 35 per cent of the inhabitants of Euskadi exclusively identified with the Basque Country, while roughly 65 per cent of the population showed some sort of identification with Spain, varying from Spanish only, to equally Basque and Spanish, and more Basque than Spanish. By 1982 the exclusive identification with the Basque Country reached its peak: 42 per cent. Those identifying with the Basque Country and Spain or with Spain only accounted for 58 per cent of the population. See Martínez Herrera (2002).
51. *El País*, 17-7-1982.
52. *ABC*, 15-3-2011.
53. *El País*, 16-11-1980.
54. For instance, *El Correo Español*, 7-7-1982; 8-7-1982; *El Diario Vasco*, 8-6-1982; 15-6-1982; 16-6-1982; 17-6-1982; 20-6-1982; 24-6-1982, 2-7-1982; 7-7-1982. Interestingly, the pro-PNV *Deia* also incorporated the Mundial 82 logo with the Spanish flag. See, for example, 11-7-1982.
55. *El Diario Vasco*, 5-6-1982; 12-6-1982; 16-6-1982; 1-7-1982.
56. *ABC*, 27-6-1982.
57. *El Diario Vasco*, 2-7-1982; 11-7-1982.
58. Blanco Valdés (2005), p. 74.
59. Rivière (2000), pp. 165–169.
60. de Pablo and Mees (2005), pp. 406–407.
61. Galindo Arranz (1997).
62. Farré et al. (2003), p. 87.
63. *Ibid.*, pp. 88–89.
64. Bonaut Iriarte (2008), p. 130.
65. According to the 1986 census, 24.58 per cent of the inhabitants of the Basque Autonomous Community were Basque speakers. Nevertheless, 17.42 per cent considered themselves ‘semi-Basque speakers’ (*semi vascoparlantes*), while 57.99 per cent were monolingual Spanish speakers; *Euskera. La lengua de los vascos. (II) Los datos actuales del euskera*, at: [www.euskara.euskadi.net/r59-738/eu/contenidos/informacion/argitalpenak/eu\\_6092/adjuntos/EEH/GAZTELAN/EEH2\\_CAS.PDF](http://www.euskara.euskadi.net/r59-738/eu/contenidos/informacion/argitalpenak/eu_6092/adjuntos/EEH/GAZTELAN/EEH2_CAS.PDF) (accessed 15 January 2013)
66. Gobierno Vasco (1999), pp. 39–40.
67. *El Diario Vasco*, 1-6-1982; Leguineche et al. (1998), p. 99.
68. Fernández Monje (2001), pp. 237–238; Leguineche et al. (1998), pp. 190–191.
69. Castillo (2007b), pp. 685–686.
70. Unzueta (1999), pp. 164–167.
71. MacClancy (1996), pp. 195–196.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 195.
73. Shulman (2004), p. 69.
74. *ABC*, 5-1-1997.
75. Castillo (2007a), p. 29.
76. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

77. For example, *El Diario Vasco*, 5-1-1983; 11-2-1983; 14-2-1983; 29-5-1983; 2-8-1990; 3-8-1990; *El Correo*, 29-5-1983; 2-8-1990; 3-8-1990.
78. *El Diario Vasco*, 3-5-1983.
79. *El Diario Vasco*, 3-5-1983; 4-5-1983.
80. *El Diario Vasco*, 28-6-1987. Leguineche et al. (1998), p. 96.
81. Woodworth (2005).
82. Muro (2005).
83. Casquete (2009), pp. 297–302.
84. *El Diario Vasco*, 3-5-1983.
85. *El Diario Vasco*, 3-5-1983.
86. *Egin*, 2-1-1984.
87. *Egin*, 19-5-1987.
88. *Egin*, 19-5-1987.
89. *El País*, 2-1-1986.
90. *El País*, 2-1-1986.
91. *El País*, 4-1-1986; 5-1-1986.
92. *El País*, 8-1-1986.
93. *El País*, 11-1-1986.
94. *Egin*, 19-1-1986.
95. *Egin*, 19-1-1986.
96. Domínguez (1998), p. 225.
97. *El Mundo*, 17-12-2000.
98. *Diario de Navarra*, 21-3-2001.
99. *El País*, 13-12-2000.
100. *El Diario Vasco*, 25-04-2007.
101. *El Diario Vasco*, 25-04-2007.
102. *El Mundo*, 21-3-1999; *El País*, 8-11-1999.
103. *Egin*, 22-11-1984.
104. *El Periódico*, 31-1-1998; *El País*, 11-3-2008.
105. *El País*, 4-4-1999; 8-4-1999; *El Correo*, 6-4-1999.
106. *El País*, 22-8-1993; 31-10-1993.
107. *El Correo*, 22-11-2000 and *El Diario Vasco*, 22-11-2000; 23-11-2000; 24-11-2000.
108. *El Correo*, 23-6-1993; 23-12-1994; 24-12-1994; 23-12-1995; 27-12-1996; 27-12-1997; 23-12-1998; 30-12-1999.
109. *El Correo*, 23-12-1998.
110. *El País*, 7-10-1998.
111. Martínez Herrera (2002), pp. 436–438.
112. In 1978–1979 the socialist Ramón Rubial was the president of the Basque General Council, the institution formed during the transition to pave the way for the creation of the Basque Autonomous Community.
113. *Herri Batasuna* (HB) has taken a variety of names since the late 1990s. For the sake of clarity I will keep using HB to refer to the radical separatist group.
114. Fernández Monje (2001), p. 290.
115. *Ibid.*, pp. 104–107. *El País*, 29-1-2013.
116. *El País*, 29-7-2008.
117. Castillo (2007b), p. 687.
118. Athletic Club webpage at: [www.athletic-club.net/web/main.asp?a=2&b=1&c=0&d=0&idi=1](http://www.athletic-club.net/web/main.asp?a=2&b=1&c=0&d=0&idi=1) (accessed 20 February 2013).

119. Seguroola (2008), pp. 185–189; Castillo (2008), pp. 718–719.
120. Castillo (2008), pp. 711–715, 718–719.
121. For the integration of different political views, see the comments of Athletic president Fernando García Macua in *ABC*, 18-11-2009.
122. *Gara*, 24-5-2012; *El País*, 21-12-2012.
123. de Pablo and Walton (2012), pp. 125–126, 136–137.
124. *Marca*, 3-7-2007.
125. *Deia*, 12-11-2012.
126. *El País*, 14-12-2008.
127. *El País*, 14-12-2008.
128. *ABC*, 3-7-2002.
129. *El Correo*, 10-3-2008; *El País*, 11-3-2008; 23-10-2008.
130. *El País*, 30-12-2007.
131. Dirección de Deportes – Departamento de Cultura, Gobierno Vasco (2009), p. 47.
132. *El Correo*, 15-12-2007.
133. *Gara*, 23-11-2008.
134. *El País*, 14-11-2008.
135. *Diario de Navarra*, 19-12-2008.
136. *Noticias de Gipuzkoa*, 26-11-2010.
137. *Gara*, 11-7-2010.
138. *Noticias de Gipuzkoa*, 10-2-2010; *Gara*, 11-7-2010; *Deia*, 25-11-2010; *Noticias de Navarra*, 25-11-2010.
139. *Naiz*, 19-12-2012.
140. *Noticias de Navarra*, 26-10-2010.
141. *El País*, 20-4-2012.
142. The words of Patxi Mutiloa, at: [www.europapress.es/nacional/noticia-gobierno-vasco-pretende-mayor-representacion-internacional-selecciones-vascas-respeto-marcos-20091215133240.html](http://www.europapress.es/nacional/noticia-gobierno-vasco-pretende-mayor-representacion-internacional-selecciones-vascas-respeto-marcos-20091215133240.html) (accessed 14 February 2013).
143. *El Mundo*, 17-11-2009; *Marca*, 17-9-2011.
144. *Gara*, 8-9-2011.
145. *El País*, 9-9-2011.
146. *ABC*, 17-7-2010; *El País*, 9-9-2011.
147. *Gara*, 11-7-2010; *El País*, 8-3-2012.
148. *Gara*, 8-8-2010.
149. *Gara*, 11-7-2010.
150. *Gara*, 8-8-2010.
151. *ABC*, 17-9-2009.
152. The celebrations appear in *20 Minutos*, 30-6-2008; *El Correo*, 30-6-2008; *El Diario Vasco*, 30-6-2008; *ABC*, 17-7-2010.
153. See [www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7m3aDXPHIk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7m3aDXPHIk) (accessed 25 January 2013).
154. *Bidaialdia.com*, 13-7-2010.
155. In 2001, 63 per cent of Basques felt both Basque and Spanish (with different levels of identification), 6 per cent felt exclusively Spanish and 25 per cent Basque only. In the autumn of 2012, 58 per cent of Basques declared they had double identities, 6 per cent felt exclusively Spanish and 33 per cent exclusively Basque. *Euskobarómetro. Series Temporales*, November 2012, pp. 79, 82, at: [www.ehu.es/euskobarometro/index.php?option=com\\_](http://www.ehu.es/euskobarometro/index.php?option=com_)

[docman&task=doc\\_view&gid=376&tmpl=component&format=raw&Itemid=97](#) (accessed 27 January 2013).

156. *El País*, 10-6-2008.
157. *El Diario Vasco*, 29-6-2012.
158. *El Diario Vasco*, 29-6-2012.
159. Molina Aparicio (2011), p. 42.
160. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
161. *Deia*, 12-7-2010; *Noticias de Navarra*, 12-7-2010; 13-7-2010; *El Mundo*, 12-7-2020; 15-7-2010; 11-7-2012.
162. *Deia*, 12-7-2010.
163. *Deia*, 12-7-2010.
164. *Deia*, 12-7-2010.
165. *Deia*, 14-6-2010.
166. *El Diario Vasco*, 29-6-2012.
167. Euskobarómetro, November 2012.
168. *El País*, 21-2-2010.
169. Castillo (2007b), p. 685.
170. Euskobarómetro, November 2012, p. 44.

## Conclusion

1. Riot Propaganda, 'El miedo va a cambiar de bando' (2013), available at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=YGJ6rKUrP2I](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YGJ6rKUrP2I) (accessed 29 February 2013).
2. *The New York Times*, 24-9-2012.
3. *The New York Times*, 24-9-2012.
4. *Eldiario.es*, 25-9-2012.
5. *Telediario*, TVE, 21h, 24-9-2012, at: [www.rtve.es/alcarta/videos/telediario/rey-defiende-imagen-espana-medios-anglosajones/1535152/](http://www.rtve.es/alcarta/videos/telediario/rey-defiende-imagen-espana-medios-anglosajones/1535152/)
6. *ABC*, 26-9-2012.
7. *ABC*, 26-9-2012.
8. *ABC*, 23-12-2012.
9. See, for instance, Taibo (2012); Gallego (2008); Navarro et al. (2011). From 2010, a growing body of articles and reports have questioned the narrative of success in newspapers such as *Público*; *Eldiario.es* and, to a lesser extent, *El País*, and TV channels such as *La Sexta*.
10. Juan Torres López, 'Se ríen de España y de los españoles', *Público*, 10-7-2012.

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*Diario 16*  
*Diario de Navarra*  
*Diarogol.com*  
*Die Zeit*  
*Dirigido por*  
*Don Balón*  
*Egin*  
*El Alcázar*  
*El Correo Catalán*  
*El Correo Español*  
*El Debate*  
*El Diario Vasco*  
*Eldiario.es*  
*El Heraldo de Aragón*  
*El Mundo*  
*El Mundo Deportivo*  
*El País*  
*El Periódico de Catalunya*  
*El Socialista*  
*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*  
*Finacial Times*  
*Furia Española*  
*Gara*  
*Il Messaggero*  
*Il Popolo*  
*Il Tempo*  
*L'Auto*  
*L'Equipe*  
*La Gaceta*

*La Nación*  
*La Nueva España*  
*La Repubblica*  
*La Razón*  
*La Vanguardia*  
*Le Monde*  
*Madrid Sport*  
*Marca*  
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*Que*  
*Sport*  
*Süddeutsche Zeitung*  
*The Daily Mirror*  
*The Economist*  
*The Guardian*  
*The Independent*  
*The New York Times*  
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*The Sun*  
*The Sunday Times*  
*The Times*

## **TV channels**

ARD (Germany)  
Antenne 2 (France)  
BBC1 (United Kingdom)  
BBC2 (United Kingdom)  
Canal + (France)  
Canal + (Spain)  
Cuatro (Spain)  
France 24 International (France)  
ITV (United Kingdom)  
RAI 1 (Italy)  
Télévision Française 1 (France)  
Télévision Française 2 (France)  
TV3 Catalunya (Spain)  
TVE 1 (Spain)  
TVE 2 (Spain)

## **Radio stations**

BBC Radio 4 (United Kingdom)  
France Inter (France)  
Cadena Ser (Spain)

COPE (Spain)  
 Catalunya Ràdio (Spain)  
 Onda Cero (Spain)  
 Radio Nacional de España (Spain)

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