

## MIGRATIONS

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The modern history of Spain is a history of movement and migration. And yet historians, many of whom privilege settlement over mobility, have been slow to incorporate the concepts of mobility studies into their analyses of the country's history. Looking at migratory movements allows us to glimpse a history of Spain from the margins, to hear the voices of those who in the past have been expelled from the national body. Migration, both voluntary and involuntary, has been a regular occurrence in Spain. Involuntary or forced migrations occur when people are forced to flee their country of birth to avoid persecution, imprisonment, or death. Today we call these people refugees, but in the nineteenth century they were known as *émigré exiles* (or *emigrados* in Spanish), a term that originally referred to people fleeing the French Revolution, but which has since been applied to any person fleeing political or social persecution. Voluntary migrants, also called economic migrants, are people whose movement is triggered by lack of economic opportunities in their place of birth; many either decide to move within their own country or cross national borders in an attempt to improve their life prospects. The term "voluntary" helps to differentiate these people from those who must leave to avoid the threat of violence or death, but this distinction downplays the fact that poverty can be as much a threat to a person's life as physical persecution. Increasingly, migration scholars try to analyze the mixed motivations that trigger human movements. Both forced and voluntary migrations help to explain the political, social, and economic evolution of modern Spain.

In the following chapter I explore Spaniards' internal migrations, the movement of Spanish exiles and economic migrants to Latin America and Europe, and also the movement of foreigners to Spain. Rather than adopt a geographical or chronological organization, this chapter discusses mobility according to the reasons that triggered these various movements. It looks at the various forced migrations that punctuated Spain's modern period, as well as the many voluntary migrations, both internal and external, that have shaped the country's history.

### RECURRING FORCED MIGRATIONS

Amparo Batanero left Spain in the spring of 1937 with 455 other children on the French ship *Mexique*. Batanero was five years old at the time; she travelled with four of her five siblings, who were seven, nine, eleven, and twelve years old. With her father on the frontlines of the Civil War, her mother thought it was better to spare her children from certain death in Madrid (she kept only her three year old with her). When these child refugees reached the Mexican port of Veracruz on June 9, thousands of people cheerfully awaited them, and the other ships sounded their sirens as a gesture of welcome; according to the national daily *El Excelsior*, "Mexico [had received] its new sons."<sup>1</sup> Batanero built a life in Mexico, and she would not return to Spain until 1960, as a twenty-eight-year-old mother of five. Many children in her situation had difficult lives; many were never reunited with their parents.

Political exile became a common feature in the era of revolution and counterrevolution inaugurated by the French Revolution. People whose thinking went against the status quo, such as Polish and Italian nationalists, or German and Finnish socialists, were forced to flee within Europe or to the Americas, sometimes more than once. Though estimates vary, some historians argue Spain has lost as many as nine hundred thousand people to exile since 1808. If we consider

that the country had 11.6 million people in the 1822 census, and 23.7 million in 1930, the loss of nearly a million people for purely political reasons—in addition to millions of others for economic reasons, as discussed below—indicates that the country has not been able or willing to properly care for its people. Historical research on exile in modern Spain suggests that the largest population movements coincided with the second absolutist restoration under Ferdinand VII (1823-33) and the Spanish Civil War (1936-39). In nineteenth-century Spain, around two hundred thousand people were forced into exile. Between 1936 and 1939—a span of only four years—the number is six hundred and fifty thousand. While it is tempting to see in these numbers confirmation of Spain’s black legend, we should remember that political exile has been a recurring theme all over Europe.

Writer Mariano José de Larra highlighted in 1835 that “por poco liberal que uno sea, o está uno en la emigración, o de vuelta a ella, o disponiéndose para otra; el liberal es el símbolo del movimiento perpetuo, es el mar con su eterno flujo y reflujo.”<sup>2</sup> Spain experienced a two-part exodus of liberals during the nineteenth century. The first migration coincided with the absolutist restoration between 1814 and 1820, and saw over twelve thousand liberals and pro-French supporters, mostly public servants and supporters of enlightenment ideals, flee to France. Geographically, linguistically, and culturally close to Spain, France has been the preferred destination for Spanish political exiles for centuries. The second episode, the so-called Ominous Decade of absolutist rule that followed the failed Liberal Triennium (1820 to 1823), triggered the exile of 48,000 people—again, mostly to France, but also to Portugal, Italy, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Algeria, and even the United States. Afterwards, there was also a smaller but ongoing exile of liberal elites, including Generals Baldomero Espartero and Prim. In fact, the revolutionary pact among *Progresistas* and *Democratas* that led to the 1868 Glorious Revolution

against Isabel II was signed by exiles in 1866 in the German city of Ostend. While some of these liberals, such as the writer Blanco White, or General Espartero, went to Britain, 77 percent—many of whom lacked the means to travel further—stayed in France.

On the other side of the political spectrum, Carlists (supporters of a rival faction of the Bourbon dynasty) fled Spain on three separate occasions during the nineteenth century. The first came after the 1839 Convention of Vergara, which ended the First Carlist War (1833 to 1839). Historians estimate that the number of Carlists in France during this period peaked in 1840 at about thirty-six thousand. Carlist exiles also went to Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, and Egypt; others decided to join the flow of economic migrants leaving for the Americas after 1870. With the end of the Third Carlist War (1872 to 1876), twenty thousand people left once again for France. The cycle of Carlist exile would soon close with the amnesty of February 1876, but it would open again seventy years later with the Civil War, as conservatives, monarchists, and traditionalists were forced out of Republican-controlled areas after 1936.

When they hear the phrase “Republican exiles,” most people think of the massive flow, into France and across the Atlantic, of refugees from the Spanish Civil War. But Republicans, along with anarchists and socialists, were intermittently forced into exile throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, from the end of the First Republic in 1874 to the establishment of the Second Republic in 1931. During this period, the experience of exile had a significant impact on the political culture of Republican supporters. They organized themselves in secret societies and conspiratorial meetings; they carried on clandestine activities along the French border; and they worked to establish political and social organizations in their countries of exile. Under Manuel Ruiz Zorrilla, who was prime minister of the First Republic from 1873 to 1874, Paris became the epicenter of the Spanish radical diaspora. Republican, anarchist, and

socialist exiles acquired valuable transnational experience in revolutionary activity in France, where revolutionaries from Russia or Italy were also gathered. But France was not the only destination for these people; during this period more than one hundred thousand exiles, mostly anarchists, left for Algeria as well.

While historians have debated the number of people who fled Spain at the end of the Civil War, a consensus is forming around the figure of 450,000. By the beginning of April 1939, most of them (about 430,000) were in France. By 1944, a further 162,000 had left the country; of these, 140,000 went to France, 8,800 to Africa, 19,000 to the Americas, 891 to Russia, and 2,000 to other parts of Europe. By region of origin, 36.5 percent came from Catalonia and 18 percent from Aragon, but many of them had been internally displaced persons from other regions of Spain who found refuge in Republican-controlled areas as the war progressed.

Our understanding of the sociological profile of these exiles is based on a 1939 census by the Servicio de Evacuación de los Republicanos Espanoles (SERE) of 278,000 males in French refugee camps. These numbers fail to account for those male refugees with the means to circumvent the camps, as well as women, who comprised 41 percent of the total adult refugee population.

We know that 32.75 percent worked in the primary sector. The overall percentage of primary-sector workers in Spain at the time was 45.51, which means primary sector workers were underrepresented within the male refugee population. This can be explained by the difficulty these workers may have had in finding the means to leave. By contrast, 48.94 percent of the male refugee population worked in the secondary sector, compared to only 26.51 in the overall Spanish population. This overrepresentation can be explained by the large support for Republican ideas found in this sector. 18.31 percent worked in the tertiary sector (compared to

27.98 percent for the overall population). The underrepresentation of tertiary workers can be partially explained by their ability to escape camps or travel to other destinations. While the middle and upper middle classes, including many intellectuals, were able to leave for the Americas, the Republic's most modest supporters, including many anarchists and communists, were forced to remain in Europe. Many were particularly vulnerable after the onset of the Second World War.

The Republican exodus to Latin America, estimated at between twenty and twenty-five thousand in Mexico alone, was abetted by a shared linguistic and cultural tradition, but these factors alone did not guarantee a smooth transition. Certainly, many professors, journalists, writers and other professionals were able to develop their careers in Spanish-speaking countries, but varying conceptions of nationalism, lukewarm support by some host governments, economic difficulties, and even ideological conflicts among Republicans themselves, weakened the exiles' ability to act as a single voice, and thus better protect their most vulnerable members. And even though the Republican diaspora in Mexico is rightly known for the achievement of its artists, such as the writer Max Aub and the painter Remedios Varo, or the caliber of its academic institutions, such as the prestigious university research center Colegio de Mexico, intellectuals made up less than 1 percent of the total number of Spanish exiles.

Republican exile was further triggered by the dictatorship of Francisco Franco. The last time Spaniards had to flee their country for political reasons occurred during this period, in the early 1960s, when students, intellectuals, Basque nationalists, members of the Communist Party, and politically active workers had to flee Franco's police at a time when torture and the death penalty were still the norm. They were unable to return until the amnesty of 1977, two years after Franco's death.

Some groups, such as women and children, have slowly started to get the scholarly attention they deserve. Between August 1936 and October 1937, 32,017 children were evacuated from Spain, particularly from the north, of whom 20,266 were eventually repatriated. 456 of these children, Amparo Batanero among them, were rescued by an initiative of Mexican president Lázaro Cárdenas. They were known as the “Children of Morelia” for the city that welcome them. Notwithstanding official support, these children had difficult lives; since it was assumed they would soon return to Spain, they were not allowed to be adopted by Mexican families. As it happened, decades passed before most would see their families again. Siblings were separated and very few had educational opportunities. When government support eventually dried up, some became street children. Batanero would become an advocate for the Children of Morelia, who only received financial compensation from the country that had abandoned them during the presidency of José Rodríguez Zapatero (2004-2011).

With the exception of some prominent figures, like the Communist politician Dolores Ibarruri (known as “La Pasionaria”), who went to Moscow, or the writer María Zambrano, who lived in Cuba, Puerto Rico, Italy, France, and Switzerland, the experience of women has too often been overlooked in studies of forced migration. We know from some studies that 41 percent of all the refugees from the Civil War were women, and that 80 percent of these women were housewives with no source of income. To the misery and difficulties that came from exile, these women also had to deal with a lack of education and professional training—not to mention a lack of gender equality in general.

Exiles have also sought refuge in Spain; while their numbers have not been as high as those leaving, their ideological backgrounds have been diverse. From supporters of the old regime escaping the fury of French revolutionaries, to French clergy escaping persecution in the

lead up to the 1905 separation of church and state, to European Jews escaping the Nazis, Spain has been a temporary place of refuge for many. A significant in-flow of political exiles was also triggered by the imposition of dictatorships in Chile, Uruguay, and Argentina beginning in 1973. Between ninety and one hundred and thirty thousand of these people found refuge in Spain, mostly in Madrid and Catalonia. Not surprisingly, the largest refugee group was from Argentina, whose dictatorship began after Franco's death in 1975. Refugees to the country had to find work and residency permits and fight to get their education recognized in a Spain that was not yet a signatory to refugee conventions.

More recently, refugees from various conflicts in Africa, the Middle East, and even Europe have sought safety in Spain. In 2014, most of these people were from Syria, Ukraine, and Mali, three countries in the midst of civil war and military uprisings. According to the Spanish Commission to Assist Refugees (CEAR), 3,614 people asked for refugee status or international protection from Spain in 2014; 44 percent obtained it. This figure lies between Hungary's ridiculously low acceptance rate for the same year (9 percent) and Sweden's much more generous example (77 percent).

## VOLUNTARY MIGRATION

### 1. Bread with Onion: Rural to Urban Migrations

Francisco Candel was born in Casas Altas, in the Spanish-speaking interior of Valencia, in 1925. When he was two years old, his parents moved to Barcelona and settled in a shanty town in the hills of Montjuic, an experience he would later use as inspiration for his 1957 novel *Donde la ciudad cambia su nombre* (Where the City Changes its Name). Though he had only a primary-school education, Candel became an influential journalist and writer.

Migration was central to Europe's industrialization in the nineteenth century. The formation of a general labor market triggered internal migrations from rural areas to more developed economic centers like Madrid, Barcelona, and the Basque Country. But while this trend began in the nineteenth century, and increased in the first third of the twentieth century, internal migration assumed massive proportions after the Spanish Civil War.

Some historians argue that between 1900 and 1960, rural-to-urban migration was as high as seven million people. The most significant decades would be 1921–30, 1941–50, and 1951–60. In the latter decade alone, close to two million Spaniards moved from rural to urban areas. But this movement was highly uneven. Out of Spain's fifty provinces, forty were net senders while only ten were net receivers. And of these ten, the provinces of Barcelona and Madrid received 43 and 39 percent of migrants, respectively, while the Basque Country welcomed 14 percent; combined, the other provinces represented only 4 percent. In other words, Barcelona, Madrid, and the Basque Country—or 4 percent of Spain's territory—absorbed 96 percent of its internal migrants between 1951 and 1960.

In trying to explain these numbers, scholars sometimes use the so-called push-pull theory. In every migratory movement, there are push factors that encourage people to leave and pull factors that attract people to particular destinations. While this theory alone cannot explain exactly who decides to move, when they decide to do it, and why they favor some destinations over others, it can help to explain the context in which humans exercise their agency and embark on a migratory journey. In modern Spain, the main factor that pushed people out of rural areas was lack of employment—particularly for women, who were the majority of these migrants. Employment in rural areas, such as it was, was limited to subsistence agriculture and seasonal labor; this was reduced even further by the growing use of machinery on farms. Moreover, a lack

of education, health, and commercial or professional services also encouraged the movement to cities.

A key feature of these migrations was a change of occupation. While most rural migrants came from agricultural backgrounds, city life meant working in construction, factories, or services. But the move to a city also involved crossing cultural and ethnic barriers that could otherwise hinder migrants' integration. Barcelona, one of the provinces to receive the largest percentage of migrants in the 1950s, had a different language and culture that, in spite of Franco's attempts to erase and prohibit it, was still an integral part of its identity. The speed with which internal migrants arrived in the region, along with their being Spanish speakers and having outside customs and religious referents, created tensions between old and new Catalans. Ethnic Catalans called this the "migration of the Andalusians." They claimed these migrants "had not known spoons" (because they were too poor to make soup) and that their diet was limited to "onion with bread." It was in this context that Candel wrote *The Other Catalans*, in which he attempted to lessen ethnic Catalans' fear that the newcomers would dilute their language and culture. In Spain, "internal" movement could even involve a change of continents. Such was the case for migrants from the mainland to the country's colonial territories in North Africa, where Spaniards lived at the mercy of colonial wars, decolonization movements, and possibly finding themselves in the position of having to head back across the Mediterranean.

## 2. Searching for El Dorado? Economic Migrations to Latin America

Clara González was born in the Panamanian city of Remedios in 1898. She was the daughter of David González, an Asturian who had immigrated first to Cuba and then to Panamá. Her indigenous mother from the Ngäbe or Guaymí people of Chiriquí died when she was young and

Clara sought female role models in the nuns of Saint Vincent de Paul. David worked as a carpenter and store clerk, but he never made enough money to go back to Spain, pay the mortgage he had placed on his family land, and reconnect with the children he had left behind. Clara would become a primary school teacher, and after returning to university, the first woman in Panama to graduate from law school. Her fight for women's rights led her to initiate the National Feminist Party in 1923. In 1946, Clara was elected member of the National Assembly and, although eventually defeated, became the first woman to run for the vice-presidency.

Spanish migration to the Americas was not new in the modern period. Already in the sixteenth century, the Spanish crown granted fifty-five thousand visas to its overseas territories. Most people left from Andalusia, Extremadura, and Castile. The migration of colonial administrators and army officers, businessmen and clergymen, came to an end with the nineteenth-century independence of most Spanish American colonies (except for Cuba and Puerto Rico). Colonial migrations promoted by the crown were replaced in the nineteenth century with the migration of laborers and their families. For example, many of the newcomers to Cuba or Puerto Rico were farm laborers, indentured or free, from the Canary Islands or rural areas of the Iberian Peninsula. While for a time, independence slowed the movement of people from Spain to Spanish-speaking America, economic migrants did not wait for the resumption of diplomatic ties to start a new life on the other side of the Atlantic. Landowners in these newly independent countries realized they needed labor to develop their economies, and they looked for agricultural workers in the poorest areas of their former colonizer. Venezuela and Uruguay favored sturdy laborers from the Canary Islands; Argentinian sheep producers favored Basque shepherds. Between 1830 and 1865, the number of Spaniards that left is estimated at three hundred and fifty thousand. In the middle of the nineteenth century, most Spanish

emigrants preferred Spanish possessions in Cuba and Puerto Rico or Brazil, but by the 1860s the great majority of Galicians were headed for Argentina.

In the great migrations of the 1870s to the onset of the First World War, Spaniards were not the only Europeans to leave the Old World for the New, and nor were they the largest group. This massive movement was triggered by a great demand for labor in both North and South America, and it was facilitated by the advent of faster and cheaper ships that used coal instead of wind. Reliable and affordable transportation also allowed American agricultural commodities, such as grains or meats, to enter European markets. In turn, this triggered a drop in similar products on the continent, which made redundant agricultural workers more likely to contemplate immigrating to the Americas. Such people depended on the personal networks by which migrants shared information—on desirable destinations, or how to navigate the journey safely—with their families and friends.

European migration also brought new figures to the fore, such as transportation promoters and port delegates; these people facilitated and encouraged movement by earning a cut for every person that left for the Americas. Intermediaries sold ship tickets and gave credit to those individuals or families that could provide capital goods as collateral. The spread of information and available means for financing the journey opened the Americas to larger sectors of the society that, decades before, could not have even imagined such a move. Clara's father was one of those Asturians that mortgaged family property to finance his American journey.

Almost forty million Europeans immigrated to the Americas in this period; one in twelve were Spaniards. 1912 saw the highest number of Spaniards—240,000—leave for the Americas in a single year: this was more than had left for the Americas in all of the seventeenth century. When we look at the passenger lists of those bound for Argentina, we see that two-thirds of the

total number came from the underdeveloped areas of Galicia, Castile, and Andalusia; the remaining third came mostly from Catalonia and Asturias. The Canary Islands, together with Galicia, was the area of Spain that sent the highest number of emigrants to the Americas. While Canary Islanders concentrated in Venezuela, Galicians were the largest group in Argentina. Most of the other migrants went to Cuba, Argentina, and Brazil. In Cuba, Spaniards were the largest European group; in Argentina, second after Italians; in Brazil, third after Italians and Portuguese. Some of these migrants partook of two separate migrations: the one that brought them initially to one of these three American countries, and then another that brought them to Chile, perhaps, or Colombia, or another destination where they hoped they would have better opportunities. After the late 1950s, new destinations—Venezuela, and to a lesser extent Uruguay, Mexico, Chile, and the United States—emerged, but overall, the number of immigrants going to the Americas declined.

Spaniards worked as laborers in the coffee haciendas in Sao Paolo, in the grain or cattle ranches in the Argentinian Pampa, or in the sugar cane plantations in Cuba. Others joined local workers in building the Panama Canal, though the Spanish government prohibited immigration to that country after 1907 to protect its citizens from unsanitary and inhumane working conditions. Some Spaniards stayed in cities and worked in construction, transportation, or domestic services. They also opened small businesses. By 1920, 80 percent of Cuba's corner stores were in the hands of Spanish families.

Women comprised 23 percent of the total number of immigrants, though they were spread out unevenly. While in Argentina, female migrants made up 33.3 percent of new arrivals, in Cuba they were only 15.5 percent. These women are usually studied as "dependent migrants," part of familial movements in which agency resides with men; the women follow later, to

achieve family reunification. But the fact that many women followed this pattern did not stop them from being labor migrants. Family reunification did not limit women to the domestic sphere—on the contrary, for those families that made a living by running small grocery stores, for example, women’s work was a crucial part of family income. Moreover, a significant percentage of female migrants were single. For instance, of the many thousands of women to emigrate from Galician ports, 67.25 percent did so on their own. They worked as domestic, service, or agricultural laborers.

During this time, the great migration was perceived by politicians in Spain as a disgrace—a reflection of a malfunctioning economy that was unable to provide for all citizens, yet another sign of the so-called “decadence” that had manifested after 1898 in the “disastrous” loss of the colonies of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines to the United States. Indeed, largescale migration represented a loss for Spain. In migration theory, this is known as “brain drain” for the country of departure and “brain gain” for the country of destination. The idea is that the country of departure has invested resources in an individual, for education (even if only primary), for health, for employment; once that person leaves, this “investment,” along with any potential return, is lost. Yet these losses were offset by the large remittances that Spanish migrants sent home during this period. From 1906 to 1910, annual remittances from Latin America were between 250 and 300 million pesetas. If we consider that the total sources of revenue for Spain amounted to just under 2.3 billion pesetas in 1906, then remittances went a long way toward balancing finances and activating the economy.

Contrary to the popular image of the impoverished migrant—forced to flee Europe, never to return—are the *golondrinas* (sparrows), workers who left for the Americas and traveled back and forth depending on economic opportunities and family needs. There were also *Indianos*, or

*Americanos*, native Spaniards who left for the Americas and made it rich, returning with a fortune they later used to start businesses or lead ostentatious lives. Miguel Viada Buñol was one such indiano. A marine merchant who made it big in Cuba, he promoted and financed the construction of a rail line between Barcelona and his birthplace, the nearby city of Mataró, in 1848. It was the first in mainland Spain. Another famous indiano family, the Vidal Quadras, left the Catalan city of Sitges for Venezuela and Cuba at the turn of the nineteenth century. They returned a few decades later, opened a bank in Barcelona, and became an influential family in business, politics, and art. But return migration was not limited to those who made it big. Some historians argue that as many as 60 percent of Spaniards who left between 1882 and 1935 returned—though not to the same areas they had left. Despite the economic difficulties that sometimes forced Spaniards to leave, it implied a certain privilege to have a country to return to.

### 3. Going North and Moving Up: Economic Migrations to Western Europe

Eliseo Rosende and Elva Expósito met and married in Le Locle, Switzerland. Both had left Galicia in the 1960s to find work and start a new life in Central Europe. Eliseo headed to Lausanne, where he worked in a restaurant for years without proper documentation; when a factory in Le Locle offered him legal work, he did not have to think twice. Elva left Spain with a cousin, and she too worked in a restaurant before finding a job in one of Le Locle's clock factories. Their two daughters, Beatriz and Madalena, were born in that city, and they managed to study despite the fact that, until the 1990s, Swiss law prohibited the children of immigrants without permanent residency from attending public schools. Beatriz studied political science and became a syndicalist, while Madalena earned a PhD. Nobody among their immigrant friends and neighbors imagined these daughters of Galician farmers would go so far.

Though Spaniards had already begun migrating to France in the nineteenth century, the economic frenzy that occurred after the Second World War prompted many more to set their sights on the rapidly developing economies of Western Europe. Some historians argue that 3.5 million Spaniards moved to France, Germany, and Switzerland. Many returned, others stayed. Some migrated legally—225,000 to France, 380,000 to Germany and Switzerland—but hundreds of thousands of workers, like Eliseo Rosende, left Spain illegally. Some of these people were regularized in their country of destination after some time, which only tended to skew the numbers involved. For instance, the French census of 1968 stated that the number of Spaniards in the country was around 610,000—or three times the number of official emigrants there.

Spaniards' economic migration to Western Europe began in the early 1950s, saw significant growth after 1961, and petered out after host countries closed their foreign-worker programs in the face of widespread unemployment after the 1973-74 Oil Crisis. These migratory patterns show that the connection between economic development in one's country of origin and the decision of thousands of migrants to leave is more complex than just poverty or lack of opportunity: it goes far beyond a simple push-and-pull explanation. While the movement of Spaniards to Western Europe coincided with the period of the Spanish economic miracle—when industry, economic development, higher salaries, and better living standards came to the country after 1959—these benefits were regionally uneven and slow to take shape. The reasons for individual Spaniards to leave thus remained in place.

Postwar economic migration was not an isolated phenomenon. Around 8 million Italians, Portuguese, Greeks, Yugoslavians, Turks, Moroccans, Algerians, and Tunisians also partook of this temporary economic opportunity. Italians, Spaniards, and Portuguese were often part of a dynamic some historians have called the Latin migration system. Italians would arrive first,

followed by Spaniards, who would replace them in their jobs; Italians could then move up the economic ladder in their host country or return home to an improved economy. After a while, Portuguese would arrive and replaced Spaniards in a similar fashion. In contrast to the late 1970s, European countries were hungry for cheap labor in the immediate postwar period. But this demand was accompanied by stringent requirements: host countries preferred young, healthy males. As a result, by 1968 only 26 percent of all Spanish workers in France were female, and in Germany two years later, women comprised 29.4 percent (though these numbers were higher than in Spain itself, where women made up 21.6 percent of the labor force in 1964 and 24.7 percent in 1975). In some countries, such as Germany, Spaniards—both male and female—were concentrated in the industrial sector, but in other countries their options were more diverse; in Switzerland, for example, a quarter of male Spaniards worked in construction, followed by industry and hospitality. 38 percent of women worked in hospitality, while 14.5 percent worked in domestic services. Spaniards in France worked mainly in agriculture, whether for the entire year or for just a few months during the wine, beet, and rice harvests. Between 1962 and 1974, as many as one hundred thousand temporary workers brought in the harvest in France each year.

Sending and receiving countries signed bilateral agreements to regulate this movement, and they created particular organizations in charge of selecting migrants. Germany signed agreements with Italy in 1955, Greece and Spain in 1960, Turkey in 1961, Morocco in 1963, Portugal in 1964, Tunisia in 1965, and Yugoslavia in 1968. The migrant-labor programs initiated with these agreements were temporary in design. Western European countries did not want to attract permanent residents, with the diverse cultural and social needs that their young families would entail. They preferred single men that would work for a short period of time, usually two years, and then return home with their earnings. When these workers returned to Spain, they

settled not in the same underdeveloped areas they had left, but rather in one of the country's rapidly growing cities. As a result, the areas that had produced these migrants in the first place never recovered from the demographic hemorrhage of the 1950-70s.

Was this migration perceived as a disgrace, as the transatlantic migration had been at the turn of the century? Franco and many of the other authoritarian leaders whose citizens had left (António de Oliveira Salazar in Portugal, the Colonels in Greece, King Hassan II in Morocco) were actually delighted to bid farewell to a population for which their economies could not provide; these people could become disenchanted and turn against their rulers if they remained at home, so migration worked as a sort of safety valve to control an idle and youthful population. And by facilitating family reunification in those countries that allowed for it—France for instance—the Francoist administration was also able to save on the cost of education, health, and social insurance. Migrants' remittances, as we have seen, were also viewed as a source of hard currency. Indeed, historians estimate that they covered between 17 and 30 percent of Spain's trade deficit between 1960 and 1973. The Francoist administration, via the Spanish Institute for Emigration, even organized a banking transfer system to facilitate, promote, and control migrants' remittances.

Figure 1

As Figure 1 shows, the Oil Crisis of 1973-74 initiated a downward trend in the migration of Spaniards and an increase in those returning home. Not only were these Spaniards able to find work at home, but many were able to move away from the hardest and most poorly paid jobs, such as greenhouse pickers or domestic servants, since these were now being filled by

international immigrants. However, with the onset of the world recession in 2008, the period of prosperity brought on by Spain's entry into the EU in 1986 was revealed to be an exception rather than a rule. According to the National Statistical Institute, almost 1.5 million Spaniards were living abroad in 2009; by 2015 this number had ballooned to almost 2.2 million, a 46 percent increase in just six years. Mostly young and educated Spaniards were leaving the northern provinces of Asturias, A Coruña, Pontevedra, and Ourense, the Canary Island of Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Madrid, and Barcelona. Every single year from 2009 to 2015, more women left than men, albeit not by a large margin. Most of these immigrants were of working age and, judging by the increase in minors abroad, many were bringing their children with them. In some cases, people whose parents and grandparents migrated to Switzerland in the 1960s and returned home to have families, have once again set their compasses north.

#### CLIMBING FORTRESS EUROPE: THE MAKING OF MULTICULTURAL SPAIN

Domingo Antonio Edjang Moreno was born in Torrejón de Ardoz, Madrid, in 1977. His Equatorial Guinean father was a military man working in the nearby base. His mother, from the poor region of Extremadura, was an ethnic Spaniard. Edjang, better known as the political rapper El Chojin, ruminates on the place of race in contemporary Spain: “Cuando tu padre es negro, tu madre blanca y tú estás entre medias, aprendes naturalmente que la cantidad de melanina es un dato anecdótico.”<sup>3</sup> How did Spain go from a country that sent millions of its citizens abroad to one that looks up to El Chojin, the son of internal and international migrants?

Migration to Western Europe began declining in the early 1970s; it was largely over by the time other European countries closed their guest-worker programs in the wake of the Oil Crisis of 1973-74. For more than three decades, from 1974 to 2008, Spaniards, now rooted and

prosperous, forgot that they had once been a country of exiles and migrants. A booming construction sector, cutting-edge agribusinesses, and a growing tourist industry attracted unprecedented levels of international migration from the mid-1990s to the onset of the economic recession in 2008. While in 1981, the number of foreign-born migrants in Spain comprised just 0.52 percent of the total population (198,042 people), that number had risen to 12.2 percent (5,747,734 people) by 2010. (It has since dropped to 10.7 percent, or about 5 million people.) One-third of the total are from Latin America, particularly Ecuador; European migrants make up another third, of which Brits and Romanians are predominant. The oldest and largest immigrant group from one single country is from Morocco.

Becoming a country of immigrants did not come easy. While Spaniards themselves were intimately familiar with exile and migration, they lacked experience with incoming migration control and integration programs. In fact, the country's first immigration law, approved in 1985, on the eve of Spain's entry into the European Economic Community—the precursor of today's European Union (EU)—the following year, was aimed at policing foreigners without any provisions for social integration. The law enshrined privileges for some migrants while ignoring others. It assumed, for example, that some immigrants, due to their “cultural affinity” with Spain, were more likely to integrate and thus deserved longer work and residency permits, and these same immigrants were granted easier access to citizenship (the normal residency requirement of ten years lowered to just two). This group included migrants from Latin America, Andorra, the Philippines, Equatorial Guinea, and Sephardic Jews. Some were included because they shared linguistic and religious customs with the majority of Spaniards; others—namely Sephardic Jews—were included as a symbolic restitution of a historic crime (the expulsion of Spanish Jews in 1492). And yet the same criteria could easily be applied to *Moriscos*, Spanish Muslims forced

to convert after the Christian conquest of Iberia, and expelled altogether between 1609 and 1614, but who were nonetheless ignored by the law. People from Spain's former colonial territories, such as the Philippines and Equatorial Guinea, were included, while incomprehensively, people from Western Sahara or Spanish Morocco were not. An impartial observer is forced to conclude that the Spanish Parliament intended to hinder the arrival and integration of populations from these Muslim-dominated countries that, using the government's own criteria, could also claim "cultural affinity" with Spain.

With Spain joining the EU, Western Europeans began immigrating to the country in large numbers, and citizens of the former Eastern Bloc followed as their countries' joined too. Brits and Germans make up part of the large "Sun migration" to Spain. These groups enjoy legal status, usually have money to buy property, and are either retired or work for their own fellow nationals. They interact little with locals, but they are not resented to the same degree as other immigrants because they are perceived to be net contributors to the economy. Backlash against Eastern Europeans has been more intense, because most are traditional economic migrants, but also because of their different ethnic and religious backgrounds. By 2004, when most Eastern European countries had joined the EU, there were already hundreds of thousands of Eastern Europeans living and working in Spain. Their countries' entrance into the EU made it easy for them to legalize their situation and become politically engaged citizens. In the province of Castelló, for example, immigrants amounted to 18.6 percent of the population in 2010; 49.5 percent of these were Romanians. In local elections, their votes have been courted with questionable enticements by the entrenched Popular Party elite.

Most immigrants have had to navigate a complex and unreliable bureaucracy and fight to obtain two separate types of permits, the one to work, the other to reside legally in the country.

Since Spain did not have a system to officially import immigrants, as in Canada or Australia, most people who wanted to remain in Spain overstayed their tourist visas or arrived illegally after a costly, and dangerous—to say nothing of deadly—crossing of the Mediterranean. Between 1985 and 2005, the lack of legal means to reach Spain created massive pockets of undocumented workers who were employed in the country’s thriving underground economy. But Spanish politicians’ lack of experience with immigration policies, compounded by a failure to acknowledge the benefits of immigration and the need to ease tensions between old and new Spaniards, made for poor immigration management. Spanish governments have had to offer “exceptional” regularizations in the form of amnesties of illegal aliens in 1985, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2003, and most recently, in 2005. Other European countries have pressured Spain, Italy, Portugal, and Greece to stop relying on such regularizations, and to find other ways to deal with the ongoing influx of irregular migrants. The Spanish government has responded with a new procedure based on “rootedness.” This is defined as having been in the country for three years, demonstrating a one-year job contract, and family ties with other immigrants—or citizens—legally residing in Spain. It has functioned unevenly at best.

While many scholars argue that regularizations represent top-down affairs decided by governments according to the economic needs of employers, this is a reductionist view of how a government deals with political pressure from civil society. Churches and NGOs have long demanded a radical transformation of the situation of undocumented migrants, and migrants themselves, organized in social movements and engaged in such acts of civil disobedience as hunger strikes and church and university occupations, have lobbied hard to place their demands on the mainstream political agenda. For example, one of the largest regularizations, which granted legal status to 230,000 people, was implemented in 2001 by a Conservative government

that had adamantly opposed it. It was called the “regularization by *arraigo*,” and it was forced on the government after a nationwide immigrant-led mobilization of undocumented migrants demanded access to legal status and the improvement of work and residency conditions it would provide.

Another push for fundamental rights on the part of undocumented migrants occurred in the North African towns of Ceuta and Melilla between 1985 and 1987. Ceuta and Melilla have been under Portuguese and Spanish control since the fifteenth century, but independent Morocco has contested these claims repeatedly. For most of the cities’ history, they were military outposts with little civilian and commercial development, but during the twentieth century their populations almost doubled; by the time Spain had reestablished democracy, these cities had become complex settler outposts best described as borderlands. Even though today it is hard to imagine—with Ceuta and Melilla surrounded by two barbed-wire fences constantly monitored by police—the borders between these cities and their surrounding territories have been porous for most of their history. By 1985, Melilla’s population was composed of two-thirds European descendants with Spanish citizenship and one-third Muslim, most of whom were undocumented workers from nearby Morocco. With the immigration law of 1985, the Spanish government considered these people foreigners, and asked them to apply for new work and residency permits. Yet the Muslim population in Melilla refused; most of them had either been born in the city or had lived there for years—longer, in fact, than the ten consecutive years necessary for the granting of Spanish citizenship. For two years, the (nativist) local government and the government in Madrid refused, but eventually they were forced to accede: tens of thousands of citizenship applications were thus granted, ending the conflict and securing a clear pro-Spanish majority in both cities—at least for the time being.

In Latin America, Spanish immigrants benefited from cultural and racial privileges; in Western Europe, despite widespread racism against southern Europeans, they enjoyed either legal migration or frequent and easy regularizations due to the fact that their labor was a sought-after commodity during the economic miracle. Yet non-European immigrants to Spain have faced a backlash from ethnic Spaniards. While violent outbursts have been limited to the Catalan town of Terrassa in 1999 and the Andalusian town of El Ejido in 2000, the social perception of immigrants as equal neighbors has been slow to trickle down into the Spanish imagination. It has been particularly difficult in those regions, such as the Basque Country or Catalonia, where nationalist projects demand cultural assimilation; in such a context, other languages and religions are perceived as threats to the survival of the nation. In “Rap vs. Racismo,” a song by thirteen Spanish rappers and DJs, MC and producer Nerviozzo raps: “Tú no eres racista tío, eres imbécil. . . . Hace ya muchos años que no existen los países, la frontera está en la piel de cada uno: todos nuestros nietos serán grises. . . . Cobarde sin actitud, si algún día te enfrentas a tus demonios verás que son blancos, como tú.”<sup>4</sup> Similarly, El Chojin’s “N.E.G.R.O.” questions a society that cannot seem to recognize its own inability to identify and deal with racism among its people: “No señores / así no hay opciones de dar con soluciones / al problema que por lo visto supone que conviva gente de distintos colores / con una sociedad que gusta de confrontaciones / si eres negro tendrás que luchar con los problemas de racismo / más todos los demás y lo peor será que verás que tu sociedad lo niega / dirá que España es racista? Venga, exageras!”<sup>5</sup>

#### EXILE AND MIGRATION: STRIKING A BALANCE

Some historians argue that the expulsion of cultural elites throughout Spanish history is one of its defining features, a crucial part of the Spanish experience. This tradition of exile and expulsion

has long been used as evidence of Spain's black legend. But historians must be careful not to project a single, essentializing cause for the many episodes of exile in the country's past. Some argue that these were triggered by intolerance, parochialism, and lack of interest in, even disdain for, foreign ideas and movements. While these cultural explanations may have been correct in some cases, they still need to be tested against concrete ideological, economic, and political causes for the events they purport to explain. That exile has been prevalent in modern Spanish history is hardly in doubt. But a more difficult question is why and to what end? We cannot explain exile movements without making reference to the misuse of institutional power to expel enemies and the backlash among those persecuted groups that this entailed; not coincidentally most modern Spanish kings, with the exception of the current Felipe VI, were exiled at some point; the others came from foreign dynasties, and were quickly deposed and kicked out of the country. The doctrinal and ideological influence of the Catholic Church also encouraged exile movements, most obviously under the Inquisition, and later, during the Spanish Civil War.

As for its consequences, the constant expulsion of enemy political factions hindered elite continuity, and led those who remained in Spain to perceive foreign influences as threats. But there is a tendency to link exile with (a failed) modernity, and rootedness with tradition. This reductive and binary view needs to be reconsidered. Migration theory has been good at tracing the numbers of people who move and the amount of money these persons send back to their families, but more recently, scholars have been trying to understand the non-material benefits that migration involves for the country of origin. Scholars call this "social remittances," which refers to the skills and knowledge that migrants and exiles bring with them when they return home. Spanish society has clearly benefited from the social remittances of returning exiles. For instance, Spaniards in the United States helped shape the perception of the US as the cradle of

liberty and progress; similarly, Spanish liberals in Europe came in contact with cultural romanticism and, after Ferdinand VII's death, brought it back to Spain.

But important questions remain: how influential have these social remittances been in modern Spain? Why have exiles and migrants not been able to have a deeper impact on Spaniards' awareness of their country as a country of migrants? In the nineteenth century, exile was seen as a constant of political life. This idea slowly faded at the end of the century, but it came back with the massive Republican exodus brought about by the Civil War. The limits of exiles' influence, and the causes and consequences of their experience, needs to be explained in its proper context. For instance, Republican exiles included a great contingent of politicians, intellectuals, and artists, and yet these people were prohibited from influencing Spanish political and cultural debates by both distance and Francoist censorship. By the time Franco died in 1975, the intellectual figures of the Republican exile had become relics of a past that thirty-six years of Francoism had largely destroyed; the actual circumstances and timing of events hampered Republican exiles' ability to contribute to the restoration of democracy in Spain.

There are various ways of interpreting massive departures. The optimistic view of migration recognizes its great potential: people who were destitute are able to earn money and gain new skills in other countries, which in turn act as sources of regeneration for the region or country of origin. This kind of thinking underlies a shift in wealthy countries from foreign aid to development projects led by migrants. Since migrants originate in underdeveloped countries, and are versed in these cultures and languages, who better to bring back skills and technology transfer from donor countries? By contrast, a negative view of migration views the departure of young, able, ambitious, and educated citizens as a collective national failure. While the "best" men and women leave and help build other societies, the people left behind have to contend with

oppressive structures—for instance, the clergy in Andalusia, or the Mafia in Sicily. If the escape route that migration offers was not there, these people would be forced to improve their places of origin. Of course, the decision to migrate sometimes does trigger phenomena that can adversely affect one's place of origin. But both the optimistic and pessimistic views of migration and exile are defined as a zero-sum game, in the same way the brain drain/brain gain theory works.

Recently, migration scholars have started looking at these phenomena from the point of view of brain circulation—the idea that a person's skills and contributions are not completely lost by their country of origin, nor gained solely by their country of destination. Take for example the activism in favor of the Spanish Second Republic on the part of Clara González, a Panamanian woman whose only connection with Spain was her Asturian father.

If we look at the journeys of migrants themselves, we are forced to agree with other historians that modern Spaniards have been privileged. Of course, this does not mean that their movements were devoid of hardship, humiliation, or personal tragedy, but Spanish migrants and refugees nonetheless benefited from being white and having places to go to that were culturally and religiously familiar. Some historians even consider the movement of Spaniards to Latin America a “privileged emigration,” in the sense that, despite of the harsh circumstances that forced them to leave in the first place, a large part of this group was able to improve their socio-economic situations. Indeed, their shared language and religion, relics of a colonial past, allowed Spaniards in Latin America to transfer their white privilege to mixed societies imbued with racial prejudice.

The same argument, with some provisos, could be made for Spanish refugees. To be sure, hundreds of thousands of Republican exiles ended up in concentration camps in Southern France; the tens of thousands that Franco refused to repatriate ended up perishing in Nazi

concentration camps such as Mauthausen. But overall, Spanish refugees and economic migrants have enjoyed imperial, religious, and ethnic privileges when it comes to their movement around the world. The generosity of Mexico and other American countries in welcoming Republican exiles right after the Great Depression was paralleled only by Western countries welcoming Communist refugees after the Second World War. Such instances of ideological solidarity are of course quite rare.

Both the memory and the reality of Spaniards' economic migration to Latin America and Western Europe have faded in the democratic period, but the renewal of Spanish emigration since 2008 is nothing new. Rather, it is a resurgence of old currents and dynamics, ones that never really disappeared, but were simply waiting for an economic downturn to reemerge.

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<sup>1</sup> Francesc Relea, "Aquellos niños, aquellos recuerdos," *El País*, July 22, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> "It doesn't matter how liberal one is, whether in the process of emigrating, returning, or getting ready to emigrate again, the liberal symbolizes perpetual movement, is the sea with its eternal ebb and flow" [Author's translation]. Mariano José de Larra, "La diligencia," *Revista Mensajero*, 47, April 16, 1835, [http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/obra-visor/la-diligencia--0/html/ff79617e-82b1-11df-acc7-002185ce6064\\_1.html](http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/obra-visor/la-diligencia--0/html/ff79617e-82b1-11df-acc7-002185ce6064_1.html) [Last accessed August 15, 2015].

<sup>3</sup> "When your dad is black, your mother is white, and you are somewhere in between them, you learn naturally that the amount of melanin is unimportant." El Chojin @ElChojin\_net, Twitter, Sept. 5, 2014 [Last accessed August 10, 2015].

<sup>4</sup> "Dude, you're not a racist, you're an idiot/... Nations disappeared long ago and borders are really only the surfaces of our skin, which is why our grandchildren will all be shades of brown/... Coward, if one day you are made to face your demons you will see that they're white, like you are" [Author's translation]. El Chojin, "Rap contra el Racismo." LP: El ataque de los que observan, 2011.

<sup>5</sup> "No, ladies and gentlemen / this way, there is no option to find solutions / to the alleged problem of people of different races living together / in a society that likes confrontation / if you're black, you're going to have to deal with racism / on top of all the other problems, and worse of all your society will deny it / and say, Spain is racist? Come on, don't exaggerate!" El Chojin, "N.E.G.R.O." LP: Cosas que pasan, que no pasan y que deberían pasar, 2009.