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State Nationalism and Territorial Accommodation in Spain and India

This article analyses the significance of polity-wide parties' understanding of state and nation for their ability and willingness to accommodate territorial diversity. To illustrate this point, we first introduce a typology containing four 'ideal-types' of state nationalism: dominant, integrationist, composite, and plurinational. Subsequently, we apply this typology to two plural and multi-level polities, Spain and India, during two critical junctures: their founding constitutional moments and more recent episodes of change associated with 'the Catalan question' in Spain and the rise of the BJP in India, respectively. Our analysis underscores how varieties of state nationalism inform the nature and evolution of the territorial constitution, in form and in practice, and the extent to which such shifts are linked to party competition and changes in the party system.

Keywords: state nationalism; sub-state nationalism; party ideology; party competition; Spain; India

Scholars of territorial politics in plurinational states have long sought to understand why, how, and when the state (center) accommodates territorial diversity. The triggers may be structural (rooted for instance in territorial variations in economic development or identity), agency-driven (linked to party agency and party competition), or a combination of both (Erk, 2007; Brancati, 2009; Meguid, 2010; Toubeau, 2017).

In this article, we examine the significance of the ideological openness of polity-wide parties to demands for territorial accommodation, broadly understood as territorial self-rule, shared rule, and symbolic recognition (Marks, Hooghe, and Schakel, 2008; Keating, 2013). Polity-wide parties have well-defined views on how they perceive the state's *raison d'être*, i.e. how they project what the state is for and what and who it represents. Such relatively stable meta-frames of state and nation (what we refer to as 'varieties of state nationalism') condition the pace at which polity-wide parties are *willing* (ideological congruence) and *capable* (are they in a position of power and do they act on their own or in concert with other polity-wide parties) to accommodate territorial diversity. This ideological openness, so we argue, remains relatively stable over time but it may lead to limited temporal shifts, prompted by electoral challengers in the form of sub-state actors (parties or movements) or polity-wide competitors. Our analysis echoes earlier work by Swenden and Maddens (2009), Toubeau and Wagner (2016), and Toubeau (2017), who argued that party ideologies work as 'ideational constraints' which set out a 'logic of appropriateness' within which parties may accommodate territorial demands.

Our article hopes to make two original contributions to the literature. Firstly, we seek to make a conceptual contribution by suggesting a typology of meta-frames, or 'varieties of state nationalism', which polity-wide parties adopt in relation to state and nation and what they mean for territorial accommodation. Secondly, although we are certainly not the first authors to pursue a longitudinal and cross-cases analysis of polity-wide party ideologies in relation to territorial accommodation, we bring together two apparently very dissimilar cases: Spain and India. Different in size and level of development, they share a number of commonalities in terms of state nationalism and territorial diversity. In this, we draw inspiration from Boswell et al. (2019), who encourage creative comparative work by focusing on the dilemmas of situated agents across contexts and their ability to create, and act on, meanings and beliefs.

The article is structured as follows. In the first section, we introduce the varieties of state nationalism and justify our comparative case-selection. Subsequently, we illustrate their significance during critical junctures in the development of regional autonomy. We start with the founding or 'constituent' moment, when both countries formulated their constitutions, including a territorial roadmap. Next we focus on the extent to which recent territorial crises and/or party system change prompted changes in the prevailing state narratives of polity-wide

parties and the ensuing pattern of territorial accommodation (in form and in practice). In the conclusion, we summarize our main findings and identify avenues for further research.

Varieties of State Nationalism and Implications for Territorial Accommodation

State nationalism links nationalism as an ideology to the territorial boundaries of the state, or indeed the ‘nation-state’. State nationalism assumes the ‘constant reproduction and promotion of the nation by state elites and institutions’ (Cetrà and Brown Swan, 2020: 3). Yet, elites representing polity-wide parties speak through many voices. In order to situate the ideology of said parties in relation to state nationalism, we propose four ‘meta-frames’, each of which corresponds with a number of attributes linked to how they perceive the relationship between nation and state and the scope for territorial accommodation. Importantly, these frames must be considered as ideal types. The ‘varieties of state nationalism’ are summarised in Table 1 below and they are ranked from the territorially least accommodative to the most accommodative.

Table 1. Varieties of State Nationalism and Implications for Territorial Accommodation

	Nation	Self-Rule	Shared-Rule	Symbolic Recognition
Dominant Nationalism	Singular, equated with ‘majority’	Low	None	Only linked to majority
Integrationist Nationalism	Singular	Moderate	Low	Low
Composite Nationalism	Singular	Moderate, asymmetry permissible	Medium	Medium
Plurinationalism	Plural	High, Asymmetry	High	High

Dominant nationalism assumes that the nation is built around a core group which, in a territorial context, is linked to a sociologically (and usually demographically) dominant territorially concentrated group, whose leaders identify as a nation. Parties which align with dominant nationalism seek to elevate the symbols, narratives, customs, laws or policies of their nation to the state as a whole. In this context, there is no need for self-rule beyond a form of decentralization which may enhance the efficiency of the state. Shared rule is absent given that the centre acts as a representative voice of the dominant nation, nor is there the possibility to recognise other groups as nations. As Smootha (2005) and Adeney (2020) demonstrate, dominant nationalists are not necessarily non-democratic so long as they extend civil and political rights to all citizens. Yet, Adeney (2020), in a recent operationalization of ethnic democracy and application to India, shows how constitutional rules, citizenship laws and informal practices may privilege a dominant ethnic group or nation at the expense of others, eroding the quality of the regime as a ‘liberal’ democracy.

Parties which align with *integrationist nationalism* seek to build the state on the basis of laws, narratives, customs, or policies which do not align *explicitly* with a territorially concentrated sub-group of the state. Rather, they claim to be ‘colour-blind’ or neutral insofar as they place emphasis on ‘constitutional patriotism’ and shared values (such as solidarity, liberalism, democracy), and purport to defend a civic or inclusive form of nationalism. Integrationist nationalists leave individuals entirely free in their choice of religion or language. Beyond guaranteeing this freedom as a constitutional right, they believe that the state should not promote group-specific policies. In *practical* terms, though, integrationist nationalists may privilege the identity and practices of one group over others. For instance, on ideological and practical grounds, they may require the institutions and administration of the central state to operate in a shared language, which may be the mother tongue of one (often dominant) group in the state. Integrationist nationalists support a federal structure to bring democracy closer to the people, but they believe the state does not need to acknowledge group rights in terms of political representation (except perhaps of a transient nature) or symbolism to support a shared identity and nation.

Parties which adhere to *composite nationalism* (Stuligross and Varshney, 2002) acknowledge the state as a ‘diverse’ (if not necessarily ‘divided’) society which brings together various groups with distinctive languages, religions, and/or customs. They believe that the state should honour group-specific practices, for instance, by reorganizing the state in such a way that the boundaries of the sub-state entities correspond with groups who self-define on the basis of language or alternative territorial markers. Yet, they continue to equate the state with a singular ‘nation’, but whose foundations are explicitly ‘syncretic’, appealing to narratives and practices which draw in or fuse various group traditions. They acknowledge the need for sanctioning asymmetric or multicultural practices, so long as these only apply to minority segments of the population, and, when linked to territory, are rooted in different processes of state formation. Composite nationalists acknowledge the need for some level of shared rule or group presentation at the centre but confined to certain decisions and normally only with the institutionalization of a *collective veto-right*.

Finally, parties which are *plurinationalist* in orientation equate the state with multiple (at least two) nations within. The state only exists as the amalgamation of two or more *demoi*. The nations composing the state must be represented in key legislative, executive, and judicial organs of the central state, and each should have a veto-right on decisions affecting their material or cultural autonomy. Asymmetric practices reflecting the different aspirations of groups within the state are tolerated and can be more widespread than in a ‘composite’ configuration. State symbols predominantly draw from narratives or images linked with each constituent nation. In a plurinational state, the gravitas of decision-making in legislative, fiscal, and administrative terms has shifted decisively to the nations, whereas the central institutions operate in a consociational or power-sharing manner to decide on a limited range of competencies. Arguably, *in practice*, polity-wide parties are rarely fully plurinational in orientation insofar as they appeal to voters across the state and thus are more likely to emphasize the ties that bind. Therefore, this is a position most closely aligned with regional and sub-state nationalist parties.

To address how polity-wide parties appropriate, and sometimes combine, elements of different varieties of state nationalism, we consider the cases of Spain and India. Although highly divergent in state formation and levels of development, they share a number of attributes which make them similar cases for the purpose of our study. Spain is one of Europe’s oldest states with a largely consolidated territorial configuration since the 16th century and a centuries-long tradition of self-governance. It is also a high-income country embedded within the European Union. Yet, Spain is home to different traditions of state nationalism which are carried forward by different ‘national’ party political formations. It is also faced with different

currents of sub-state nationalism. These have forced state actors to articulate their views on state and nation at regular intervals, most recently so during the ‘Catalan crisis’. India, in its current territorial form, did not exist prior to the state’s independence in 1947. Its birth ended nearly a century of direct British colonization (longer if we consider the legacy of the East India Company since 1757) and was tied up with the violent Partition of British India into India and Pakistan. As a post-colonial, low-income country, development and modernization were placed right and centre of its state nationalist ideology (Khilnani, 2004). Yet, like in Spain, actors at the centre have had to address alternative views of state and nation, specify their relation to the majority culture, and identify their ideological and institutional approach to territorial diversity, especially in the face of sub-state nationalist and regionalist movements.

To trace the origins and development of state nationalism, we pay attention to its articulation during two critical junctures. The first are their ‘founding moments’ (Khosla, 2020) as democracies, marked by different types of regime change (in Spain, the fall of the Franco regime in 1975 and its replacement with a democratic constitution as of 1978; in India, the end of colonialism and the making of a fully democratic Indian constitution between 1946-1949). Since constitutions and the territorial arrangements of a state at a time of constitution-making reflect a balance of power at a particular moment in time, we need to trace their evolution across time. For reasons of space, we cannot focus on the full period since 1978 and 1949 respectively. Therefore, we contrast varieties of state nationalism during these founding moments with a more recent period of recalibration which has prompted parties to re-examine, reassert, and adjust their state nationalist narratives, although through different processes. In Spain, the trigger prompting this most recent critical juncture is decisively sub-state mobilization: the rise of Catalan demands for self-determination and independence. In India, this reconfiguration reflects party system change following the 2014 general elections, which led to the emergence of the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) as the dominant polity-wide party.

State Nationalism during Critical Junctures: Modern Spain and India’s Founding Moments

Modern Spain’s Founding Moment: Constitutional Ambiguities and Territorial Governance

In the late 1970s, Spain transformed from a unitary non-democratic state into a democratic and decentralized polity through an elite-driven process characterized by cross-party compromise that culminated into the approval of the 1978 Spanish constitution. Negotiations on a constitution were induced by the absence of a single party majority after the 1977 general elections (Colomer, 1995), as a result of which sub-state nationalist parties enjoyed opportunities for leverage. Despite representing different varieties of state nationalism, the party leaders involved in the constitutional negotiations were marked by a consensual predisposition amid fears of a democratic setback prompted by the armed forces. The broader ideational context was one in which dominant nationalism centred around a Castilian core was delegitimized due to its symbolic and discursive appropriation by the Franco regime (1939-1975) while sub-state Basque, Catalan, and Galician nationalisms enjoyed a newly gained legitimacy based on their legacy of democratic resistance and repression (Núñez Seixas, 2018).

The process of constitutional reform was initiated by the Spanish Congress, which appointed a constitutional commission that in turn chose a seven-deputies committee, later known as ‘fathers of the Constitution’. With three delegates, the Unity of Democratic Centre (UCD) had the strongest representation, alongside one each for the Socialists, the Communists (a Catalan, from the Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia or PSUC), and the right-wing Popular Alliance (AP). Due to their stronger representation in Parliament, the ‘Catalan-Basque

minority’, with one delegate only, was represented by a Catalan nationalist, which shaped the discussion of territorial accommodation alongside the idiosyncrasies of the Catalan case. Partly as a result of their exclusion, the PNV (Basque Nationalist Party) abstained in the final voting of the constitutional draft and advocated an ‘active abstention’ in the confirmatory referendum campaign. Despite this, the Spanish constitution marks a broad inter-party compromise with strong popular legitimacy. It was overwhelmingly ratified in a popular referendum (91.81% Yes, 8.19% No) on a turnout of 67.11%. Importantly, however, in the Basque Country, support for the constitution was comparatively lower (69% voted in favour) and the turnout was only 45%, raising concerns about the legitimacy of the new constitutional setting in that Autonomous Community (Lecours, 2007). In view of its overall broad legitimacy, the dominant claim of Spanish nationalism since democratization has become ‘constitutionalism’, or the vindication of the 1978 Constitution as the legitimate basis for maintaining political order and unity in Spain. Even today, leaders of all polity-wide parties self-define as constitutionalists –or, less frequently, as ‘constitutional patriots’.

In the process of constitution-making, debates around sovereignty, nationhood and territorial organization proved the most contentious (Moreno et al., 2019: 245-48). The alliance between polity-wide leftist and sub-state nationalist parties was a marked feature of the constitutional moment and a constant, in varying degrees, of territorial dynamics in democratic Spain. Mainstream sub-state nationalist parties were willing to pursue their goals within a plurinational frame. The Catalan Democratic Convergence (CDC) sought recognition of Catalonia’s national distinctiveness and the re-establishment of Catalan political autonomy; and the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) demanded the re-establishment of the traditional ‘fueros’ (administrative and fiscal self-rule) in the three Basque provinces and Navarre.

Among the polity-wide parties, the Socialists (PSOE) and the Communists (PCE) defended a composite, even plurinational view of Spain. Indeed, in the 1960s and 1970s, the PSOE defended the right to self-determination for ‘nationalities and regionalities’ and the creation of a ‘republican federation of Iberian nationalities’. Only after the Spanish election of 1977, and especially after the failed *coup d’état* of 1981, did it shift towards a form of composite nationalism with Spain as the main frame of reference (Núñez Seixas, 2018). The ruling UCD prioritized maintaining the monarchy but was internally divided on the territorial agenda, with integrationist nationalists purporting symmetric decentralization and composite nationalists defending the special treatment for the ‘historic nationalities’ which enjoyed autonomous status in the Second Republic: Catalonia, the Basque Country, and Galicia. Only the conservative Popular Alliance AP defended a strongly integrationist form of state nationalism, centred around the indissoluble unity of Spain and the maintenance of a unitary and centralized state.

Out of these various strands of state nationalism emerged a constitution which somehow blends an integrationist view of the state with important composite tenets. Its integrationist credentials can be read from a concern with state integrity, especially in Article 1, which vests sovereignty in the Spanish people, and Article 2, which proclaims the ‘indissoluble unity’ of the Spanish nation as the ‘common homeland of all Spaniards’. Its composite features are reflected in terminological ambiguities (Cruz Villalón, 2006), such as references to the ‘peoples’ of Spain in several passages, and in the deliberately ambiguous term ‘nationalities’, created to appease both the right and the armed forces, for whom any reference to other nations would have been anathema, and the Catalan-Basque minority, for whom their designation as simple regions would have been unacceptable (Balfour and Quiroga, 2007: 52). In fact, Article 2 speaks of ‘the nationalities and regions of which [Spain] is composed’, which some have interpreted as the signal of a source of authority that precedes the Constitution (Guibernau, 2004).

The integrationist view of the Spanish document is also reflected in the chosen language regime (Article 3 and Preamble). The constitutional legislator gave a prevalent role to the majority language, Castilian [Spanish], the only official language across the state territory and the only language which all Spaniards have a duty to know. In fact, the ‘other languages’ are not specified. However, this coincides with a policy of *co-officiality* which grants official status to certain languages, alongside Spanish, in all or part of the territory of the Autonomous Community (for example, Catalan in Catalonia, the Balearic Islands and the Valencian Community) and of *limited recognition* through a partial degree of protection to certain languages in all or part of the Autonomous territory short of co-official status (for example, Astur-Leonese in Asturias).

Territorially, the text provided for an open-ended model of decentralization (Cruz Villalón, 2006) that came to be known as the ‘State of Autonomies’. Article 2 recognized a right to self-government (self-rule) for the aforementioned nationalities and regions. The territorial boundaries (as well as the powers and organization) of the Autonomous Communities were not defined but allowed to emerge in an iterative process, involving the centre and state parliaments and, in the case of their territorial configuration, the Spanish provincial Councils, which were left with the right to initiate the process towards self-government¹ (Moreno et al. 2019).

When the constitution was approved, the asymmetric nature of the self-rule arrangements was obvious to see. The historical nationalities (and other multilingual territories) saw their associated languages recognised as co-official (with implications for education, cultural policies, and citizen rights) in no less than six Autonomous Communities. They also sometimes benefited from specific funding arrangements, with the Basque Country and Navarre preserving their special fiscal arrangements² as part of the broader protection of their historical rights (*foralidad*), and the Canary Islands obtaining a special economic-fiscal regime with special provisions on the VAT (Colino, 2020). Thus, despite their absence from the commission, the PNV achieved their ambitious goal of the re-establishment of the *fueros*, although outstanding grievances remained (Monreal Zia, 2014). Importantly, territorial accommodation was built almost entirely around self-rule rather than shared rule. There was little investment in intergovernmental relations, and the Senate was not made to represent territorial interests.

India’s Founding Moment: Integrationist Nationalism and the Territorial Compact

Unlike Spain, India had emerged as a ‘new’ country when it debated its first indigenous constitution (1946-1949) and continued to operate on the basis of the colonial Government of India Act (1935) in the interim. In marked contrast with Spain, a single party, the Congress Party (hereafter Congress), with 82 percent of the Constituent Assembly seats, dominated deliberations (Austin, 1966: 12). However, Congress did not present a uniform state nationalist narrative. Gandhi came closest to propagating a composite, even multicultural idea of the state (for instance, drawing on elements of Hinduism and Islam in propagating *Hindustani* as a shared language) (Varshney, 1993: 234). However, select voices within Congress, but also outside the party, especially in the Hindu Volunteers Organization or *Rashtriya Swayamsevak*

¹ As a result, some territories enjoying distinct histories and a degree of pro-autonomy mobilization obtained autonomy status (such as Andalusia, Navarre, Valencia and the Canary Islands) soon, while others did not (i.e. Leon), and yet a third group of territories without a sense of collective distinctiveness became autonomous units as well (such as Cantabria, La Rioja and Madrid).

² For instance, under the *concierto económico*, the three Basque historic territories that currently form the Basque autonomous community set and collect most taxes and pass on a share to the Spanish government for common services. The amount passed by the Basque authorities is low enough to allow the Basque Country to run a surplus.

Sangh (hereafter RSS), propagated a dominant Hindu nationalist state narrative (Singh, 2005). Given the legacy of Partition, and the related ‘two-nation’ theory underpinning a Muslim Pakistan and Hindu India, their voices could have been more influential had it not been for Gandhi’s assassination by a (former) RSS activist in 1948.

In the end, though, the Constituent Assembly settled for a predominantly integrationist vision of state and nation. The ‘idea of India’ (Khilnani, 2004) projected a modernist state bound by common citizenship and identity, equality before the law, democracy, and secularism. These principles found recognition in a liberal and socially transformative constitution, which, as in Spain, formed the basis of a strong sense of constitutional patriotism. That the integrationist view prevailed is in part connected to the towering role of Jawaharal Nehru, India’s first Prime Minister (1947-1964). However, the painful legacy of the sub-continent’s Partition put a strong onus on the territorial integrity or unity of the Indian state ahead of the accommodation of territorial diversity (Adeney, 2002; Swenden, 2017). Therefore, unlike in Spain, where politicians can voice support for regional self-determination (though may not act upon it), Indian politicians can do neither. The People of Representation Act (1951), which has formed the basis of the 1952 and subsequent elections, disqualifies (prospective) members of parliament and state legislatures who insult the national flag or the Constitution of India or prevent the singing of the national anthem (Chapter III, 8 (k)). Integrationist nationalism also upholds India as an ‘*indestructible union*’ (of destructible states). As per the constitution (sixteenth amendment act, 1963), public officeholders, including MPs and members of state assemblies, must pledge loyalty to the ‘*integrity and sovereignty of the union*’. Activities which undermine this (e.g. the creation of an explicitly secessionist party) are considered ‘anti-national’ and punishable by law.

The preponderance of integrationist state nationalism led to an at best centralized federal arrangement, explicitly referred to as a ‘union of centre and the states’. In it (with the exception of Jammu and Kashmir), the more than 500 princely states contingent to Indian territory were left with no choice but to join India, and in the process saw their territories largely rearranged or merged with former colonial provinces (now renamed as states). Dr Ambedkar, the chairman of the drafting committee of the Indian constitution, asserted the flexibility of this arrangement: the state could be ‘unitary or federal according to the requirements of time and circumstance’ (Raju, 1991). The central parliament *alone* obtained formal discretion in determining the number and size of the states. The centre gained the upper hand in legislation, including taxation. It inherited significant emergency powers, i.e. the right to suspend the autonomy of the states under a provision known as ‘President’s Rule’ subject to certain conditions being met and, less dramatically, to legislate in state (exclusive) powers when deemed in the national interest. The constitution did not institutionalize shared rule: the Rajya Sabha (second chamber), whilst indirectly elected by state legislatures, is subordinate to the lower house and states are more or less represented according to population (rather than territory). Lack of state representation in the central Planning and Finance Commissions added to India’s centralization (Swenden 2016).

However, as Jaffrelot (2004: 129-133) has argued, the modernist or integrationist vision of Indian nationalism is not blind to territorial and linguistic diversity. The constituent assembly acknowledged the lack of sufficient support for Hindi as the *national* state language, in spite of its indigenous and plurality status. Hence, Hindi was introduced as an official language alongside a further fourteen other languages and English was made an associate official language. The language debate was not fully settled, though, and the option was left open to phase out English and to establish Hindi as the national language after a transition period of 15 years (Chandhoke, 2007).

Asymmetric territorial arrangements were allowed at the fringes, such as border regions with Pakistan and China (Tillin 2016), but they pertain to a small share (less than 5 percent) of

the population, well below the comparable population share of the historical nationalities in Spain. Furthermore, these asymmetric arrangements often carried forward colonial practices and thus did not necessarily introduce *new* forms of accommodation that signify more widespread support for a composite view of the state. Examples in this context relate to the ‘Inner Line Permit’ (ILP) and the Sixth Schedule Provisions in the North-East. The former protects residents in (parts of) Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram, and Manipur against settlements or land purchase from outsiders (Baruah, 2020). The latter enabled hill tribes in Assam (and states carved out of Assam at a later point in time such as Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram and Manipur) to set up Autonomous District Councils. In the case of the Nagas, the post-independence state actually *scaled back* the right to self-determination which they were promised in an agreement with the then governor of Assam shortly before independence. Nagas were merely offered Sixth Schedule protection and Naga tribes boycotted the 1952 elections and started an insurgency (Tillin 2016).

Finally, although princely states were merged or subsumed within other states, there was an important exception: Jammu and Kashmir. Formerly a princely state adjacent to India and Pakistan with a Hindu ruler but Muslim majority population, it could have joined either country. It chose India in October 1947, but joined it only in foreign affairs, defence and communications. The state was also offered the prospect of its own ‘constitution’ (a right not handed to any other Indian state), and a promise by the then Governor General that once law and order had been restored, its accession should be settled by referendum. The special status (and terms of accession) of Kashmir was honoured by the Indian Constituent Assembly in adopting what became Article 370 of the Indian constitution (Bose, 2007).

Party Contestation and the Breakdown of the Territorial Consensus in Spain and India

Spain: The Rise of Catalan Independence and the Crisis of the Territorial State

After the Spanish constitutional moment, and unlike in India (see below), no single party was dominant *for long enough* to impose its national view as hegemonic. Rather, which version of state nationalism prevailed was linked to the ideology of the ruling polity-wide party and party-political bargaining, including the leverage of sub-state nationalist parties to prop up central governments (Field, 2016). The gradual extension of similar powers for all autonomous communities, including erstwhile provinces and regions with limited or non-existing self-government claims, eroded the territorial consensus. This symmetrization, more in tune with an integrationist understanding of the state, was opposed by Catalan and Basque nationalists, since it moved them further away from the composite vision on which they were willing to compromise. However, they lacked sufficient leverage to bargain for a more formally decentralized and asymmetric federation.

For a long time, the strongest challenges to the constitutional compromise came from the Basque Country, where radical forms of sub-state nationalism led to armed struggle. The fight against ETA (*Euskadi ta Askatasuna*, ‘Basque Homeland and Freedom’) became a source of state legitimacy, especially for conservative parties. Politically, the greatest challenge to the predominantly integrationist vision of Spain set out in the constitution was the co-sovereignty proposal known as the Ibarretxe Plan, which was promoted by the PNV Basque President at the time with a view to establish a ‘freely associated state’ in a quasi-separate, confederal relationship with Spain. This was rejected by the Spanish parliament in 2005, while a 2008 proposal seeking to hold a referendum on sovereignty was declared unconstitutional. Recently, under Íñigo Urkullu’s leadership, the PNV’s ‘pendulum’ on the national question (Mees, 2015) moved to pragmatism, attempting to reconstruct centre-periphery cooperation and adopting a more gradual approach to enhancing Basque self-government through the ambiguous demand

of a new political status for the Basque Country. The willingness to buy into a ‘composite settlement’ for now has been made easier in the Basque Country due to ‘conflict exhaustion’ after the end of ETA in 2011 and the dominance of the PNV as the key sub-state nationalist voice (despite limited competition of the leftist Basque pro-independence EH Bildu).

The absence of major competition between different sub-state nationalist parties sets the Basque Country apart from Catalonia, where the independence agenda has been led by two parties of similar size (one centre-left, the Republican Left of Catalonia (ERC); one centre-right, at present the Together for Catalonia (JuntsxCat)). The rise of the independence agenda since 2012 was fuelled by the earlier failure of Catalan statute reform (2006-2010) and its interpretation by Catalan parties and civil society institutions (Basta, 2018), and it has been subsequently accelerated by dynamics of electoral competition between ERC and JuntsxCat (Barrio and Teruel 2017). The statute reform had been initiated by a coalition-government of the Catalan Social-Democrats (PSC) and ERC, thus bridging the Spanish sub-state/state-nationalist divide. The key event in the unprecedented political and social mobilization for Catalan self-determination and independence in the period 2012-17 was the 2017 unilateral referendum (López and Sanjaume-Calvet, 2020) and its in part violent repression by the Spanish police, followed by a failed declaration of independence and the jailing of twelve political and social leaders for sedition, misuse of public funds, and disobedience.

Thus, in recent years, two fundamental constitutional precepts enjoying state-wide cross-party consensus – a single sovereign Spanish nation and the indivisibility of Spain – have moved to the forefront of the political agenda, prompting a realignment among polity-wide parties. The room for compromise is larger among left-wing polity-wide parties, which place the strongest emphasis on redistributive issues, than among their right-wing competitors, for whom the national and territorial question is the main electoral dimension (Alonso, 2012: 13-40). Conservative parties in Spain – the Popular Party (PP), Ciudadanos (C’s) and, more recently, VOX – own the issue of state unity and have made it a salient aspect of their discourse. The PP, which was the incumbent party for most of this period (2011-2018), has adopted a strongly integrationist narrative of the Spanish state, without a need to compromise between 2011 and 2016 due to the party’s parliamentary majority. In spite of this, and perhaps paradoxically, the party’s strategy mostly consisted of framing the Catalan self-determination demand as a matter of law-enforcement and resorting to challenges via the Constitutional Court. Under the PP governments, we see a centralizing effect of regulatory reforms to provide budget stability amidst the global financial crisis, which increased the dependence of Autonomous Communities on the central government (Colino and Del Pino, 2017). We also see a greater questioning of sub-state nationalist policies, especially on language in Catalonia (Cetrà 2019). It is actually when the PP is in central opposition that it most seeks to increase the salience of the national question in order to re-define the political agenda around favorable issues, as evidenced during the Catalan statute reform process and since PSOE’s Pedro Sánchez became Prime Minister in 2018.

Since 2015, in the wake of the Catalan crisis, the PP, immersed in successive corruption scandals, has faced competition from Ciudadanos on the integrationist flank and the more overtly dominant nationalist VOX. Ciudadanos and VOX share a strong ‘anti-separatist’ character, with the former appealing to the constitution and individual rights as safeguards against (sub-state) nationalism, and the latter combining its quasi-mystical identification between Spain and Catholicism with a growing focus on nativism. An outbidding pattern of competition has developed between state-wide conservative parties through the radicalization of party discourses and positions, mirroring a similar process between Catalan nationalist parties. Ciudadanos and VOX would have presented any hypothetical accommodationist move as a ‘concession’ to the ‘separatists’, and the PP could have experienced a loss of votes as the

party's core voters would have felt that the party leadership was sacrificing the party's ideology (Cetrà and Harvey, 2019: 621-624).

Towards the more accommodative spectrum, the 'composite' PSOE has always opposed a Catalan independence referendum, but it has undergone significant changes in their framing of, and approach to, the issue. The party finds itself in competition with a more plurinational understanding of Spain by the leftist Unidas Podemos. The Social-Democrats emphasize the 'plural' character of Spain, a nation proud of its linguistic and cultural diversity with a plurality of national identities or 'cultural nations' (short of 'political nations') coexisting within, but being loyal to, a common Spanish nation. In comparison, Podemos contends that Spain is plurinational and acknowledges sub-state nations as distinct peoples with a right to self-determination. Given the comparatively lower salience attributed to the territorial issue compared with their centre-right polity-wide competitors, both parties have been able to shift their position in recent years. Unidas Podemos has subtly altered its discourse since 2017 and no longer uses the term 'referendum' but 'vote', which is vaguer, and seeks to emphasize other issues over the territorial question. In the 2019 election campaign, the PSOE sought to attract votes from Ciudadanos by portraying the Catalan movement as violent and exclusionary, and insisted on law enforcement. The PSOE's formation of a minority coalition government after the elections with the plurinationalist Unidas Podemos, which required the abstention of the Catalan pro-independence ERC from the investiture vote, prompted the party to adopt a more conciliatory tone (see Anderson 2020 for a detailed discussion of recent developments).

In short, the cross-party consensus among polity-wide parties on relatively ambiguous but predominantly integrationist precepts of the state has evaporated. In response to the hardening of Catalan demands for self-determination, we have seen an intensification of integrationist and even dominant state nationalist voices among the right, alongside stances which at once reflect integrationist, composite, and plurinational views on the left. This re-articulation has been driven by rising electoral outbidding among state nationalists *and* sub-state nationalists in a context in which the national question became central to party competition in state and Catalan elections.

India: The Emergence of Hindu Nationalism as the New State Nationalism

Prior to 2014, Hindu nationalism was not strong enough to become India's dominant state ideology. Even though Congress violated the party's verbal commitment to an overarching integrationist meta-frame – especially so under the Premiership of Indira Gandhi (1966-1977; 1980-1984) during which President's Rule was regularly abused and Hindu nationalism was sometimes appropriated for electoral gain – ; such violations remained largely opportunistic and were limited in time or space.

In contrast, the BJP, its predecessor the Jan Sangh, and the broader Hindu nationalist movement around the RSS with which they are linked, have been consistent in their ideological commitment to dominant nationalism. That vision has sought 'the abolition of the provinces [states] as an intermediary structure' (Jaffrelot, 2011: 32). For Hindu nationalists, any territorial sub-divisions cannot query an Indian's loyalty to the holy or sacred motherland, linked to the territory encompassing the Himalayas, main rivers and seas bordering the South Asian subcontinent. This *Bharat* is first and foremost a nation rather than a state, marked by Hindu traditions and symbols. Deendayal Upadhyaya, erstwhile president of the Jana Sangh, put this rather starkly in his 'integral humanism' (1965), advocating 'One Nation, One People' (and with that also the promotion of Hindi as the national language, following the principle of *Hindu-Hindi-Hindustan*), as well as the replacement of a union state with a decentralized state built around local governments or *panchayats* and *Janapadas* (about 100 across India) centered

around a unitary state (Upadhyaya 2002). The need for unity is emphasized even more strongly by MS Gowalkar, the longest serving supreme leader (*Sarsanghchalak*) of the RSS (from 1940 until 1973) to date. In his '*Bunch of Thoughts*' (published in 1966 but based on a number of interventions throughout the years), Gowalkar clearly affirms that India is

'one country, one society and one nation and hence it is natural that the affairs of the nation are governed through a single state of the unitary type. The present federal system generates and feeds separatist feelings. In a way it negates the truth of a single nationhood and is therefore, divisive in nature. It must be remedied and the Constitution amended and cleaned so as to establish Unitary Form of Government' (Gowalkar, 1966: Part II, XII Territorial Nationalism)

As of 1967, the Congress started to lose its shine, in part linked to leadership and organizational changes within the party, but also to rising pressure from lower caste and sub-state national movements. The gradual decline of Congress widened space for a Hindu nationalist competitor, in some sense also as a counter-point to the rise of (also Hindu but) lower-caste based parties. Indeed, especially in its early years, BJP voters (and more so its leaders) were disproportionately upper-caste, seeking to protect the perceived decline of a 'dominant minority within the dominant majority.' The decline of Congress eventually triggered the replacement of a dominant one-party system with a system of binodal competition in which no polity-wide party could claim a stake in central power without the support of regional(ist) parties (Arora and Kailash, 2012; Schakel and Swenden, 2018). In this context (1998-2014), the BJP emerged as the key party in one node (the National Democratic Alliance) and the Congress as the centre of the other node, the United Progressive Alliance. Although the BJP challenged Congress' (verbal) commitment to secularism, it was not in a position to *displace* the dominant narrative of integrationist nationalism, let alone to enforce the transition to a unitarity state.

So long as the Hindu nationalists vied for power, but lacked the capacity to govern on their own, they had to compromise or reconsider their stances on some issues in light of public opinion. This had become obvious even to the Jan Sangh or Hindu Mahasabha who, despite their misgivings in earlier Hindu nationalist doctrinal writings, endorsed the reorganization of state boundaries along linguistic lines (1952-1966). This was an important 'composite' concession which even the Congress Party had opposed initially (Adeney, 2005: 100). Similarly, to keep state or national coalition governments in which it participated afloat, the BJP was forced to shelve its proposed abolition of Article 370. The party sanctioned fair state assembly elections in Kashmir in 2002, while the inclusion of the Kashmir National Conference and several secular regional parties in the BJP-led NDA coalition at the centre (1998-2004) helped to side-line hardliners within the RSS or broader Sangh Parivar (Behera, 2002). In practical terms, the BJP also learned to appreciate federalism when it seized power in several North Indian states in 1990, 6 years *before* it (briefly) entered the central government. In time, this made some of its Chief Ministers, including the thrice re-elected Chief Minister of Gujarat, Narendra Modi, supportive of the territorial constitution, at least verbally. Apart from communalism, his politics in Gujarat had appealed to Gujarati *asmita* (pride and identity) and business-led development (Jaffrelot, 2016) and, ahead of the 2014 elections, Modi propagated a 'competitive-cooperative federal system' centred on 'development'.

However, the decisive parliamentary majority for the BJP in the 2014 and especially the 2019 general elections enabled the BJP to shift India much closer towards a dominant nationalist frame. Much has been written about what the party has done to transform India into an 'ethnic democracy' (Hindu-first) based on citizenship legislation, discourse, and informal political practice. Indeed, the BJP does not control enough parliamentary seats and state

assemblies yet to erase ‘secular’ from the constitution (Jaffrelot, 2017; Chatterji, Hansen and Jaffrelot, 2019; Adeney, 2020). For the same reason, the BJP could not ‘centre’ the Indian constitution by weakening the constitutional position of the states. However, the party has done so in different ways.

In Modi’s first-term in office (2014-19), we observe both a continuation of federal practices *and* a move towards ‘re-centring’ (see Sharma and Swenden 2018 for a fuller exploration). Attempts at centralizing were most apparent in the political and administrative domains, but less so in areas of territorial finance. Examples are the replacement of in-kind with direct or cash benefits (facilitated by national biometric identification scheme, Aadhaar) (Tillin, 2019: 101-102), or the replacement of the Planning Commission with the NITI Aayog, a predominantly advisory body subsumed under the Prime Minister’s Office. The latter reduced the (already weak) shared rule attributes of the Indian state (Swenden and Saxena, 2017) and strengthened the discretion of the Ministry of Finance in the disbursement of central welfare grants. These were also renamed in honour of the Prime Minister and closely monitored by establishing direct lines of communication between the centre and district officers, bypassing the states (Aiyar and Tillin 2020: 130-131). The BJP also invoked President’s Rule to rid itself of Congress-state governments in Arunachal Pradesh and Uttarkhand, though on both occasions it was stopped in its tracks by the Supreme Court. Furthermore, the BJP-government is actively considering adjusting the cycle of state assembly elections, so that at least half of them could be brought into line with national elections. This would ‘nationalize’ state assembly election campaigns and strengthen the party’s ‘trump card’, Narendra Modi.

Whereas the 2014 general election was still won on a platform of ‘development’, the 2019 election campaign was more overtly nationalist, promoting Modi as a ‘chowkidar’ (‘watchman’) following a terrorist attack in Kashmir by a militant Islamist shortly before the elections. Speeches in the build-up to and after the elections were peppered more frequently with ‘One Nation’ references (Aiyar and Tillin, 2020). The re-election of the BJP-led government with an increased single party parliamentary majority in May 2019 accelerated the implementation of its dominant nationalist agenda. This *mostly* concerns the hollowing out of the secular credentials of the Indian state, as evidenced by the party’s Citizen Amendment Bill (December 2019), which grants Indian citizenship to Hindu, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist and Jain refugees from Pakistan and Bangladesh (as long as they have arrived before 31 December 2014), but *not* to Muslims.

However, the BJP’s religious and territorial agendas sometimes intersect, as in the case of Jammu and Kashmir, until August 2019 India’s only Muslim-majority state. The state had been under central rule already since 2018, but the 2019 election victory emboldened the BJP to declare Article 370 inoperative and to demote the state into two separate union territories (Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh), placing them under central surveillance. Ironically, the ‘temporary provision’ of Article 370 and the ability to erode its special autonomy through Presidential Orders (a mechanisms which previous Congress-led governments also invoked frequently) provided the state with *less* protection from central encroachment than an ordinary state (on this point and the legal controversy surrounding the move, see Khosla, 2012; Nair, 2019). For now, this contrasts with the BJP’s approach to the North-East, where the party often governs in coalition and appears to be playing the long game (for an analysis and also recent tensions within those coalitions due to the Citizen Amendment Bill and NRC, see Longkumer, 2019).

Despite continuing evidence of political (e.g. central response to COVID-19) and fiscal centralization (e.g. in seeking to strengthen the central share in shared tax receipts at the expense of the states as per the Terms of Reference for the XV Finance Commission), the BJP does not want, or cannot do away with, the states (save Jammu and Kashmir) and replace them with 100 *janapadas*. Not only would this require a constitutional amendment, but the party

would also encounter the possible opposition of the Supreme Court, which has read federalism, implying a ‘balance of power’ between the union and the states, into the ‘Basic Structure’ of the Constitution (and therefore may consider it as not-amendable).

Yet, the BJP may be able to realise its vision in practice *despite* the constitutional obstacles (Sircar, 2020). It can rely on a well-oiled and financially powerful party organization and largely submissive media and business organisations to strengthen support for its dominant nationalist vision (Jaffrelot and Verniers, 2020). Above all, it can rely on an acquiescing popular majority who place ‘trust’ (*vishwas*) in Modi as their preferred national leader, capable of serving the national interest. In this, the BJP merely tapped into rising levels of support for strong leadership (even military), rising levels of religious identification, and growing feelings of discontent with the working of democracy, all of which *pre-dated* the 2014 general elections (Sircar, 2020). Strong levels of support for the current regime among a majority of the population may embolden the BJP to neutralise potential checks on its powers, such as the Supreme Court, the Election Commission, critical journalists or opposition leaders (Khaitan, 2020).

But perhaps more important has been the tacit acceptance among many opposition parties of dominant nationalism as the leading ideology of this new ‘Second Republic’ (Chhibber and Verma, 2018). These parties try to avoid the national agenda as much as possible, realizing all too well that it is ‘owned’ by the BJP. However, when they cannot do so on key occasions, most of these parties, even those with a regionalist following, do not necessarily stand in the way but may be seen to broaden the legitimacy of Hindu nationalism³. This has been most obvious in their appropriation of Hindu religious symbols in discourse and in the support for the construction of a Hindu temple in Ayodhya in honour of God Ram at the site of a former mosque illegally destroyed by a Hindu mob in 1992. However, it is also reflected on issues affecting territorial autonomy. For instance, despite its wide-ranging ramifications, the August 2019 decision on Kashmir was opposed by few regionalist parties in the Rajya Sabha (second chamber), even though the BJP lacks a majority there. A representative of the Odisha Biju Janata Dal proclaimed that ‘We are a regional party. But for us the *nation* comes first’ (India Today, 2019). The absence of widespread resistance to dominant nationalism among quarters where it is most expected illustrates its *de facto* hegemony (Palshikar 2018).

Conclusion: Evolving State Nationalism and its Implications for Territorial Autonomy

This article proposed a way of conceptualizing state nationalist ideologies by distinguishing between dominant, integrationist, composite, and plurinational varieties. We applied these concepts to assert polity wide parties’ ideologies and their implications for territorial accommodation in two plural and multi-level polities: Spain and India. We focused on two critical junctures: the founding moments, linked to modern constitution-building, and more recent episodes of change associated with the ‘Catalan crisis’ in Spain and the rise of the BJP in India, respectively.

³ This potential shift in the position of opposition parties (and even the Congress) towards Hindu nationalism appears to contradict our basic assumption of ideological stability in prevailing party positions. However, there are two potential explanations for this. Firstly, in India, more so than in Spain, the central state is capable of ‘reigning’ in political opponents through mechanisms of coercion and control. The capacity to use them is heightened under conditions of one-party dominance, which in turn compels opposition parties to move closer towards the position of the dominant party on issues essential to its identity. Secondly, and as alluded to above, the Indian population at large appears to have become more supportive of a strong central leader, embracing a dominant nationalist ideology.

In both states, the constitution almost acquired a ‘totemic’ status (Hoenig, 2010) and became a significant lynchpin of state nationalism, centred predominantly around integration. However, in Spain, the presence of multiple forms of state and sub-state nationalism during the country’s founding moment left the process of territorial autonomy open. In India, integrationist nationalism was a comparatively more prevalent state nationalist ideology, with a focus on territorial integrity and the functioning of India as a union, not federal state. Even though, just as in Spain, the constitutional text was a compromise, disguising some differences of opinion on how to accommodate diversity and therefore left open to flexible interpretation, there was less toleration for plurinationalism, let alone minority nationalist views.

Our comparison has underlined the role of party competition in the reproduction, alteration, and contestation of state nationalist (and sub-state nationalist) ideologies as well as their implications for territorial accommodation. In Spain, polity-wide parties have generally stayed within ‘reasonable distance’ of their original state nationalist frame, but the rise of Basque and (especially) Catalan demands has intensified integrationist and even dominant state nationalist voices, especially among the right, in a context of increasing electoral outbidding on the issue of state unity. However, there remains space for the expression of composite and even plurinational views on the left. In India, whilst until 2014 Hindu nationalism had acquired increasing influence (with the rise of the BJP but also within Congress and some regional parties), it was *layered* onto a predominantly state integrationist edifice. The 2014 BJP victory enabled the alignment of dominant state nationalism with religious majoritarianism, and hence the more direct displacement of integrationism with dominant (Hindu) nationalism. In terms of territorial politics, the implications thereof were felt most explicitly in the case of Kashmir. Although states and state politics remain intact (though, not unlike during periods of previous Congress-hegemony, in a context of increasing political, fiscal and administrative centring), several regional parties have been co-opted within the broader project of Hindu nationalism, thus weakening their capacity to project a composite, let alone plurinational view of the state.

We see three avenues in which this research can be extended further. Future research may pursue a more fine-grained analysis which systematically codes and evaluates party positions across the various dimensions populating each of the boxes in Table 1. Alternatively, it may link state nationalist discourses to survey data on national identities (for example, we would expect the rise of dominant state nationalism to erode dual identities and to heighten the support for exclusive state-national and sub-state national identities). Above all, future research may seek to connect evolving state nationalist discourses to deeper structural shifts such as economic crises, economic liberalization, and shifting territorial inequalities. Such deep-seated structural changes have provided the raw material on the basis of which party agents (old and new) have (re)framed their territorial positions or grievances and, in the process, recalibrated their state and sub-state nationalist ideologies.

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